

TRAFFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL

6 SEPTEMBER 2016

PRESENT

The Worshipful the Mayor (Councillor Mrs. Judith Ann Lloyd), in the Chair.

J. Coupe (Deputy Mayor)	A. Duffield	J.R. Reilly
D. Acton	Mrs. L. Evans	Mrs J. Reilly
S. Adshead	N. Evans	B. Rigby
S.K. Anstee	T. Fishwick	M. Sephton
Dr. K. Barclay	M. Freeman	B. Sharp
J. Bennett	P. Gratrix	B. Shaw
Miss L. Blackburn	Mrs. D.L. Haddad	J. Smith
R. Bowker	J. Harding	E.W. Stennett
C. Boyes	J. Holden	L. Walsh
Mrs. A. Bruer-Morris	D. Hopps	Mrs. V. Ward
B. Brotherton	M. Hyman	A. Western
D. Bunting	C. Hynes	D. Western
D. Butt	D. Jarman	M. Whetton
K. Carter	P. Lally	A. Williams
M. Cawdrey	J. Lamb	J.A. Wright
R. Chilton	E. Malik	M. Young
M. Cordingley	P. Myers	Mrs. P. Young
M. Cornes	D. O'Sullivan	
Mrs. P. Dixon	K. Procter	

In attendance

Deputy Chief Executive and Corporate Director Economic Growth, Environment and Infrastructure	Mrs. H. Jones
Corporate Director Transformation and Resources	Ms. J. Hyde
Interim Corporate Director Children, Families and Wellbeing	Ms. J. Colbert
Director of Legal and Democratic Services	Ms. J. Le Fevre
Democratic and Performance Services Manager	Mr. P. Forrester
Interim Public Relations Manager	Mr. M. McAdam
Senior Democratic and Scrutiny Officer	Mr. I. Cockill

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors S.B. Anstee, J. Baugh, Mrs. J.E. Brophy, L. Dagnall, A. Mitchell, T. Ross and S. Taylor.

28. MINUTES

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 27 July 2016, be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

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29. ANNOUNCEMENTS

(a) Membership of Committees

The Mayor advised the Council of the following changes to the Membership of Committees which had been agreed by the Chief Executive, in consultation with the appropriate Political Group Leader and the Council noted the changes:

- Councillor Mrs. Haddad had replaced Councillor Boyes as a substitute Member of the Joint Health Scrutiny Committee with Manchester City Council, with effect from 1 September 2016.
- Councillor Adshead has replaced Councillor Dagnall as a Member of Scrutiny Committee, with effect from 6 September 2016.

(b) Health Awareness and Charity Fundraising

The Mayor announced that the Council was supporting Health and Wellbeing week by organising a number of events that week and that nationally, prior to the next scheduled meeting of the Council, the 'Stoptober' campaign would be encouraging people to quit smoking. Promoting her Mayoral Charities, the Mayor appealed for the support of Members and officers thinking of participating and fundraising.

(c) Her Majesty the Queens Award for Enterprise

The Mayor was pleased to announce that local business NDC (Northern Drives and Controls, Limited) of Trafford Park had received the Queen's Award for Enterprise. Attending an award ceremony earlier that day, the Mayor was able to congratulate management and staff on their prestigious award.

30. QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS

The Mayor reported that 6 questions had been received under Procedure Rule 10.2.

(a) Councillor O'Sullivan asked the following question for which she had given notice:

"Many in this Chamber will have received an email recently from a young man who was homeless in the Stretford Area, the email being sent in the late evening outside of normal Council hours. Not being aware of any out of hours contact number for homelessness in the Borough and being concerned for this young man's safety I contacted the Chief Executive and a Corporate Director for further advice. It transpires this young man had spent four nights in the Café at Tesco Extra in Stretford and had been in touch and was registered with HOST but the only option he was offered was temporary accommodation in Rochdale. Because of his family ties to Stretford, he has a 2 year old daughter living here, he refused this offer because this would have prevented him having close ties with her.

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I would like to know

1. *How many persons/families are currently registered as homeless in Trafford?*
2. *How many temporary accommodation places can we offer in Trafford to homeless persons/families?*
3. *How many persons are currently sleeping rough in Trafford?*

Finally I would like to see advice on dealing with homelessness out of hours circulated to all Councillors together with details of the relevant council officers and agencies to contact.”

Councillor John Reilly, Executive Member for Economic Growth, Environment and Infrastructure explained the Council’s statutory duties under legislation and advised that the Council’s homelessness advice and homelessness prevention service was delivered on behalf of the Council by HOST- Housing Options Service Trafford, which had a good record of achievements.

