

**COUNCIL BUSINESS  
COMMITTEE**

**6.00 P.M.**

**15TH SEPTEMBER 2011**

**PRESENT:-** Councillors Richard Newman-Thompson (Chairman), June Ashworth, Janet Hall, Sylvia Rogerson, Roger Sherlock and Emma Smith (Substitute for Roger Mace)

Apologies for Absence

Councillor Melanie Forrest and Roger Mace

Officers in  
attendance:-

Mark Davies	Head of Environmental Services (part)
Nadine Muschamp	Head of Financial Services (part)
Adrian Robinson	Head of Revenues and Benefits (part)
Peter Baines	Senior Democratic Support Officer
Jenny Kay	Democratic Support Officer

**8 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 30<sup>th</sup> June were signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

**9 ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS AUTHORISED BY THE CHAIRMAN**

The Chairman advised that he had agreed to one item of urgent business which was a request to make an amendment to the Membership of a Committee which would be meeting before the next meeting of the Business Committee.

**10 APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES AND CHANGES TO MEMBERSHIP**

The change submitted by the Green Group was accepted.

***Resolved :***

That the following nomination and change to membership of committees be accepted.

**Green Group**

Licensing Regulatory Committee

Add Tracey Kennedy to replace  
Chris Coates.  
Add Chris Coates as a substitute

**11 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest declared.

**12 CONSULTATION: RATIONALISATION OF HOUSEHOLD WASTE RECYCLING CENTRES**

Members were requested to consider a consultation that had been received from the County Council on the rationalisation of Household Waste Recycling Centres.

It was reported that the County Council had made the decision to rationalise their network of household waste recycling centres. The closures would reduce operating costs and make better use of the remaining facilities making the network more cost effective.

At this stage of the rationalisation, there were no plans to close either of the two recycling centres in the Lancaster district at Salt Ayre or Carnforth. It was however noted that there were plans to replace the two centres with a single facility in the future.

The Committee considered the draft response that had been prepared by officers which highlighted the proposed closure of the Garstang recycling centre which would potentially impact on the Salt Ayre facility. It also requested involvement in any decision to introduce a new facility within the district to replace Salt Ayre and Carnforth.

The Chairman advised that he had received an e-mail from Councillor Mace with some comments on the consultation that he would forward to Officers for inclusion in the Council's response.

***Resolved :***

- (1) That Council Business Committee agrees the response to the County Council consultation 'Rationalisation of Household Waste Recycling Centres.'
- (2) That Councillor Mace's comments on the consultation be forwarded to Officers for inclusion in the Council's response.

**13 CONSULTATION: LOCAL GOVERNMENT RESOURCE REVIEW**

The Head of Financial Services presented a report detailing a Government consultation on proposals to change aspects of business rates and the current national pooling arrangements, which was part of the Government Resources Review.

Members were advised that the Government intended to introduce business rates retention from April 2013 for local authorities as part of the 2010 Spending Review. The government would however retain the rate setting powers and the revaluation process would not change. It was reported that a system of tariffs and top ups would be introduced to address fairness.

The Committee was informed that a county wide response to the consultation was being prepared by Chief Finance Officers from around Lancashire.

Members discussed the proposals and asked a number of questions regarding the impact this could have on the Council.

**Resolved :**

- (1) That the Committee consider electronically the county wide response and determine electronically any additional City Council response to be submitted by the consultation deadline of 24<sup>th</sup> October 2011.
- (2) That the Head of Financial Services be authorised to finalise and submit any City Council response formulated in light of (1) above.

**14 CONSULTATION: LOCALISING SUPPORT FOR COUNCIL TAX IN ENGLAND**

The Committee considered a report detailing another consultation the Council had received from the Government. As part of its plans for welfare reform, it proposed to abolish Council Tax benefit and replace it with a new localised scheme which would be administered by local authorities.

It was reported that the Government aimed to give local authorities a greater stake in the economic future of their area but to ensure the most vulnerable in society especially pensioners were protected.

Members were advised that the key issues on the proposals were the introduction of the scheme in April 2013, the reduction by 10% of the current expenditure and supporting work incentives.

Concern was raised over the timescale to introduce such a scheme and the reduction of benefits for vulnerable people.

The Committee was informed that a county wide response to the consultation was being prepared by Chief Finance Officers from around Lancashire.

**Resolved :**

- (1) That the Committee consider electronically the final county wide response and determine electronically any additional City Council response to be submitted by the consultation deadline of 14<sup>th</sup> October 2011.
- (2) That the Head of Financial Services be authorised to finalise and submit any City Council response formulated in light of (1) above.

**15 REVIEW OF THE MEMBER DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY**

The Senior Democratic Support Officer presented a report which requested the Committee to adopt the amended Member Development Strategy for 2011/12.

Members were reminded that part of the role of the Committee was to champion Member Development. The Committee considered the Strategy each year and updated it in line with the Council's Corporate Plan and Priorities.

It was reported that this year's Corporate Plan placed an emphasis on community leadership and committed the Council to deliver a development programme which included the Community Leadership role of Councillors. It was suggested that this could be taken forward as a level 2 submission for the Member Development Charter. As well

as this priority there were 4 others set in the Corporate Plan for the forthcoming year.

Members were requested to consider how to take forward the Community Leadership role and how this could be developed. Several ideas were tabled which would be taken forward.

It was noted that attendance levels at recent development sessions were quite low considering the large number of new Councillors elected in May. Members of the Committee agreed to encourage Members of their groups to attend briefings and development sessions.

**Resolved :**

- (1) That Council Business Committee adopt the amended Member Development Strategy for 2011/12.
- (2) That Members of the Committee encourage Members of their groups to attend briefings and development sessions.

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Chairman

(The meeting ended at 7.15 p.m.)

**Any queries regarding these Minutes, please contact  
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or email [jkay@lancaster.gov.uk](mailto:jkay@lancaster.gov.uk)**