

COUNCIL

THURSDAY, 20 DECEMBER 2012

PRESENT:- The Deputy Mayor in the Chair; Councillors Junab Ali, Steve Allsopp, Abdul Amin, Paul Baker, John Ballman, Ray Ballman, Mike Bawden, Andrew Bennett, Alan Bishop, Roderick Bluh, Wayne Crabbe, Mark Dempsey, Michael Dickinson, Mark Edwards, Toby Elliott, Claire Ellis, Emma Faramarzi, Fionuala Foley, Brian Ford, Mary Friend, Jim Grant, John Haines, Peter Heaton-Jones, Neil Heavens, Dale Heenan, Russell Holland, Fay Howard, Richard Hurley, Colin Lovell, Cindy Matthews, Brian Mattock, Des Moffatt, Derique Montaut, Teresa Page, Stan Pajak, Maureen Penny, Garry Perkins, Julian Price, David Renard, Ann Richards, James Robbins, Rochelle Russell, Kevin Small, Vera Tomlinson, Joe Tray, Steve Wakefield, Nadine Watts, Peter Watts, Steve Weisinger, Keith Williams, Robert Wright and Julie Wright.

74. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from The Worshipful The Mayor, and Councillors Rex Barnett, Nicky Sewell and Dave Wood.

75. Return of Councillor Elected

The Director of Law and Democratic Services reported the return of Councillor Steve Weisinger elected on 15th November 2012, following a by-election in the Blunsdon and Highworth Ward in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972.

76. Communications

The Chief Executive reported that no communications had been received.

77. Minutes

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 8th November 2012 be confirmed and signed.

78. Declarations of Interest

Councillors Junab Ali, Roderick Bluh, Toby Elliott, Emma Faramarzi, Mark Edwards, Fionuala Foley, Nick Martin, Brian Mattock, Des Moffatt, Garry Perkins, Kevin Small, Vera Tomlinson and Keith Williams had received dispensations in relation to matters which have a bearing on the setting of the discounts and exemptions for Council Tax and/or consideration of the Council Tax Support Scheme in accordance with Section 33 of the Localism Act 2011.

Councillors Junab Ali, Roderick Bluh, Toby Elliott, Emma Faramarzi, Mark Edwards, Fionuala Foley, Nick Martin, Brian Mattock, Des Moffatt, Garry Perkins, Kevin Small, Vera Tomlinson and Keith Williams made personal declarations of interest in respect of Agenda Item 7 as they or their spouses have an interest in a second property in the Borough. (Minute 80(1) refers)

Councillors Roderick Bluh, Fionuala Foley, Nick Martin, Brian Mattock, Garry Perkins, Vera Tomlinson and Keith Williams made personal declarations of interest in respect of Agenda Item 7 as they could be affected by the Council Tax Support Scheme. (Minute 80(2) refers)

79. Public Question Time

Mrs Kareen Boyd asked a public question regarding the delay in completing construction work at the Croft School, and why this varied from the dates given to the Evening Advertiser.

The Leader of the Council indicated that a written response would be provided.

Mrs Kareen Boyd asked a public question regarding differing information received from the Leader of the Council and Council officers regarding the number of children attending the Croft School who lived within 1km of it.

The Leader of the Council indicated that a written response would be provided.

Mr. Richard Symonds asked a public question regarding usage surveys for Moulton Hill Country Park.

The Leader of the Council indicated that a written response would be provided.

Mr. Richard Symonds asked a supplemental question seeking clarification about the conditions under which the usage survey had been undertaken.

The Leader of the Council indicated that a written response would be provided.

Mr. Richard Symonds asked a public question regarding which wards were to be consulted on the provision of the school at Moulton Hill Country Park?

The Leader of the Council indicated that a written response would be provided.

80. Minutes for Confirmation

(1) Councillor Mark Edwards moved and Councillor Roderick Bluh seconded:

“That, subject to the removal of bullet point 5 (Charge to Mortgage Companies), Minute 68(1) of the Cabinet (Council Tax Discounts and Exemptions) be confirmed and adopted.”

The Motion was put to the vote and declared carried.

