

**COUNCIL BUSINESS
COMMITTEE**

4.00 P.M.

28TH JUNE 2007

PRESENT:- Councillors Susan Bray (Chairman), Shirley Burns, Geoff Knight,
Karen Leytham, Peter Robinson and Morgwn Trolinger

Apologies for Absence

Joyce Pritchard

Officers in attendance:-

Roger Muckle

Gillian Noall

Jenny Kay

Corporate Director (Finance and Performance)

Head of Democratic Services

Democratic Support Officer

1 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 29th March, 2007 were signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

2 ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS AUTHORISED BY THE CHAIRMAN

The Chairman advised that she had agreed to an Item of Urgent Business – Commitment to the North West Charter for Elected Member Development, since a decision was required from the Committee before the first Pre-Assessment for the Charter that was due to take place on 11th July.

3 COMMITMENT TO THE NORTH WEST CHARTER FOR ELECTED MEMBER DEVELOPMENT

The Head of Democratic Services presented a briefing note detailing the Council's commitment to gaining the North West Charter for Elected Member Development. Members were advised that work towards the Charter was progressing well and a date had now been set for the first pre-assessment on 13th July. The process required three Members to be interviewed to provide evidence. It was suggested that one of these Councillors should be the Chairman of the Council Business Committee, one should be selected from the Councillors most recently elected and one from the smallest political group on the Council since they relied more heavily on appropriate Member support without a large group on which to rely.

Resolved :

That the Chairman a new Member, and a representative of the smallest political group take part in the first pre-assessment interviews for the Charter.

4 COUNCIL'S ANNUAL REPORT

The Corporate Director (Finance and Performance) presented the Council's Annual Report for consideration by the Committee. Members were advised that the Annual Report replaced the Best Value Performance Plan that had been published in previous

years setting out the Council's performance.

It was noted that the Audit Committee had approved the Statement of Accounts for inclusion in the report at its meeting the previous evening.

The recommendations set out in the report were unanimously agreed.

Resolved :

- (1) That the Corporate Performance Plan (Best Value Performance Plan) be approved for publication on 30th June, 2007.
- (2) That the Corporate Performance Plan be re-designated as the Annual Report – 2006/07.

5 CITY COUNCIL MEETING TIMES 2007/08

The Committee considered a report of the Chief Executive which contained the results of a survey of Members on the preferred times of Council meetings undertaken in response to issues raised in setting the timetable for 2007/08 (Minute 24 refers). It was reported that the survey results were inconclusive.

Members discussed the report at length in particular the difficulties encountered by those who worked full time in attending meetings, but acknowledged that a change to evening meetings would not be convenient for all.

It was noted that a considerable number of Overview and Scrutiny Task Groups and Partnership meetings met during the evenings or late afternoon allowing working Members the opportunity to contribute. Each of the scheduled meetings was considered in turn with a view to varying the start times but with the results of the survey being inconclusive and in the knowledge that Members this year had chosen their committees often on the basis of when they met, it was not felt that the committee were in a position to impose any changes and a consensus could not be reached.

Instead it was felt that further evidence should be gathered with a view to making changes when setting the timetable for 2008/09. It was proposed that this be done by consulting each committee and obtaining evidence from Group Administrators of any Members who were unable to attend their choice of committees due to current start time.

It was also agreed that the Council meeting in September should commence at 4.00 pm on an experimental basis to provide further evidence in considering any change to the start time of full Council.

In the meantime it was also agreed to change future meetings of the Council Business Committee to 4.30 pm for the convenience of current Members.

Resolved :

- (1) That the start time of Council Business Committee meetings be amended from 4.00 pm to 4.30 pm for 2007/08.
- (2) That the Council meeting on 26th September 2007 commence at 4.00 pm on an experimental basis.
- (3) That an item be included on the next agenda of all scheduled meetings requesting consideration of the most appropriate start time for that meeting.

- (4) That Group Administrators be requested to obtain information from their political groups on any Members unable to attend their choice of committee due to its current start time.
- (5) That all feedback received be taken into account in setting the timetable for 2008/09.

6 SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING 2007

The Head of Democratic Services presented a report which gave Members details of a suggestion that had been put forward for the Special Council meeting in Autumn 2007. Members were reminded that Council had agreed that one meeting a year would be designated as a Special Council meeting each Autumn.

The Committee discussed the proposed theme for the meeting which would focus on local produce, culture, music, environment entertainment and hospitality in the district. Members went on to discuss the format of the event, possible venues and the importance of community engagement.

Consideration was also given to the date of the Special Meeting and it was noted that utilising either of the scheduled meetings in September and October could impact on normal Council business.

Resolved :

- (1) That the Special Council Meeting take place on Wednesday 17th October 2007.
- (2) That the Head of Democratic Services be authorised to make appropriate arrangements for the 2007 Special Meeting on the lines set out in section 2 of the report, in consultation with the Chairman of the Committee and other Group Administrators as necessary.
- (3) That a progress report be submitted to Council Business Committee in September setting out further details of the proposed event and any financial implications.

7 EVALUATION OF INDUCTION PROGRAMME FOR NEWLY ELECTED AND RETURNING MEMBERS

(A summary of evaluations received was circulated).

Members considered a report of the Head of Democratic Services which detailed the comprehensive Induction Programme that had been implemented for both newly elected and returning Members following the elections in May and it was reported that this and any further information would be used to improve the Induction Programme in the future.

Resolved :

That the report be noted.

8 CHANGES TO MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES

Group Administrators were invited to put forward nominations for any changes to Committee Memberships.

The changes submitted by the Independent Group were accepted :

Resolved :

That the following changes to Committee appointments be made:

Standards Committee - Delete David Kerr, add Shirley Burns

Local Governance Committee - Delete Mike Greenall, add John Barnes

Lancashire Local - Lancaster District - Delete Bob Roe, add John Barnes

Licensing Regulatory Committee - Delete Roger Dennison, add Mike Greenall

Licensing Act Committee - Delete Mike Greenall, add Roger Dennison

Chairman

(The meeting ended at 5.40 p.m.)

**Any queries regarding these Minutes, please contact
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