

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS OF A MEETING OF COUNCIL

14th November 2017

At a Meeting of Rugby Borough Council held on 14th November 2017.

The Mayor (Councillor Mrs Garcia), Councillors Mrs A'Barrow, Allen, Mrs Avis, Brader, Mrs Bragg, Butlin, Cade, Mrs Crane, Cranham, Douglas, Miss Dumbleton, Ms Edwards, Gillias, Leigh Hunt, Keeling, Miss Lawrence, Lewis, Mistry, Mrs O'Rourke, Pacey-Day, Mrs Parker, Roberts, Mrs Roberts, Ms Robbins, Roodhouse, Mrs Roodhouse, Sandison, Dr Shera, Mrs Simpson-Vince, Srivastava, Stokes and Mrs Timms.

36. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence from the meeting were received from Councillors Brown, Ellis, Lowe, Mahoney, Mrs Nash, Mrs New and Poole.

37. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Special Meeting of Council held on 28th September 2017 were approved and signed by the Mayor.

38. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Item 6(a)(1) of Part 1 – One-off Community Grants 2018/19 – Councillor Ms Robbins (non-pecuniary interest as defined by the Council's Code of Conduct for Councillors by virtue of being Vice-Chair of Brownsover Community Association).

Item 6(a)(1) of Part 1 – One-off Community Grants 2018/19 – Councillor Ms Edwards (non-pecuniary interest as defined by the Council's Code of Conduct for Councillors by virtue of being a member of Brownsover Community Association and Newbold Community Partnership).

Item 6(a)(1) of Part 1 – One-off Community Grants 2018/19 – Councillor Mrs O'Rourke (non-pecuniary interest as defined by the Council's Code of Conduct for Councillors by virtue of being a member of Overslade Community Centre).

39. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor had been pleased to welcome representatives of World Rugby to the Hall of Fame with the Rugby World Cup as part of its tour leading up to the 2019 World Cup in Japan.

The Mayor gave special thanks to the Council's Democratic Services team for its huge effort in ensuring this year's Remembrance Sunday Service was such a wonderful and poignant occasion.

40. QUESTIONS PURSUANT TO STANDING ORDER 10.

(A) Councillor Brader asked the Leader of the Council, Councillor Stokes:

“Could the Leader update the Council on the situation regarding Oakfield Recreational Ground, and whether they will pursue a compulsory purchase order to re-open the park for public use?”

Councillor Stokes, Leader of the Council, replied as follows:

“In May 2015 agents on behalf of Heart of England Cooperative Society (HoECS) submitted a planning application for the residential redevelopment of Oakfield Recreation Ground. This planning application was refused by this Council, the principal ground for refusal being the unjustified loss of public open space. The applicants then sought to appeal this decision to the Secretary of State but withdrew the appeal in 3rd April 2017.

Since this time, planning officers have been in confidential pre-application discussions with agents on behalf of HoECS in relation to an alternative development proposal on site. I cannot share the details of these proposals however the position of the Council as Local Planning Authority in relation to this site has not changed; the site is protected public open space and any proposal to develop the site for an alternative use would require a clear and compelling justification in line with national and local planning policies. To date, such a justification has not been forthcoming and any application that fails to meet this test is likely to be refused.

During this time, the Council has offered to purchase the recreation ground at a value appropriate to the current open space use. This offer has been declined by the owners. Officers have advised that use of Compulsory Purchase powers in relation to this site is not currently viable whilst the planning process is ongoing. This is, in part, because the Secretary of State would require any planning process to be concluded prior to issuing an Order but, more importantly, because the Compulsory Purchase would require payment of an independently assessed market value for the site. Whilst the owners still retain an aspiration to redevelop the land the Council would be at risk of paying a higher value that it cannot realistically afford.

The Council’s position remains that this is a well-used and valuable public open space and should be protected as such. We will continue to work with local ward Cllrs and local community groups in seeking to ensure the protection of the recreation ground.”

Councillor Brader then sought reassurance from the Leader that he was maintaining contact with local interested parties in this matter and would be willing to attend any local community group meetings.

Councillor Stokes confirmed that local community groups were scheduled to attend a meeting at the Town Hall on this matter and he was willing to attend any further meetings arranged.

41. REPORT OF CABINET - 30th OCTOBER 2017

RESOLVED THAT - the report be confirmed and adopted.

42. REPORTS OF OFFICERS

(a) Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and Housing General Fund Acquisition and Disposal Policy and Process

Council considered the report of the Head of Corporate Services & Chief Financial Officer concerning the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and Housing General Fund Acquisition and Disposal Policy and Process.

RESOLVED THAT -

- (1) the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and Housing General Fund Asset Acquisition and Disposal Policy and accompanying Approval Process be approved; and
- (2) the Head of Corporate Resource and Chief Financial Officer be given delegated authority to approve Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and General Fund housing acquisitions and disposals in accordance with the policy.

43. CORRESPONDENCE

There was no correspondence.

44. COMMON SEAL

It was moved by the Mayor, seconded by the Deputy Mayor and

RESOLVED THAT - the Common Seal be affixed to the various orders, deeds and documents to be made or entered into for carrying into effect the several decisions, matters and things approved by the Council and more particularly set out in the Panels and Committees reports adopted at this meeting.

45. MOTION TO EXCLUDE THE PUBLIC UNDER SECTION 100(A)(4) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

RESOLVED THAT - under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of information as defined in paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A to the Act.

46. PRIVATE REPORT OF OFFICERS

(a) Acquisition of New Council Houses to Rent

Council considered the joint private report of the Head of Communities and Homes and the Head of Corporate Resources (Part 2 – agenda item 1(a)) concerning the acquisition of new council houses for rent.

RESOLVED THAT - the recommendation in the report be approved.

MAYOR