In response to the specific questions asked, the Executive Member reported that, according to the latest quarterly figures April – June 2016, 76 cases had been presented as homeless, with 41 accepted as being so. There were 47 temporary accommodation places available in Trafford and if demand was to exceed this, bed and breakfast accommodation could be accessed. Also, as of November 2015 the date of the last annual assessment, it was estimated that there were 2 persons sleeping rough in Trafford. It was acknowledged that this number could change over time and that where rough sleepers became known or were reported in a particular location, HOST would visit the individual to provide housing and homelessness advice. There was information on the Council website giving advice and contact details on how to report a rough sleeper.

HOST could be contacted by telephone and email and also face to face at Sale Waterside 9 a.m. - 5.30 p.m. Monday to Friday and outside of these hours there was an Emergency Duty Team in place which could be contacted via telephone. All contact details were available on the Council’s website and Councillor John Reilly would ask for a briefing note to be provided for all Members.

As a supplementary question Councillor O’Sullivan asked if there had been a year on year increase for the last 6 years on the numbers sleeping rough and homeless and how the number of places in the borough catering for those sleeping rough and homeless compared to 6 years ago. The Executive Member indicated that he did not have the information to hand but that he would provide a written response.

- (b) Councillor Freeman asked the following question for which he had given notice:

“In a recent Press Article the Special Educational Needs (SEN) Families Support Group in Trafford are on record as saying that children with SEN in Trafford are not valued by this Council; indeed that this Council Executive Committee are not interested in what the future holds for these children and their families, paying mere lip service to them.

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Instead of being 'outraged' that a Charity with good cause, has suggested this Council are failing our SEN Children and families can the Executive Member explain what plans he has to drill down and discover why these very damaging accusations have been levelled at the Council and what organisational and cultural changes are required within the SEND Department to ensure the services provided by the Council in this very important area, properly take account of the individual needs of our SEN children and their families, if we really do pride ourselves in our commitment to providing the best possible educational opportunities and experience for every child and young person to thrive, develop and meet their individual potential in this borough irrespective of their circumstances?"

Councillor Hyman, Executive Member for Children's Services was genuinely disappointed that the SEN Families Support Group had the belief that children with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) requirements were not valued by the Council and wanted to make it very clear that this was definitely not the case.

At the last Council meeting (Minute 18a refers), the Executive Member took considerable time to acknowledge the shortcomings over Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plans and the considerable number of steps that the Council was taking to remedy the situation. He did not accept that identifying a problem when it arose and then dealing with it, amounted to a lack of care and that on the contrary, it was precisely that care which drove service improvements.

Following on from the information supplied at the previous meeting, Councillor Hyman provided more detail of how the Council was seeking to improve the operation of SEND services by highlighting the main reforms:

1. All EHC processes and documents reviewed so that communication with parents and schools was improved.
2. Training events and regular meetings with Trafford Parents Forum to ensure co-production of the local offer and good communications.
3. A training programme for all staff across all aspects of the SEND Code of Practice to improve knowledge and skills.
4. Re-organisation of the EHC Team, effective that month, into four geographical areas plus three specialist areas of Post-16, 0-5 Early Years and Special Schools.
5. Recruitment of two additional EHC Co-ordinators and one business support officer over and above that of the agreed establishment to provide additional short-term capacity until October 2016.
6. Revision of the timetable for transfers for the 2016/17 cohort of Year 6 pupils and Year 11- Year 14 students so that the process starts earlier and spreads the workload more evenly.
7. Early identification of parental choices for pupils in Year 5 as part of the annual review to help inform the transfer review process at Year 6.
8. Revised SEN Panel and approval criteria that included representatives from schools, education services, health and social care.

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9. An implementation plan to transfer SEND records from Tribal to Liquid Logic to improve electronic processes and case management recording.
10. Establishment of a Local Area SEND Board to provide strategic direction and leadership with 3 task and finish groups responsible for Participation and Engagement; Data; and Self-Assessment. The Board was accountable to Trafford's Health and Wellbeing Board.
11. A new Early Years SEND Project to set up networks of private, voluntary and independent providers and SEND professionals in Partington and Old Trafford.
12. A Children and Young People's participation event in February 2017 to focus on "Preparing for Adulthood".
13. A new primary special school "The Orchards" opened on a temporary site at Acre Hall Primary School whilst the new school was built, would be co-located on the site of Barton Clough Primary School. This would give a provision of 3 special schools located across the borough for children with severe learning difficulties, profound and multiple learning difficulties and Autism with overlapping cognitive difficulties.
14. The new Brentwood College for young people aged 19+ co-located on the site of a new, state of the art, Brentwood Special School for children and young people aged 11 to 19 years, and funded from the Council's capital programme, costing in excess of £9 million.

