

COUNCIL

Tuesday 25 February 2020

Present:-

The Right Worshipful the Lord Mayor Councillor Peter Holland (Lord Mayor)
Councillor Mrs Yolonda Henson (Deputy Lord Mayor)
Councillors Begley, Bialyk, Branston, Foale, Ghusain, Hannaford, Harvey, Henson, D, Leadbetter, Lyons, Martin, Mitchell, K, Mitchell, M, Moore, D, Morse, Newby, Oliver, Packham, Pattison, Pearson, Sheldon, Sills, Sparkes, Sutton, Vizard, Wardle, Warwick, Williams and Wood

1

MINUTES

The minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Council held on 17 December 2019 and the Extraordinary Meeting held on 21 January 2020 were moved by Councillor Bialyk, the Leader, seconded by Councillor Sutton, the Deputy Leader, taken as read, approved and signed as correct.

2

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence was received from Councillors Buswell, Foggin, Moore J., Owen and Quance.

3

OFFICIAL COMMUNICATIONS

The Lord Mayor congratulated the following:-

- Councillor Alys Martin, nee Quance, on her recent marriage, the wedding having taken place at the Guildhall;
- Councillor Bob Foale on his selection to represent Southern England in Over 60's Walking Football and being one of 20 players selected to attend all England trials in Birmingham for the forthcoming European Championship Finals in July; and
- Exeter, for being awarded "City of Apprenticeships" status, awarded by the City and Guilds Group following a report produced by the Centre for Cities for the city's exceptional recruitment of apprentices. Exeter had the highest rate of apprenticeship starts, almost ten times higher than the poorer performing cities studied and offered over 150 different apprenticeships, The Council itself had 21 apprentices in a wide variety of roles.

4

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

There was one question from Mrs. C Thompson to Councillor Bialyk, Leader.

The Summary and Explanations and The Exeter Conventions (items of the Constitution noted on the website) state a member from each political group shall be allocated a seat on the Executive; therefore does the existing Executive breach the Constitution.

Response

The Leader thanked Mrs Thompson for the question and confirmed that the copy of the constitution and conventions had been amended by Council at its meeting on 15 October 2019, following a review of the governance arrangements of the Council. Unfortunately, the copy of the constitution on-line had not yet been updated to reflect these changes and he had asked that this be done as a matter of urgency.

One of the issues agreed by Council in October, had been the removal of the Convention which previously allocated a seat on the Executive to each opposition group on the Council. This had been agreed with cross party support.

He therefore assured Mrs Thompson that all decisions taken by the Executive continued to be valid.

5

PLANNING COMMITTEE - 6 JANUARY 2020

The minutes of the Planning Committee of 6 January 2020 were presented by the Chair, Councillor Lyons, and taken as read.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Planning Committee held on 6 January 2020 be received.

6

PLANNING COMMITTEE - 13 JANUARY 2020

The minutes of the Planning Committee of 13 January 2020 were presented by the Chair, Councillor Lyons, and taken as read.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Planning Committee held on 13 January 2020 be received.

7

PLANNING COMMITTEE - 10 FEBRUARY 2020

The minutes of the Planning Committee of 10 February 2020 were presented by the Chair, Councillor Lyons, and taken as read.

In respect of **Minute No. 18 (Planning Application No. 19/0962/FUL – Land off Pulling Road, Pinhoe, Exeter)** and in response to a query from a Member, the Leader advised that the Council would be reviewing the amount of CIL contributions sought from developers. He added that a review of the CIL process was being undertaken as part of the consultation process in bringing forward the Greater Exeter Strategic Plan and that this process would reflect the City Council's goal of becoming carbon neutral by 2030.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Planning Committee held on 10 February 2020 be received.

8

LICENSING COMMITTEE - 4 FEBRUARY 2020

In the absence of the Chair and the Deputy Chair of the Committee, the minutes of the Licensing Committee of 4 February 2020 were presented by Councillor Vizard and taken as read.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Licensing Committee held on 4 February 2020 be received and, where appropriate, adopted.

9

STRATEGIC SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 16 JANUARY 2020

The minutes of the Strategic Scrutiny Committee of 16 January 2020 were presented by the Chair, Councillor Sills and taken as read.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Strategic Scrutiny Committee held on 16 January 2020 be received.

10

CUSTOMER FOCUS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 6 FEBRUARY 2020

The minutes of the Customer Focus Scrutiny Committee of 6 February 2020 were presented by the Chair, Councillor Vizard and taken as read.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Customer Focus Scrutiny Committee held on 6 February 2020 be received.

11

AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE - 28 JANUARY 2020

The minutes of the Audit and Governance Committee of 28 January 2020 were presented by the Chair, Councillor Wardle, and taken as read.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Audit and Governance Committee held on 28 January 2020 be received and, where appropriate, adopted.

