

Full Council

Minutes

Tuesday, 25 November 2014 at 19:00

PRESENT:

The Mayor Councillor Fairhead (in the Chair); Councillors Andrews, Annison, Bird, Blyth, B Coleman, M Coleman, Collins, Connell, Cutting, Fox, Grey, Hacon, Jeal, Jones, Linden, Myers, Peck, Plant, Pratt, Robinson-Payne, Shrimplin, Stenhouse, Sutton, H Wainwright, T Wainwright, B Walker, Weymouth and Williamson.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Cunniffe, Jermany, Reynolds and Rodwell.

In attendance were Mr G Mitchell (Chief Executive Officer), Mrs J Beck (Director of Customer Services), Mr C Skinner (Monitoring Officer) and Mr R Hodds (Cabinet Secretary).

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Jeal declared a personal interest in the item relating to appointments to outside bodies in his capacity as an employee of First Move Furnishaid, and left the meeting for the discussion of this item.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Cunniffe, Jermany, Reynolds and Rodwell.

3. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Council considered the following public question:-

(a) Questions from Mr R Hudson

"Does the appointment of a £200,000 a year Chief Executive to oversee cuts in Council spending, effectively mean the Leader of the Council has abdicated all responsibility to a paid mercenary and that the Public Consultation is a total sham?"

In response, the Leader responded to the above question to state no.

In accordance with the provisions of the constitution, Mr Hudson was then entitled to

ask a supplementary question as follows:-

"Given that you say that you have not abdicated responsibility to the Chief Executive, how many other mercenaries/consultants have you engaged since the appointment of the Chief Executive? What advice are these people giving on how to slash budgets and at what cost to the Tax Payer?"

In response, the Leader stated that the Chief Executive Officer had been brought in on a temporary contract to carry out a specific job on behalf of the Council together with supporting consultants and that it was considered this had been money well spent in order to secure the services of these staff.

The Leader also stated that he took exception to the abusive accusations and remarks that had been made by Mr R Hudson at the end of this item.

4. REPORTS TO COUNCIL FOR DECISION

5. Revised List of Committee Memberships for 2014-15

Following a number of recent changes to membership of political groups, Council was now asked to consider amendments to the appointments to committees for 2014/15.

In discussing the report, Councillor Fox expressed his concern with regard to his deletion from the membership of the Scrutiny Committee, and Councillor Shrimplin also commented on his removal as a member of the Development Control Committee and expressed a view that this committee should have at least one independent Member serving on that committee. Councillor Fox confirmed that he did not wish to be a member of either the Housing Appeals or Appeals Committee as allocated under that revised amendments.

The Leader advised the two independent Members that if they were willing to form a group then they would have the same rights as all the other political groups with regard to the allocation of numbers of Members to committees.

(Councillor Jeal here left the meeting)

Proposer: Councillor T Wainwright Second: Councillor Williamson

That the proposed amendments to the appointments to committees for 2014/15 as detailed in the Chief Executive Officers report be agreed.

CARRIED

6. Appointments to Outside Bodies 2014/15

Council was asked to give consideration to a number of replacements on appointments to Outside Bodies for 2014/15.

Councillor Grey expressed her concern with regard to the proposed amendments to Outside Bodies and the fact that not all of the Council's political groups had been nominated as representatives on the Outside Bodies.

Proposer: Councillor Grey Second: Councillor Jones

That the status quo should remain Councillor Hacon's nominations on the Outside Bodies for 2014/15.

LOST

Proposer: Councillor Plant Second: Councillor Williamson

That approval be given to the following replacements on Outside Bodies for 2014/15:-

- St Nicholas Church Preservation Trust - Councillor M Coleman to replace Councillor Hacon
- Active Norfolk Board - Councillor Weymouth to replace Councillor Hacon
- Norfolk Coast Partnership (Joint Advisory Panel) - Councillor Weymouth to replace Councillor Shrimplin
- Waveney, Lower Yare and Lothingland IDV - Councillor Tate to replace Councillor Hacon
- First Move Furnishaid - Councillor Walker to replace Mrs V Pettit and Councillor T Wainwright to replace Councillor Pratt
- Great Yarmouth Racecourse - Councillor Peck to replace Councillor Hacon
- High School Foundation - Councillor Williamson to replace Councillor Robinson-Payne

CARRIED

7. Council Minutes

The Mayor presented the minutes of the Council Meeting held on the 23 September 2014.

With regard to item 5, Motions on Notice, Councillor Myers stated that there had been no inclusion in the minutes of the comments expressed by the Leader of the Council to Councillor Field during the course of the debate on this item.

Proposer: Councillor Myers
Second: Councillor Grey

That the comments expressed by the Leader of the Council to Councillor Field during the course of the debate on the Motions on Notice at the Council Meeting on the 23 September 2014 should be included in the minutes of the meeting.

7a. Cabinet Minutes

The Leader presented the minutes of the Cabinet meetings held on the 8 October and 12 November 2014.

7b. Scrutiny Minutes

The Chairman presented the minutes of the meetings held on the 25 September and 23 October 2014.

8. SPECIAL COUNCIL - 11 DECEMBER 2014

Her worship the Mayor reminded Members that a special meeting of the Council to

consider budget issues would be held on Thursday 11 December 2014 at 7:00pm.