Councillor Hyman reasoned that the last point, in particular, was not consistent with the comment in the question that the Council and its Executive were not interested in what the future held for these children and that the new Brentwood site was hardly 'mere lip service'. Councillor Hyman also asserted that he did not have plans 'to drill down and discover why' the accusations had been levelled, as he had actions that were already in place and were already taking effect.

Asking a supplementary question, Councillor Freeman wondered why it had got to a situation where it took such a long time to communicate with parents and carers. Councillor Hyman indicated that he had explained in detail at the last meeting why it had taken time and had apologised for any short comings. He maintained that when something went wrong it was recognised and addressed, just as the Council was doing with the operation of SEND services.

(c) Councillor Hynes asked the following question for which he had given notice:

"There have been a number of antisocial behaviour incidences involving youths in parts of the Borough over the last 12 to 18 months. Some of these have been violent incidences; involving weapons, including knives and fighting amongst rival gangs. This is understandably causing worry in our communities. In light of the wholesale cuts to Youth Services in Trafford coupled with cuts to Police budgets what assurances can the Executive Member for Communities and Partnerships and provide that Trafford is doing all it can to address these issues?"

Councillor Lamb, Executive Member for Communities and Partnerships indicated that the question mainly centred on the events of summer 2015 and reminded Members of the response he provided to a question at Council on 20 January

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2016 (Minute No. 57(c) refers) which set out the very positive and robust actions that were taken by the Council and Greater Manchester Police (GMP) to deal with a spate of serious disturbances and violent attacks among a small number of young people.

The Executive Member reported that, despite a slight increase in youth antisocial behaviour (ASB) through the 2016 summer months, the police had informed him that it was nothing out of the ordinary. He was pleased to say that the severity and number of incidents of 2015 had not been repeated that summer and so, in that sense, the question was anachronistic.

Councillor Lamb suspected that Councillor Hynes was attempting to link a rise in youth ASB with reductions in youth service and GMP budgets, therefore, he wished to expand upon the points made at Council back in January, highlighting that:

- The young people involved in the summer 2015 incidents, who were now well known to the Council, did not fit the profile of those who would normally engage in universal youth services and in fact none of them had at any point previously. The use of new youth ASB legislation enabled the Council to swiftly take out Ex Parte injunctions following incidents to prevent repetition and escalation and Criminal Behaviour Orders were also obtained against a small number of young people who continued with their behaviour. That action allowed for a longer term intervention by the Youth Offending Service with the young people and their families whilst providing police the power to take action against young people if they breached the order. The Executive Member thought it worth noting that Trafford led the way on the early and effective use of this legislation.
- For those young people where recourse to the courts had not seemed appropriate, specialist intervention was commissioned and would be again should the need arise. This included the Community Change Foundation which was commissioned to prevent other young people being dragged into ASB and criminality and to effect behaviour change for those already involved. Manchester Young Lives was also commissioned to ascertain locations of all incidents and deliver further outreach engagement with youths and deliver diversionary activities to prevent ASB and effect behaviour change.
- In his November 2015 spending review the then Chancellor of the Exchequer did not proceed with expected further reductions in police budgets and that currently GMP was recruiting police officers. Also in Trafford progress was being made with the recruitment of Special Constables.
- Although the aforementioned should provide reassurance that the Council and its partners, through the Trafford Partnership, deal effectively with youth ASB, the newly formed Trafford Youth Trust warranted a mention as it was charged with providing services for young people going forward. From 1 July 2016 the Trust, under an independent chair and board, had responsibility for commissioning services and attracting funding investors.

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- On Saturday 3 September 2016, some 800 young people took part in activities in Sale and Stretford commissioned by the Youth Trust and similar activities coupled with engagement would be taking part across the borough as the year progressed, however, activities for young people were not the exclusive preserve of any one organisation.

Councillor Lamb reasoned that it had always been the case and would remain the case that most activity for young people was provided independently of what the Council and its partners did and referred anyone interested in what was on offer for young people to visit the online Trafford Service Directory where they would find over 200 clubs, associations and interest groups across the borough.

