

TRAFFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL

17 SEPTEMBER 2014

PRESENT

The Worshipful the Mayor (Councillor Ejaz Malik), in the Chair.

J. Holden	M. Cornes	K. Procter
D. Acton	J. Coupe	J.R. Reilly
S. Adshead	L. Dagnall	Mrs J. Reilly
S. Anstee	Mrs. P. Dixon	B. Rigby
Dr. K. Barclay	A. Duffield	T. Ross
J. Bennett	Mrs. L. Evans	M. Sephton
Miss L. Blackburn	N. Evans	B. Sharp
R. Bowker	T. Fishwick	B. Shaw
C. Boyes	M. Freeman	J. Smith
H. Boyle	P. Gratrix	E.W. Stennett
Mrs. A. Bruer-Morris	J. Harding	S. Taylor
Mrs. J.E. Brophy	D. Higgins	L. Walsh
B. Brotherton	M. Hyman	Mrs. V. Ward
D. Bunting	C. Hynes	A. Western
D. Butt	D. Jarman	D. Western
C. Candish	P. Lally	M. Whetton
K. Carter	J. Lamb	A. Williams
R. Chilton	A. Mitchell	M. Young
Mrs. L. Cooke	P. Myers	Mrs. P. Young
M. Cordingley	D. O'Sullivan	

In attendance

Corporate Director Economic Growth, Environment and Infrastructure	Mrs. H. Jones
Corporate Director Transformation and Resources	Mrs. W. Marston
Director of Finance	Mr. I. Duncan
Director of Legal and Democratic Services	Ms. J. Le Fevre
Democratic Services Manager	Mr. P. Forrester
Democratic Services Officer	Mr. I. Cockill

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J. Baugh, J. Lloyd and I. Platt.

33. MINUTES

That the Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting of the Council held on 14 July 2014 and the Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 16 July 2014, each be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

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34. ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor reported that the Leader of the Council, Councillor Anstee had completed his “Ice Bucket Challenge” the week previously, suitably aided by Councillor Acton who was on hand with the bucket to ensure that he got a soaking. £127 was raised on the day for charity with direct text donations made afterwards still to be calculated. The Mayor congratulated the Leader for entering into the spirit of the challenge and thanked everyone for their generosity.

35. QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS

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

(a) Councillor Shaw asked the following question for which he had given notice:

“Members will have noted the Press Release 9 September in respect of Key Stage 2 Educational attainments and I ask if there is any further information available?”

In response to the question, Councillor Cornes the Executive Member for Children’s Services provided a detailed statistical analysis of the national curriculum tests results which showed attainment in Trafford to be well in excess of both national and North West averages. Councillor Cornes welcomed a set of results which would set great foundations for the children of the Borough’s future.

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

“Can the Executive Member for Children’s Services please explain the rationale behind the summer retendering of SEN School Transport contracts and the level of personal scrutiny he gave to the process? When was the decision made to retender the Contracts? Why did he not foresee the need to inform Elected Members of the changes and at the same time keep parents/carers of SEN Children transported by Trafford aware of the changes?”

Councillor Cornes, Executive Member for Children’s’ Services advised that a note on the matter had been issued to the Scrutiny Committee Chairman and Vice-Chairman and stressed to the Council that there had not been a policy change nor had any changes been made to the eligibility criteria. The decision was within the remit of officer decisions and as was usual practice, Members had not been involved. However, the Council had recognised that the information provided to parents and carers was insufficient and had apologised reservedly for not communicating adequately.

As a supplementary question, Councillor Freeman then asked:

“Does the Executive Member regret the fact that parents of SEN children were not kept informed of the changes and will he now apologise for this? Is

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it right that some children are now experiencing longer travel times to schools? Did the tendering process take account of individual children's needs? What assurances can the Executive Member give that this Council is not putting saving money before ensuring our SEN Children are safely transported to and from school?