The meeting ended at: 19:28

Full Council

Minutes

Thursday, 11 December 2014 at 19:00

PRESENT:

The Mayor Councillor Fairhead (in the chair); Councillors Andrews, Annison, Blyth, B Coleman, M Coleman, Collins, Connell, Cutting, Grey, Hacon, Jeal, Jones, Linden, Myers, Peck, Plant, Pratt, Reynolds, Robinson-Payne, Rodwell, Shrimplin, Smith, D Thompson, H Wainwright, T Wainwright, Walker, Weymouth, Williamson and Wright.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Bird, Field, Fox, Stenhouse and Sutton.

In attendance were Mr G Mitchell (Chief Executive Officer), Mrs J Beck (Head of Customer Services), Mr R Read (Director of Housing and Neighbourhoods), Mr C Skinner (Monitoring Officer), Mrs D Summers (Group Manager, Finance), Mr R Hodds (Cabinet Secretary), and Mr A Radford (Consultant).

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Bird, Field, Fox, Stenhouse and Sutton.

3. DIGITAL COUNCIL BUSINESS CASE

Council considered the Director of Customer Services' report which detailed the Digital Council Business Case for achieving the Council's objective to create an excellent customer experience and achieve low transaction cost while enabling those who can to self serve and provide consistent support to those least able to meet their own needs.

Proposer: Councillor Williamson
Seconded: Councillor T Wainwright

That the Digital Council Business Case be agreed.

CARRIED

4. COUNCIL TAX AND BUSINESS RATES COURT COSTS

Council considered the Group Manager - Transformation's report which sought approval for the proposed increase in the court costs for Council Tax and Business Rates in accordance with the regulations.

Councillor Myers asked for a breakdown of the costs of pursuing outstanding debts.

Proposer: Councillor Walker
Seconded: Councillor Jeal

That the increase in the court costs for Council Tax and Business Rates be increased to £75 with effect from the 1 April 2015.

CARRIED

5. COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME 2015

Council considered the Director of Customer Services' report which sought approval of the 2015 Local Council Tax Support/Reduction Scheme.

Proposer: Councillor B Coleman
Seconded: Councillor Jeal

That approval be given to option 1 - Current Scheme as detailed in the Director of Customer Services' Report for the Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2015.

CARRIED

6. CAR PARKING WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS

The Cabinet Member (Transformation and Regeneration) advised Council of the work that had been undertaken by the Car Parking Working Group to identify recommendations moving forward by operation, charging, utilisation and review. The Cabinet Member was now asking Council to agree to withdraw consideration of this item at this meeting as there is further outstanding work for the Working Group to consider and to then give detailed consideration to the Car Parking Working Group's recommendations at the next Council meeting on the 13 January 2015.

In response to a question from Councillor Reynolds, Councillor Williamson confirmed that the deferment of this matter to the January Council meeting would not effect the smart card for residents.

Councillor Plant expressed his concerns at the request to withdraw this item as he felt that the Working Group had cross party representation and had agreed their recommendations for consideration by Council. Councillor Jones confirmed that the

Car Parking Working Group had not had a meeting since the publication of the Council's agenda detailing the Working Group's recommendations.

Proposer: Councillor Williamson
Seconded: Councillor Plant

CARRIED

7. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY UPDATE - FEES AND CHARGES POLICY

Council considered the Chief Executive Officer's report which advised Council on the progress on the Transformation Programme, its impact on moving to a balanced budget for financial year 2015/16 and a sustainable medium term financial strategy. The report also detailed the revised fees and charges policy.

Councillor Reynolds commented on the need to look at a wider range of options to reduce costs and asked that consideration should be given to investigating the Economic Development Department to be strategically linked with Planning Policy, the level of collection rate undertaken by the Property Department, and on the contracts with GYB Services and Norse.

The Leader stated that there was still money to be saved within the Council's budget and that every department was being looked at and that the budget was being considered line by line. With reference to the Economic Development Department, the Leader referred to the significant developments that had taken place in the Borough and especially at Beacon Park.

Councillor Plant commented that consideration of this matter was premature as the Council had still to receive the finance settlement from the Government.

Councillor Williamson commented that the figures in the medium term financial strategy had been based on all the proposed changes that needed to take place.

Proposer: Councillor Walker
Seconded: Councillor T Wainwright

(i) That Council approves the strategy contained in the Chief Executive Officer's report in order to develop a balanced budget for Council consideration in February 2015.

(ii) That Council approves the Fees and Charges Policy.

CARRIED

8. MAYORALTY

Council considered the Chief Executive Officer's report on the process for the appointment of the Mayor.

Proposer: Councillor T Wainwright
Seconded: Councillor Plant

That in view of the current political make-up of the Council, approval be given to the

appointment of the Mayor to continue to alternate between the political groups but that this should now be based on the three party system rather than the previous two party system, and that the appointment of the Mayor for 2015/16 to be nominated from the Conservative Group; for 2016/17 from the UKIP Group; for 2017/18 from the Labour Group; and then to alternate for future years.

CARRIED

9. MAYOR OF THE BOROUGH OF GREAT YARMOUTH 2015/16

On reference from Cabinet, Council was recommended to agree that Councillor Shirley Anne Weymouth be appointed as Mayor of the Borough of Great Yarmouth for 2015/16. Proposer:Councillor T Wainwright Seconder:Councillor Plant That Councillor Shirley Anne Weymouth be appointed as Mayor of the Borough of Great Yarmouth for 2015/16.

CARRIED

10. CIVIC CAROL SERVICE

Her Worship reminded Members of the Civic Carol Service to be held on Monday the 15 December at St Nicholas Minster.

The meeting ended at: 19:40