Indicating that she was yet to be convinced that there was not a link between what appeared to be an increase in ASB and the withdrawal of funding from Trafford Youth Services, Councillor Hynes asked as a supplementary question who was taking on the responsibility of educating young people out in the communities and signposting them away from antisocial behaviour to more positive activities, diverting them from crime and who was safeguarding the borough's young people now that there were no detached work teams out on the streets.

Councillor Lamb confirmed that responsibility for maintaining order amongst young people in terms of ASB was overseen by the Safer Trafford Partnership Board and that the general provision of universal youth services resided with the newly created Trafford Youth Trust.

- (d) Councillor Adshead asked the following question, the first of two for which he had given notice:

“Genuine concerns have been raised by Residents and Councillors of all Parties, some in this Council Chamber concerning the current poor level of service this Borough is suffering from for all street scene services delivered by the One Trafford Partnership (AMEY), and a number of these issues were highlighted in last week’s Messenger Newspaper. Yet Madam Mayor the Council Leader and the Executive Member for Environment and Economic Growth dismissed these concerns and complaints as being unsubstantiated, uncorroborated, lacking evidence and accused Councillors in this Chamber of talking down this Borough in a letter they have sent to the Messenger Newspaper. I would like to know who the Council leader thinks is telling the truth over this issue, the residents and Councillors who raised these concerns or himself?”

In response, Councillor Williams, Deputy Leader of the Council advised that the Amey contract had been in place for 12 months following a lengthy procurement process where service delivery and performance was monitored and maintained by strict quality indicators. He indicated that the Labour Group sat on the One Trafford Partnership Board that oversaw the contract. In their letter to the Messenger newspaper, the Leader of the Council and the Executive Member for Economic Growth, Environment and Infrastructure had said that whilst everything was not perfect, the Council had a contract which had been in place for some time

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which was monitored and enforced with a commitment from all parties that delivery continued to improve.

The Council would encourage residents and Members to report issues, such as missed bins or faulty street lights through the report it facility on the Council website. Where Councillors felt that the standard of service provided was not to an acceptable standard or concerns had not been dealt with, the Partnership would ask all Councillors to raise such concerns through the Trafford Members inbox. The Partnership would then investigate and seek to resolve the concerns and it could get an accurate understanding of where the issues were so that resources could be allocated accordingly.

The Deputy Leader stated that the One Trafford Partnership was delivering well and cited the LED Street Lighting Programme which was delivering very effectively, the delivery of 7 Green Flags for the borough's parks and the improved response times for fly-tipping. It was now investing in new equipment to speed up pot hole repairs, new grass cutting equipment and 28 new refuse vehicles.

Councillor Williams concluded that the administration would always seek balance in the local media against any exaggerated remarks of opposition Councillors.

In putting a supplementary question, Councillor Adshead claimed that, in conflict to the Leader of the Council and Executive Member's comments, he had examples of problems which he could substantiate and therefore asked in light of their alleged deception, whether they would consider withdrawing their comments and also apologise to himself and to residents for talking them down and for misleading the community and Members as to the extent of the problems.

In response, Councillor Williams asked that Councillor Adshead apologise for his comments in the supplementary question, stating that there had been no dishonesty from any Members of the Executive. In the context of the achievements being made by the One Trafford Partnership and the reservation and understanding that there were concerns and issues that needed to be dealt with, the Deputy Leader believed that Councillor Adshead's comments about the One Trafford Partnership were political posturing rather than informed comment and that the Leader and Councillor J.R. Reilly were right to call him out in the local media about the comments which were incorrect.

- (e) Councillor Adshead asked the following question, the second of two for which he had given notice:

“Can the Executive Member for Environment and Economic Growth please explain in light of possible health concerns around the use of the weed killer glyphosate, and the recent petition handed to Trafford Council highlighting those concerns what steps are being taken to find an alternative to it.”

Councillor Shaw, Deputy Executive Member for Economic Growth, Environment and Infrastructure advised that the One Trafford Partnership had recognised the concerns raised by Trafford residents and although the European Commission had licenced Glyphosate for a further 18 months, the partnership was working

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hard to identify alternative methods of weed control. The partnership benefited from the larger Amey business where experts in the field had engaged with Rigby Taylor to commence trials of alternative products, including tank mixes for the residual chikara which gave approximately 6 months of weed control.

In addition, the partnership was committed to reducing the volume of weeds across the borough and would be utilising specialist equipment designed to remove weed growth and the detritus in which the weed could germinate. Using a 'WeedRipper' to remove the material over the forthcoming months would assist in reducing the volume of weeds from the next spring and in turn reduce the levels of weed spraying required across the borough.