(2) Councillor Mark Edwards moved and Councillor Roderick Bluh seconded:

"That Minute 69 of the Cabinet (Council Tax Support Scheme) be confirmed and adopted."

The Motion was put to the vote and declared carried.

81. Motion - Christmas Market

Councillor Mark Dempsey moved and Councillor Bob Wright seconded:

"This Council believes that a Town Centre market is necessary and should be encouraged, and requests that Officers work with InSwindon to identify an appropriate site to enable a Christmas Market to be held in the Town Centre, and that any issues around a weekly market are resolved as soon as practicable."

Councillor Richard Hurley moved and Councillor Andrew Bennett seconded:

"This Council has always and continues to believe that a Town Centre market is necessary and should be encouraged, and requests that Officers continue to work with InSwindon to identify an appropriate site to enable a Christmas Market to be held in the Town Centre, and that any issues around a weekly market are resolved as soon as practicable."

The amendment was put to the vote and declared carried becoming the Substantive Motion.

The Substantive Motion was put to the vote and declared carried.

82. Motion - Videoing Council Meetings

Councillor Mark Dempsey moved and Councillor Bob Wright seconded:

"This Council supports the development of a more open, transparent and accountable politics and press.

In order to rebuild trust and engagement with the decisions of this Council, at Full Council in April 2011 the Council passed a motion requesting the Chief Executive to provide a report to Cabinet on the feasibility of recording and broadcasting Council Meetings via the Council's web site. This simple measure is being implemented by Councils across the country. This Council is disappointed that 18 months since this motion, the report has still not been produced. This Council requests that this report is completed within three months, with a view to videoing Full Council Meetings by the 2013 Annual Council Meeting."

Councillor Roderick Bluh moved and Councillor Russell Holland seconded that the Motion be amended to read:

"This Council supports the continued development of a more open, transparent and accountable politics and press.

This Council notes that:

- Full Council in April 2011 passed a motion requesting the Chief Executive provides a report to Cabinet on the feasibility of recording and broadcasting Council Meetings via the Council's web site.

- The Labour party request for videoing of Full Council Meetings to commence from the 2013 Annual Council Meeting.

This Council requests that a Cabinet report is published within three months investigating the cost and feasibility of fulfilling this request.”

The amendment was put to the vote and declared carried becoming the Substantive Motion.

The Substantive Motion was put to the vote and declared carried.

83. Motion - Council Funding

Councillor Steve Allsopp moved and Councillor Jim Grant seconded:

“This Council notes that the concerns raised in Swindon’s Big Conversation have not been heard by the Chancellor in his Autumn Statement. It agrees to shout louder and ensure that the voice of those hurt most by the deepening austerity measures is heard by the Chancellor by requesting the Chief Executive to write to him expressing our concern about the impact on the Statement on our community.”

The Motion was put to the vote and declared lost.

84. Motion - Heathrow Airport

Councillor Kevin Small moved and Councillor Des Moffatt seconded:

“This Council for local economic reasons opposes a Thames Estuary airport and advocates that the Swindon economy will benefit from better connectivity between Swindon and an improved Heathrow Airport.”

With the agreement of the Council the Motion was amended to read:

Councillor Kevin Small moved and Councillor Garry Perkins seconded:

“This Council for local economic reasons opposes a Thames Estuary airport and advocates that the Swindon economy will benefit from better connectivity between Swindon and an improved Heathrow Airport.

This Council calls on the Government to speed up the airport capacity review, being conducted by Sir Howard Davies. Delays in these recommendations will damage the economy of Swindon and the United Kingdom.”

The Motion, as amended, was put to the vote and unanimously agreed.

85.

Councillors Question Time

The Director of Law and Democratic Services reported that Standing Order 15 Questions have been received from Councillors Steve Allsopp, Mark Dempsey, Des Moffatt and Julian Price.

Councillor Julian Price asked the Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Sustainability about the cost of officer time and queried why the Council was undertaking this action on behalf of a private company.

The Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Sustainability responded that officers had undertaken work on an issue that the Council itself wished to pursue.

Councillor Julian Price asked the Leader of the Council how many other properties were on the Council's Compulsory Purchase Order list and the process for identifying which properties took priority.

The Leader of the Council indicated that a written response would be provided.