Can the Executive Member please explain why some contracts would appear to have been wrongly awarded resulting in some private contractors now being paid up to £1800 under the 21 day termination notice for contracts because of failings in the tendering process?

Lastly, with regard to the unfortunate incident where a contractor was sent to collect a child who had tragically died the week before school term commenced, can the Executive Member explain why I am in receipt of an email from a Senior Council Officer stating staff were unaware and had not been informed of the death, yet the Manchester Evening News are informed the Council was advised but this information was not provided to the contractor?

Considering the complexity of the supplementary question, the Executive Member assured Councillor Freeman that he would provide a written response to all the points that had been raised. Councillor Cornes also referred to the related newspaper article and given the circumstances expressed astonishment that the parents had been contacted.

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

“Can the Executive Member advise how many bins have been reported as lost or stolen since the introduction of fortnightly collections or by year for the last two years if this is not identifiable?

Can he also advise how many of these bins have since been recovered?

And lastly, can the Executive Member advise from the figures which neighbourhoods or postcodes are most at risk of bin theft?”

Responding to the question, Councillor John Reilly, Executive Member for Environment and Operations reported that 2,395 bins had been reported as lost or stolen for the period April 2013 to August 2014 but unfortunately was unable to advise how many had been recovered due to the ambiguity of reporting any subsequently located. Councillor John Reilly advised that, for the period, Gorse Hill and Clifford wards reported 630 and 620 bins lost or stolen respectively, compared to 286 the next highest in Bucklow St. Martins, with the lowest figures being 86 in Flixton and 85 in Davyhulme East. A breakdown on a ward by ward basis could be provided if Members so wished.

Noting the potential number of bins in circulation, Councillor Cordingley asked as a supplementary question whether the Council could start to look at whether bins

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reported as lost or stolen were appearing on collection days. The Executive Member confirmed that it was something that could be investigated.

(d) Councillor Lally asked the following question for which he had given notice:

“The most comprehensive UK survey of musical instrument learning by the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music (ABRSM) finds that while more children than ever are playing, many still have no access and children from lower social groups remain disadvantaged. Do you feel this is representative in Trafford?”

The Executive Member for Children’s Services, Councillor Cornes advised that Trafford Music Service offer every child a chance of learning an instrument and that a quarter of key stage 2 children have this experience. The Executive Member acknowledged that there were barriers to continuing playing afterwards, with finance being one, however, the service looked at targeting children from disadvantaged social groups and provided subsidised lessons wherever possible.

In asking a supplementary question, Councillor Lally referred to fears expressed earlier in the year about reductions to the music service and out of office hours provision and he wondered if they had been substantiated. It was the Executive Member’s view that the fears were completely unfounded and that Trafford Music Service continues to go from strength to strength, performing well above the national requirement.

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

*“The most important responsibility a Council has must be to protect and safeguard its children and young people.
Therefore in light of the problems of child sex exploitation exposed in Rotherham I ask the Leader to give assurances to the Council that children in Trafford are not being subjected to sex exploitation.
Accountability and Responsibility is critical in terms of ensuring the protection and safeguarding of our children in the Borough, therefore can the Leader assure the Council that these lines of responsibilities and accountabilities are in place in Trafford.
Further, as a matter of urgency will the Leader agree to organise a detailed member seminar to brief members of Council with regard to all aspects of policy, processes and the reporting and accountabilities as they relate to safeguarding of children and young people?”*

In response to the question, the Leader of the Council assured Members that the Council took the risk of child sex exploitation (CSE) very seriously with a well-established multi-agency working group focusing on detection and prevention reporting to the Trafford Safeguarding Children’s Board. The group had developed a CSE prevention strategy with an action plan that was reviewed regularly and revised annually. The reviews include consideration of all new national and individual authority specific reports to ensure any new learning is addressed and the group considered the Rotherham report at its most recent meeting.

