

Taunton Deane Borough Council

At a meeting of Taunton Deane Borough Council held in the Principal Committee Room, The Deane House, Belvedere Road, Taunton on 13 September 2006 at 8.00p.m.

Present: The Deputy Mayor (Councillor Hayward) (in the Chair)
Councillors Mrs Allgrove, Beaven, Mrs Biscoe, Bishop, Bowrah, Mrs Bradley, Miss Cavill, Clark, C Cluff, Coles, Croad, Edwards, Floyd, Garner, Guerrier, Hall, Henley, House, Lees, Leighton, Mrs Lewin-Harris, Meikle, Morrell, Mullins, Murphy, Paul, Phillips, Slattery, Vail, Mrs Whitmarsh, Williams, and Mrs Wilson.

1. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 July 2006 were taken as read and were signed.

2. Apologies

Councillors Bone, N Cavill, Davies, Denington, Durdan, Govier, C Hill, Mrs Marie Hill,, The Mayor (Councillor Hindley), Lisgo, Prior-Sankey, Mrs Smith, P Smith, Stuart-Thorn, and Weston

3. Public Question Time

- i) Paul Partington referred to Footpath T 18/3 at Norton Fitzwarren and asked:
 - 1. Was the decision to seek an extinguishment order on this public path made by an Executive Councillor, an officer or by a Committee or full Council ?
 - 2. If an Executive Councillor, which Councillor ?
 - 3. What was the costs to Taunton Deane Borough Council in 2002 in clearing the northern half of the section of the path
 - 4. What has been the financial cost to Taunton Deane Borough Council in officer time and any other cost since 2002 to today ?

Councillor Garner replied that the initial decision to apply for an extinguishment of Footpath T 18/3 at Norton Fitzwarren was an operational decision made by Housing officers as a housing management issue. At a meeting on the 29 March this year he was advised as the relevant portfolio holder that an application for extinguishment had been made following consultation with residents and at the request of the Parish Council. He had endorsed the approach that was being taken but was advised that as the decision was an operational one it was not necessary to make the decision formally.

It had not been possible in time for this meeting to identify the costs incurred in clearing the path in 2002 but this information would be forwarded when available. It was not possible to quantify the costs incurred in officer time since 2002 in progressing this matter, but no costs other than officer time had been incurred.

ii) Patricia Rowe referred to consultation with tenants and said that vital messages were not being put across. For instance it was not generally known that once the housing stock had been transferred it could never return to Council ownership.

Councillor Williams replied that this was not a privatisation of the housing stock. The Council would still retain responsibility for housing and the homeless and would continue to have a duty to see that the housing stock was maintained.

4. Declarations of interest

Councillor Mrs Biscoe declared a personal interest in Agenda item no 7 as a member of the Shadow Board and as a tenant of a Council owned garage..

Councillors C Cluff and Morrell both declared a personal interest in Agenda item no 7 as members of a company which was involved in providing valuations in respect of Right to Buy properties.

Councillor Mrs Allgrove declared a personal interest in Agenda item no 7 as a member of the Shadow Board

Councillor Mrs Bradley declared a personal interest in Agenda item no 7 as a relative had purchased a Council property

5. Housing Transfer Offer Document

Following the meeting of the Executive which had taken place immediately before this meeting consideration was given to a recommendation that the Council should take the next step towards balloting the tenants on transferring the housing stock to Deane Housing.

Further special meetings of the Executive and Council had been arranged to take place on Monday 13 November 2006, when the Council must decide whether or not to proceed to ballot.

RESOLVED that the recommendation of the Executive be agreed, the offer document be "signed off" and stage one of the ballot process be implemented with tenants being issued with a copy of the offer document.

(The meeting ended at 9.02p.m.)