

## **Taunton Deane Borough Council**

At a meeting of Taunton Deane Borough Council held in the John Meikle Room, The Deane House, Belvedere Road, Taunton on 4 October 2016 at 6.30 p.m.

Present      The Mayor (Councillor Mrs Stock-Williams)  
                  The Deputy Mayor (Councillor Prior-Sankey)  
                  Councillors Mrs Adkins, M Adkins, Aldridge, Beale, Berry,  
                  Mrs Blatchford, Booth, Bowrah, Cavill, Coles, Coombes, D Durdan,  
                  Miss Durdan, Mrs Edwards, M Edwards, Farbahi, Mrs Floyd, Gage,  
                  Gaines, Govier, Habgood, Hall, Mrs Herbert, Mrs Hill, C Hill, Horsley,  
                  Hunt, James, R Lees, Mrs Lees, Ms Lisgo, Martin-Scott, Morrell,  
                  Nicholls, Parrish, Mrs Reed, Ross, Ryan, Mrs Smith, Stone, Sully,  
                  Townsend, Mrs Tucker, Mrs Warmington, Watson, Wedderkopp,  
                  Williams and Wren

Mrs A Elder – Chairman of the Standards Advisory Committee

### **1. Apologies**

Councillors Brown, Davies, Mrs Gunner, Miss Smith and Ms Webber.

### **2. Minutes**

The Minutes of the meetings of Taunton Deane Borough Council held on 12 and 26 July 2016 and 4 and 22 August 2016, copies having been sent to each Member were signed by the Mayor.

### **3. Communications**

(a) Councillor Williams reported that the Chief Executive, Penny James, was currently away from work due to back problems. He hoped the Council would agree to send their very best wishes to Penny for a speedy recovery.

This was agreed.

(b) The Mayor reminded Councillors of the Ceilidh that had been arranged to Raise money for her Charities at Oake Manor Golf Club on Friday, 14 October 2016 at 7 p.m. She hoped as many Councillors as possible would attend.

(c) The Mayor also asked those Councillors who currently had full mailboxes to either empty them, or ask for the size of their mailboxes to be increased. At the moment messages being sent to the half dozen Councillors concerned were 'bounced back' to the sender.

### **4. Declaration of Interests**

Councillors M Adkins, Coles, Govier, Hunt and Prior-Sankey declared personal interests as Members of Somerset County Council. Councillor Coles

also declared a personal interest as a Member of the Devon and Somerset Fire Authority. Councillor Mrs Herbert declared a personal interest as an employee of the Department of Work and Pensions. Councillor Wren declared a personal interest as Clerk to Milverton Parish Council. Councillors D Durdan, Gage and Stone declared prejudicial interests as Tone Leisure Board representatives. Councillor Ms Lisgo declared a personal interest as a Director of Tone FM. Councillor Beale declared personal interests as a Board Member and Director of Tone FM and as a Governor of the South West Ambulance NHS Trust. Councillor Edwards declared a personal interest as the Chairman of the Governors of Queens College. Councillor Farbahi declared a personal interest as the owner of land in Taunton Deane. Councillor Hall declared a personal interest as a Director of Southwest One. Councillor Coombes declared a personal interest as a Stoke St Mary Parish Councillor and as the owner of land at Haydon. Councillor Parrish declared a personal interest as the District Council's representative on the Somerset Pensions Committee. Councillor Mrs Hill declared personal interests as a representative on the Board of Directors of Apple FM, as a Trustee of Hestercombe House and Gardens and the Somerset Building Preservation Trust. Councillor Miss Smith declared a personal interest as Chairperson of Refugee Aid from Taunton.

5. **Motion – The Proposed Development at Firepool \*the Old Cattle Market), Taunton**

Moved by Councillor Coles, seconded by Councillor Horsley.

“The Council notes that:-

- a) The Planning Committee rejected the Firepool Application submitted by the developers St Modwen on 31 August 2016 on the recommendation of the officers.
- b) It was defeated on the grounds that it did not meet the requirements of the Council's Core Strategy adopted in 2012 and on the grounds of poor design, failure to connect the station appropriately through the new Boulevard to Somerset Square and lack of activity for the waterfront onto the River Tone.
- c) It was also condemned for appearing like a “retail park” and the adverse effect it would have on the existing current town centre with Taunton Deane's consultants Savills estimating that it could take up to 20% of turnover away from the area.
- d) There was little evidence of any businesses truly interested in coming to Firepool from the hotel, entertainment, leisure and retail sectors at the meeting on 31 August 2016.
- e) The announcement on 19 September 2016 of the forthcoming closure of The County Stores in North Street, Taunton from January 2017.
- f) The announcement on 15 September 2016 made by the John Lewis Partnership that it was unlikely to open any further Waitrose Stores in

the foreseeable future including Firepool.

- g) The Government's confirmation on 18 September 2016 of its decision to proceed with the contract arrangements to build Hinkley C.

Council believes that Firepool is still the most important brownfield site available for the future development of Taunton and is anxious for new proposals to be brought forward at the earliest opportunity taking into account the latest circumstances set out above.

Council further believes that to attain our vision of becoming a forward thinking, progressive County Town and to meet its sustainable growth requirements to create prosperity and exploit our natural advantage of becoming the sub-regional capital of the South West we should:-

- (i) Seek a new development partner; or
- (ii) Should consider undertaking the project north of the River Tone ourselves;
- (iii) Should rapidly reconsider the mix of buildings and businesses to reflect the changing circumstances set out in the Notes above; and
- (iv) Any development should enhance the current offering of the town centre;
- (v) The development should be environmentally sustainable.
- (vi) The new proposals should reflect the strategic importance of the site as the new "Gateway to Taunton" from the Railway Station and be designed accordingly; and
- (vii) A fresh survey should immediately be undertaken of the businesses in the town centre and with the people of Taunton to ascertain their views on the above ideas.