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Trafford was also a partner in Project Phoenix which was the Greater Manchester partnership response to the learning from Rochdale. Project Phoenix has enabled the development of a coherent response to CSE within Greater Manchester including communication across borders in relation to young people at risk and potential perpetrators. New training had been made available and a pre-planned week of action for Greater Manchester commenced on 12 September for which Trafford was undertaking awareness raising work and launching the new Greater Manchester risk measurement tool for CSE.

Councillor Anstee could not provide an absolute assurance that no young people living in Trafford were at risk but was confident that the Council was alert to the issues of CSE, would never be complacent and would always assume that there was more it could do to maximise the protection of Trafford's young people. He indicated that he would arrange a briefing session for Members who wish to understand more detail about the issues and the work being undertaken.

Referring, as part of his supplementary question, to the duties and accountability of Members and the complexities of the issues involved, Councillor Acton asked for regular reporting mechanisms to be put in place to ensure all Members have access to the necessary information. Councillor Anstee confirmed that there were already clear lines of responsibility within the Council and that he would undertake to arrange the briefing session as soon as possible.

- (f) Councillor Mrs. Brophy asked the following question for which she had given notice:

"In so many of our iconic UK cities and towns a 30mph limit is seen as "no longer fit for purpose" for most residential streets. This now includes many areas of Greater Manchester (including neighbouring Manchester City Council) where 20 is seen as plenty for the places where people live. This is also in line with recent government encouragement for 20mph limits for residential streets.

Is it therefore time that Trafford Council should consider the move to a "default 20, targeted 30" for residential streets with all its positive benefits?"

Councillor John Reilly, Executive Member for Environment and Operations confirmed that the Council was committed to monitoring developments in other authorities and had estimated that the cost of implementing 20mph limits at £1.9 million due to the necessary signage. Advising that the Council had to evaluate whether such a spend would significantly impact on accident figures, the Executive Member state that he did not agree 30mph limits were no longer fit for purpose but agreed to revisit the issue with Highway Officers and would invite Councillor Mrs. Brophy to attend such a meeting.

Councillor Mrs. Brophy referred in her supplementary question to the public health benefits of lower speed limits and asked how the debate could be widened to include these. Councillor John Reilly indicated that he was aware of the wider health benefits and reaffirmed that he was happy to meet and discuss.

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36. MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES AND OUTSIDE BODIES

RESOLVED: That the Council notes that the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council has agreed the following changes to the Membership of Committees and Outside Bodies:

- (a) Councillor Higgins replaced Councillor Dr. Barclay on Health Scrutiny Committee with effect from 15 July 2014; and
- (b) Councillor Mitchell replaced Councillor Dr. Barclay as a Substitute Member on the AGMA appointed Greater Manchester Health Scrutiny Committee with effect from 18 July 2014.

37. YEAR END CORPORATE REPORT ON HEALTH AND SAFETY - 1 APRIL 2013 TO 31 MARCH 2014

The Executive Member for Transformation and Resources submitted a report providing information on council-wide health and safety performance, trends in workplace accidents and a summary of other key developments in health and safety over the 12-month period. The Executive Member placed on record his thanks to officers of the Health and Safety Unit for their efforts in ensuring staff were protected.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

38. CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND WELLBEING BUDGET 2014/15

The Executive Member for Finance and Director of Finance submitted a report setting out proposed measures to reduce the shortfall which had been identified within the Children, Families and Wellbeing Budget for 2014/15.

The recommendations set out in the report were moved and seconded and after a debate were put to the vote and declared carried.

RESOLVED –

- (1) That the Council notes the additional in-year savings within the Children, Families and Wellbeing Directorate of up to £3.3 million.
- (2) That a reduction in the Provision for Equal Pay Claims of £1.0 million and the use of capital receipts of £1.3 million from Urmston Town Centre, as outlined in paragraph 3.6 of the report, be approved.
- (3) That the Council approves the further use of up to £1.6 million from the General Reserve in support of the 2014/15 budget.
- (4) That the use of the General Reserve (if required) for the Council's contribution to the accumulated deficit on the Learning Disability Pooled Budget, be approved, on condition that the General Reserve is restored to the approved minimum level for 2015/16.