12

EXECUTIVE - 11 FEBRUARY 2020

The minutes of the Executive of the 11 February 2020 (with the exception of minute numbers 21, 22, 23 and 24 which had been considered at the Extraordinary Council meeting immediately preceding this meeting) were presented by the Leader, Councillor Bialyk and taken as read.

In respect of **Minute No. 20 (Public Spaces Protection Order Renewal)**, and in response to a query from a Member regarding the intended summit to be held on issues around the Order, the Portfolio Holder for Supporting People stated that there were no details yet available for the summit and who would be included. However, charities representing the homeless would be invited to the summit, along with a host of other partners and organisations to tackle the overall issue of anti-social behaviour. She emphasised that the issue of anti-social behaviour was a society wide matter and not associated with any particular cohort of people.

The Leader moved and the Deputy Leader seconded the recommendations and they were carried unanimously.

In respect of **Minute No. 25 (Annual Pay Policy Statement 2020/21)**, the Leader moved and the Deputy Leader seconded the recommendations and they were carried unanimously.

In respect of **Minute No. 26 (Gender Pay Gap Report)**, the Leader moved and the Deputy Leader seconded the recommendations and they were carried unanimously.

In respect of **Minute No. 29 (Business Case for the Review of Staff Structure in Housing Tenancy Services)**, the Leader moved and the Deputy Leader seconded the recommendations and they were carried unanimously.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Executive held on 11 February 2020 be received, and where appropriate, adopted.

13 **QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL UNDER STANDING ORDER NO. 8**

In accordance with Standing Order No. 8, the following questions were put by Councillor Hannaford to the Deputy Leader.

Question

Can our Devon and Cornwall Police and Crime Panel member please brief Council on the recent decision to cut the number of Police Community Support Officers (PCSO's) in Devon and Cornwall?

The Deputy Leader reported that, at the recent Panel Budget setting meeting, there had been considerable cross-party disquiet regarding the cut in numbers of PCSO's across Devon and Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. She also stated that the proposal had been put forward by the Police and Crime Commissioner whilst, at the same time, seeking additional funding from Central Government to help provide additional support to the Devon and Cornwall Police during the summer months when the region's population increased because of the influx of tourists.

Despite a majority of those present at the Police and Crime Panel meeting opposing the proposal, it had been carried due to the particular rules governing the operation of Police and Crime Panels.

Councillor Hannaford asked a supplementary question as to whether there would be an opportunity in the future to overturn decisions taken in this manner.

The Deputy Leader stated that this would necessitate a change in the national Governance arrangements of Panels.

Question

Do we have any indication how many we will lose in Exeter and in which areas?

The Deputy Leader reported that she had no indication of the numbers as this was an operational matter for the Chief Constable. She had reported at the Panel meeting the significant effect the reduction in numbers would have in Exeter where the work and commitment of the Support Officers was highly valued.

Councillor Hannaford asked a supplementary question as to whether there would be consultation locally by the Force on the reduced numbers and that, if so, this should take into account crime figures in areas.

The Deputy Leader agreed that a consultation process should be undertaken.

In accordance with Standing Order No. 8, the following question was put by Councillor D. Moore to the Leader.

Of the 17 actions in Exeter's Air Quality Management Plan, how confident is the Leader that this plan complies with the judgement from the 2016 Client Earth legal challenge. The judgement spelled out that air quality action plans should:

- 1. Show exactly how limit values can be met,*
- 2. Take the route that reduces people's exposure as quickly as possible,*

3. Ensure that compliance is not just 'possible', but 'likely'.

The Portfolio Holder for Equalities, Diversity and Communities responded that the Council's Air Quality Action Plan has been appraised by Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs following significant local and statutory consultation. The action plan provides a solid basis for developing effective measures to address exceedances, with measures to tackle congestion and accessibility being profiled within the plan.

However, delivery of the plan was dependent on the actions of a range of organisations including the Transport Authority and, ultimately, the individual choices residents and visitors take. This was why the Council was supporting the work of Exeter City Futures in bringing stakeholders together to design a road map for the Council's ambitions for a carbon neutral city by 2030. As shared priorities emerge through this process, the Air Quality Action Plan might require a review.

The Portfolio Holder also welcomed the recent Government proposal to ban the burning of polluting fuels including wood and coal in domestic burners, which would further contribute to cleaner air quality.

Councillor D. Moore asked a supplementary question regarding the seven air quality monitoring points shown on the Council's website and the requirement to update the website information in respect of targets and breaches. She further requested that a review of the Air Quality Action Plan be brought to the relevant Scrutiny Committee.

The Leader explained, that although the questions raised were not supplementary questions based on the response given, he would ensure responses would be provided.

(The meeting commenced at 8.45 pm and closed at 9.20 pm)

Chair