The motion was put and was lost.

## 6. Reports of the Leader of the Council and Executive Councillors

### (i) Leader of the Council (Councillor Williams)

Councillor Williams's report covered the following topics:-

- Taunton Deane Borough Council and West Somerset Council – Creation of a New Council;
- Digital Economy;
- Blackbrook Pool;
- Hinkley Point C;

- Deane DLO Depot;
- Somerset County Council;
- Taunton Deane Borough Council Budget Setting;
- Devolution;
- Firepool, Taunton; and
- Somerset County Cricket Club.

(ii) **Environmental Services and Climate Change (Councillor Berry)**

The report from Councillor Berry drew attention to developments in the following areas:-

- Environmental Health – Somerset Rocks Concerts; Environmental Health Reactive Works; Food Hygiene Inspections; Private Water Supplies; Team Meetings; Social Media; Taunton Town Centre Events; and Fly-tipping;
- Licensing – Performance of the Service; Child Sex Exploitation Guide for Taxi and Private Hire Drivers; A Taxi Driver v Taunton Deane Borough Council;
- Deane DLO – Street Sweeping and Toilet Cleaning;
- Somerset Waste Partnership – Recycle Centre Permits; and Vehicle Procurement; and
- Crematorium.

(iii) **Economic Development, Asset Management, Arts and Tourism and Communications (Councillor Edwards)**

The report from Councillor Edwards covered:-

- Business Development - Delivery of Employment Land across the Borough; UK Hydrographic Office; Support for Digital Innovation; BREXIT Research; Appointment of Marketing Partner; Business Support Events; Wiveliscombe Enterprise Centre; and Nuclear South West Conference.
- Town Centre - Coal Orchard Redvelopment; and Wi-fi Taunton, Wellington and Wiveliscombe.
- Marketing the Area to Businesses, Visitors and Local Residents – Events; Marketing to Visitors; Social Media and Website; Town Centre Marketing; Taunton Live; and Arts and Events Grants; and
- Asset Management Service General Fund Activities - Estate Management Work; and Asset Data and Compliance Work;
- Communications; and
- The New Deane DLO Depot.

(iv) **Planning and Transportation (Councillor Habgood)**

The report from Councillor Habgood provided information on the following areas within his portfolio:-

- Site Allocation and Development Plan (SADMP);
- Specific Site Activity -Staplegrove; Comeytrowe / Trull; Monkton Heathfield; Firepool, Taunton; and Quantock House, Taunton;
- M5 Junction 25;
- Strategic Employment Site Local Development Order
- Neighbourhood Planning
- Transportation - Schemes; Variable Message Signage and Pay on Foot; Northern Inner Distributor Road; and Car Park Operations.

(v) **Sport, Parks and Leisure (Councillor Mrs Herbert)**

The report from Councillor Mrs Herbert dealt with activities taking place in the following areas:-

- Parks – Departure of Cyril Rowe; Grass cutting; Move to Westpark, Wellington; and Five Green Flag Awards.
- Play and Leisure – Hamilton Gault Park dedicated with Fields in Trust as a Centenary Field in Trust; Capital Grant Scheme; Brittons Ash Community Hall; Play equipment improvements; and Wellington Petanque Pitch.

(vi) **Corporate Resources (Councillor Parrish)**

The report from Councillor Parrish provided information on the following areas within his portfolio:-

- Corporate Strategy and Performance;
- Customer Contact Service;
- Facilities Management;
- HR and Organisational Development;
- ICT and Information;
- Southwest One Exit and SAP Replacement;
- Electoral, Electoral Review, Democratic Services and Legal Services;
- Southwest One Customer Services;
- Revenues and Benefits Service; and
- Finance and Procurement.

(vii) **Community Leadership (Councillor Mrs Jane Warmington)**

Councillor Mrs Warmington presented the Community Leadership report which focused on the following areas within that portfolio:-

- Summer Activities;
- Minerva Primary School, Halcon, Taunton;
- Holway Litter Pickers;

- Education Programme on ‘Legal Highs’;
- ManKind;
- Improving Tenant and Leaseholder Satisfaction;
- Syrian Refugee Resettlement; and
- Taunton Deane and West Somerset.

(viii) **Housing Services (Councillor Beale)**

Prior to submitting his report Councillor Beale drew attention to the outstanding service Lesley Webb had given to the Council over the past 35 years. He and other Councillors congratulated Lesley on this achievement.

Councillor Beale’s report covered the following issues:-

- Deane Housing Development – Creechbarrow Road, Taunton; Weavers Arms, Rockwell Green, Wellington; Extensions; Scooter Storage; Car Parking; Parmin Close, Taunton; and Housing Enabling;
- Anti-Social Behaviour Service – Performance; Casework; Closed Cases; and High Profile/Risk Cases;
- Homefinder – Homefinder Somerset Policy Changes October 2016;
- Welfare Reform – Welfare Reform Visits; Discretionary Housing Payments; and Universal Credit.

(Councillors Miss Durdan left the meeting at 8.31 p.m. Councillors Coombes, Mrs Edwards, Morrell and Wren left the meeting at 7.48 p.m, 7.54 p.m, 7.55 p.m. and 7.56 p.m. respectively. Councillors Ross, Stone and Mrs Tucker left the meeting at 8.09 p.m, 8.24 p.m. and 8.34 p.m. respectively. Councillors D Durdan and C Hill both left the meeting at 8.48 p.m.)

(The meeting ended at 8.57 p.m.)