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39. REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL (IRP)

(Note: Councillor Anstee, the Leader of the Council declared a prejudicial interest since the Leader's allowance was one of the matters for consideration and in accordance with paragraph 13.4(e) of the Code of Conduct for Members, was permitted to remain in the meeting, participate in the debate and vote thereon.)

The Chief Executive submitted a report setting out the recommendations of the IRP Panel regarding amendments to the Scheme of Members' allowances, for consideration by the Council.

The recommendations set out in the report were moved and seconded and after a debate were put to the vote and declared carried.

RESOLVED –

- (1) That the recommendations of the Panel, as set out in the report at Appendix 1, be approved.
- (2) That the Director of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to revise Part 6 of the Constitution (Members Allowances Scheme) as a consequence of this decision.

40. CONSTITUTIONAL MATTERS

The Director of Legal and Democratic Services submitted a report setting out changes to the Constitution as a result of new regulations relating to openness of local government decision making.

RESOLVED: That the changes to the Council's Constitution, as set out in the report, be approved.

41. MOTION SUBMITTED BY THE CONSERVATIVE GROUP - PROTECTING PRIVACY

It was moved and seconded that:

“The Council is concerned that its residents are being bombarded with unsolicited and unwanted junk mail by companies who buy the open Electoral Register.

Therefore, Council notes and supports the campaign initiated by the Local Government Association for legislation to be enacted to repeal the law allowing the sale of the open Register of Electors and make all electoral registers closed.”

Following a debate on the matter, the Motion was agreed by the general consent of the Council.

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RESOLVED: That the Council is concerned that its residents are being bombarded with unsolicited and unwanted junk mail by companies who buy the open Electoral Register.

Therefore, Council notes and supports the campaign initiated by the Local Government Association for legislation to be enacted to repeal the law allowing the sale of the open Register of Electors and make all electoral registers closed.

42. MOTION SUBMITTED BY THE CONSERVATIVE GROUP - HEALTHIER TOGETHER

Procedural Arrangements – Since the Motions set out at Items 9 (b) and 9 (c) on the Council Summons concerned the same issues, the Mayor, with the consent of the Council, suspended Procedure Rules to enable both these Motions to be moved and seconded, then debated together, before being determined.

(Note: The following Councillors declared a personal interest in this item, for the reasons set out below and remained in the meeting during consideration and determination of the matter:

Councillor D. Western - works at Wythenshawe Hospital;
Councillor Cornes – a number of family members work for the NHS locally;
Councillor Adshead – works at Trafford General Hospital;
Councillor Mrs. Bruer-Morris – is a NHS practice nurse; and
Councillor Mrs. Brophy – works for the Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust.)

It was moved and seconded as a 1st Motion that:

“The Council notes the consultation period for Healthier Together is approaching its end and greatly encourages all residents of Trafford to participate and comment on the options for reconfiguration of health services across Greater Manchester.

In addition, Council notes the commitments made during the New Health Deal for Trafford implementation that maintained easy and readily available access to a full complement of hospital services for all Trafford residents both at the University Hospital of South Manchester Foundation Trust and Central Manchester Foundation Trust.

On this basis, the Council contends that provision of these services is not clearly articulated in the consultation and requests that the Leader of the Council ensures a meeting is arranged with NHS England to ensure that its views are fully understood and taken into account in the consultation proceedings.

That the Council asks the Leader, with the full authority of the Council, to write to the Secretary of State to express the feelings of all Members of this Council following this debate.”

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It was moved and seconded as a 2nd Motion that:

“This Council supports Wythenshawe Hospital in the Healthier together campaign to remain as a specialist hospital with a 24/7 Accident and Emergency Unit.