Councillor Adshead, asked as a supplementary question whether the matter could be considered a very high priority and for an assurance that an alternative would be put in place? Councillor Shaw confirmed that the health of residents was a high priority and that he would keep Councillor Adshead informed of progress.

(f) Councillor Acton asked the following question for which he had given notice:

"There have been reports in the news last week that there are now approximately 800 unaccompanied migrant children in the camps of the Calais Jungle; 400 of whom, campaigners are saying may be eligible to come to the UK because either they have family here or because they are the vulnerable or the most in need. Reports say that the Home Office have agreed to take 150 children this year and state that they would like to take more but need Local Authorities to agree to look after them. Would the Leader of the Council be prepared to agree that Trafford will take some of these extremely vulnerable children, who are so in need of our help?"

Councillor Williams, Deputy Leader of the Council reported that the Council had been fully engaged in the regional discussions with the Home Office on the transfer of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children Minors programme which was being led nationally and that any movement of children would be managed on a regional basis. It was likely that Trafford would receive some children through the transfer over a period of time and preparations would be made to meet their needs.

A full commitment had been provided by the Council to work with the Home Office, through regional collaboration, on the transfer of children and the Deputy Leader recognised that the Council had already received and was caring for, through its statutory children's services duties, a number of unaccompanied children who had arrived in Trafford earlier in the year.

Asking a supplementary question, Councillor Acton sought an assurance that the Council would take some of the 800 stranded children. Councillor Williams confirmed that there was a commitment from Trafford and others nationally and that the Council would ensure it did what was required in partnership with the Home Office and its partners.

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31. ANNUAL ACCOUNTS AND AUDIT REPORT 2015/16

The Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Accounts and Audit Committee for 2015/16 submitted a report summarising the work undertaken by the Committee during the year and its impact. The report also provided assurance to the Council on the fulfilment of the Committee's responsibilities.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

32. CONTRACT PROCEDURE RULES REVISIONS

The Director of Procurement submitted a report setting out proposed amendments to the harmonised Contract Procedure Rules (CPRs) currently adopted into the Council's Constitution and seeking agreement to the revisions.

RESOLVED: That the Council approves the revised CPRs provided at Appendix 2 to the report and that the revised CPRs be incorporated into the Constitution of the Council.

33. ANNUAL SCRUTINY REPORT 2015/16

The Chairmen of Scrutiny Committee and Health Scrutiny Committee submitted a report presenting the Annual Scrutiny Report to Council detailing the previous year's work and both Committees work programmes for the year ahead.

The Chairmen thanked the Mayor and Deputy Mayor, the 2015/16 respective Chairmen of Health Scrutiny and Scrutiny, and they duly thanked their respective Vice-Chairmen, Councillors Mrs. Young and Cordingley as well as all Members, Co-opted Members and officers for their work and expertise.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

34. MOTION SUBMITTED BY THE CONSERVATIVE GROUP - POSITIVE OUTCOMES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN TRAFFORD

It was moved and seconded that:

"In 2015, Children's Services were independently inspected by Ofsted as the joint highest performing in the country, in particular services for children leaving care. The Council has received more recent external recognition including:

- The Education Policy Institute, in its inquiry, has graded Trafford one of only five local authorities with 'good' in all categories for Children's and Adolescent Mental Health Services and future transformation plans;
- Recognition from the Family and Childcare Trust who have awarded our Family Information Service the Families First Quality Award with additional SEND standards.

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Whilst we must not rest on our laurels, the Council welcomes this recognition as further evidence of its efforts to support the most vulnerable young people and is committed to ensuring all children and young people are able to get off to the best and right start in life.

Further, the whole Council wishes to place on record its sincere congratulations to pupils, teachers, support staff and governors all of whom are yet again are able to celebrate fantastic achievements in this summers A-Level and GCSE examinations.

The Council wishes the very best to all of our young people as they embark on the next stage in their lives.”

Following a debate on the matter, the Motion was put to the vote and declared carried.

RESOLVED: That in 2015, Children’s Services were independently inspected by Ofsted as the joint highest performing in the country, in particular services for children leaving care. The Council has received more recent external recognition including:

- The Education Policy Institute, in its inquiry, has graded Trafford one of only five local authorities with ‘good’ in all categories for Children’s and Adolescent Mental Health Services and future transformation plans;
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The Council wishes the very best to all of our young people as they embark on the next stage in their lives.

The meeting commenced at 7.00 p.m. and finished at 9.04 p.m.