The residents of Trafford have already seen the loss of the 24 hour seven day a week A/E at Trafford General Hospital and were promised that the A/E at Wythenshawe would now become the A/E for all Trafford residents.

Wythenshawe Hospital is major emergency hospital with specialist care in thoracic, heart, transplant, burn and plastic surgery. It also specialises in major trauma cases e.g. Airport incidents.

We are in danger of losing these services if the hospital is downgraded.

It is vital that all residents vote and back our campaign to ensure Wythenshawe remains a clinical specialist hospital in Greater Manchester.

This is urgent as the Consultation period finishes at the end of September.”

[Note: During the debate on this item, the time being 9.01 p.m., the Mayor indicated that all speeches would now be limited to a maximum of two minutes per speaker.]

Following a debate on all matters, the Council agreed both the Motions by general consent.

RESOLVED –

- (1) That the Council notes the consultation period for Healthier Together is approaching its end and greatly encourages all residents of Trafford to participate and comment on the options for reconfiguration of health services across Greater Manchester.

In addition, Council notes the commitments made during the New Health Deal for Trafford implementation that maintained easy and readily available access to a full complement of hospital services for all Trafford residents both at the University Hospital of South Manchester Foundation Trust and Central Manchester Foundation Trust.

On this basis, the Council contends that provision of these services is not clearly articulated in the consultation and requests that the Leader of the Council ensures a meeting is arranged with NHS England to ensure that its views are fully understood and taken into account in the consultation proceedings.

That the Council asks the Leader, with the full authority of the Council, to write to the Secretary of State to express the feelings of all Members of this Council following this debate.

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- (2) That this Council supports Wythenshawe Hospital in the Healthier together campaign to remain as a specialist hospital with a 24/7 Accident and Emergency Unit.

The residents of Trafford have already seen the loss of the 24 hour seven day a week A/E at Trafford General Hospital and were promised that the A/E at Wythenshawe would now become the A/E for all Trafford residents.

Wythenshawe Hospital is major emergency hospital with specialist care in thoracic, heart, transplant, burn and plastic surgery. It also specialises in major trauma cases e.g. Airport incidents.

We are in danger of losing these services if the hospital is downgraded.

It is vital that all residents vote and back our campaign to ensure Wythenshawe remains a clinical specialist hospital in Greater Manchester.

This is urgent as the Consultation period finishes at the end of September.

43. MOTION SUBMITTED BY THE LABOUR GROUP - HEALTHIER TOGETHER

Please refer to Minute No. 42 as this matter was considered together with the Motion set out at 9 (b) on the Summons.

44. MOTION SUBMITTED BY THE LABOUR GROUP - ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

It was moved and seconded that:

“Council notes that changes to staffing levels and severe budget cuts has led to a clear deterioration of green spaces and environment activities and calls for improvements to be made to services as a matter of urgency.

This Council notes particular the following concerns:-

- Overflowing litter bins throughout Trafford
- Overgrown grass verges
- Overgrown weeds in many of our built-up areas
- Increased levels of fly tipping
- Dirty alleyways
- A clear reduction of maintenance in our parks and green spaces

Constant promises by the Council Executive that services will improve have failed to materialise and resulted in deterioration of the Trafford environment, therefore, we call on the Council to take immediate action to deliver cleaner streets and improved environmental maintenance.”

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[Note: During the debate on this item, the time being 9.17 p.m., the Mayor indicated that all speeches would now be limited to a maximum of one minute per speaker.]

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

45. MOTION SUBMITTED BY THE LABOUR GROUP - COUNCIL LEISURE FACILITIES MANAGED BY TRAFFORD COMMUNITY LEISURE TRUST

RESOLVED: That, in view of the time, this matter be deferred to the next meeting of the Council.

The meeting commenced at 7.04 p.m. and finished at 9.29 p.m.