

**COUNCIL BUSINESS  
COMMITTEE**

**6.00 P.M.**

**16TH JANUARY 2014**

**PRESENT:** Councillors Paul Aitchison (Chairman), Roger Mace (Vice-Chairman), Janet Hall, Tim Hamilton-Cox (substitute for Melanie Forrest), Billy Hill, Geoff Knight and Vikki Price

Apologies for Absence  
Melanie Forrest

Officers in attendance:  
Debbie Chambers Democratic Services Manager  
Jennifer Milligan Consultation and Engagement Officer  
Peter Baines Senior Democratic Support Officer

**22 MINUTES**

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as a correct record.

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

The chairman authorised an item of urgent business, in connection with the announced closure of Skerton Community High School, and reported that the item would be taken after agenda item 5, Councillor Community Leadership Support Programme.

**24 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Hall declared an interest in the urgent business item, the nature of her interest being that she was a governor of Skerton Community High School (minute 26 refers).

**25 COUNCILLOR COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP SUPPORT PROGRAMME**

The Consultation and Engagement Officer introduced a progress report on the Councillor Community Leadership Support Programme, and the Community Leadership Conference planned for June 2014.

Having considered the Councillor Led Community Project Pilot, members noted that it required intensive officer support. Rather than offering that level of support to other councillors, it was agreed that key findings from the pilot should inform a pack, or document, for members' use.

With regard to the conference, councillors agreed that it should be held on either Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> June or Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> June, if at all possible, for the benefit of those councillors in full-time employment who would struggle to attend during the week. It was agreed that officers would check the viability of those dates with the proposed key-note speaker, and circulate potential dates to the committee by email.

***Resolved:***

- (1) That, due to the officer resource implications, the Councillor Led Community

Project Pilot should not be rolled out to other councillors; instead, that the Consultation and Engagement Officer be requested to produce a guidance pack for members to use when undertaking community leadership work;

- (2) That the Community Leadership Conference be held on either Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> or 28<sup>th</sup> June if possible. Officers would check the dates, and the prospect of a Saturday meeting in general, with the proposed key-note speaker. A proposed date would be circulated to committee members by email.
- (3) That the Community Leadership Conference be confirmed only on the condition that a minimum of 25 city councillors registered to attend.

## 26 SKERTON COMMUNITY HIGH SCHOOL CONSULTATION

The chairman introduced an item of urgent business, in connection with the announced closure of Skerton Community High School.

At the committee's last meeting, 12 September 2013, members received an urgent business report to consider Lancashire County Council's consultation on the possible closure of Skerton Community High School. A consultation response on behalf of the city council was agreed and submitted to the county council following the meeting.

On Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> January 2014, Lancashire County Council issued a public notice of closure, with effect from 31<sup>st</sup> August 2014, and the start of a six week period within which any person may object to or make comments on the proposals. The reason for urgency was to inform the committee of the new consultation period as soon as possible.

Following discussion, it was agreed that the council should submit a response to the consultation, making reference to the original letter of response and restating the key points. The chief consideration in the response would be the importance of children's welfare, both at Skerton Community High School and at other secondary schools in the district, which would receive re-located pupils.

### ***Resolved:***

- (1) That a response to Lancashire County Council's consultation on the notice to close Skerton Community High School be drafted by officers;
- (2) That the draft be circulated to all members and agreed with the Chairman, prior to being submitted to the county council before the deadline.

## 27 MEETINGS TIMETABLE 2014-15 (Page 6)

The committee considered the proposed timetable of meetings for 2014/15.

In the course of discussion, members agreed to continue with biennial Special Council meetings, targeting the 2014 meeting at perspective candidates for the 2015 local elections to Lancaster City Council. This would be similar to the "Would you like to be a Councillor" Special Council meeting held in October 2010.

The committee agreed that, wherever possible, Overview and Scrutiny Committee

(OSC) meetings should be synchronised with Cabinet meetings in order that additional meetings were not necessary in the event of a call-in. With this in mind, the ideal length of time between meetings of Cabinet and OSC was identified as two weeks and a day, and it was agreed to amend the 2014/15 timetable to reflect this where it did not require another meeting to be changed. In October and December 2014, where this was not possible, it was agreed to move the OSC meeting to one week and a day after Cabinet.

There was further agreement that OSC meetings would be scheduled two weeks and a day after Cabinet meetings on future timetables, from 2015/16 onwards.

**Resolved:**

- (1) That Special Council meetings be maintained on a biennial basis, with the aim for the September 2014 meeting being to provide information for perspective candidates for the 2015 City Council elections;
- (2) That the 2014/15 timetable be amended to re-arrange OSC meetings to follow two weeks and a day after Cabinet wherever possible. Where that was not possible, that OSC meetings be moved to follow Cabinet meetings by one week and a day. **(The revised timetable is appended to this minute)**;
- (3) That OSC meetings be scheduled to take place two weeks and a day after Cabinet meetings on future timetables, beginning with 2015/16;
- (4) That meetings of Annual Council be timetabled to begin at 6:30pm, as opposed to the current time of 6pm.

**28 SPEAKING AT PLANNING AND HIGHWAYS REGULATORY COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

*The chairman left the meeting during consideration of this item, and the vice-chairman (Councillor Mace) chaired the remainder of the meeting.*

The Democratic Services Manager introduced a report on procedure rules for the public participation scheme of Planning and Highways Regulatory Committee, and a proposed revision of the constitution regarding ward councillors speaking at meetings.

In discussion, some members expressed the view that three minutes gave insufficient time for public speakers at a Planning and Highways Regulatory Committee (PHRC) to put their points across, particularly in relation to a complicated application. It was suggested that a recommendation be forwarded for consideration at PHRC that ward members be allocated five minutes to speak, and members of the public four minutes.

Regarding the proposed revised wording of Council Procedure Rule 27.2, there was agreement that the reference to Licensing Regulatory Committee be removed, and an additional paragraph inserted regarding the procedure for that committee.

It was further agreed that the final sentence of Council Procedure Rule 27.2 should be amended to the following:

*Ward members wishing to speak to Planning and Highways Regulatory Committee must*

*register with Democratic Services before noon on the Thursday before the committee meets, and must indicate their position in relation to the application in order to be fair to the applicant.*

The reference to a maximum of three minutes being allocated to ward members who had registered to speak at the meeting would also be reviewed, depending on the outcome of the relevant discussion at Planning and Highways Regulatory Committee.

**Resolved:**

- (1) That a recommendation be forwarded to Planning and Highways Regulatory Committee that the time limit for public speaking be extended from three minutes to five in the case of ward members, and four in the case of members of the public;
- (2) That Council Procedure Rule 27.2 be amended to read as follows:

*Where the Planning and Highways Regulatory is considering an individual application, any member who represents the ward to which the application relates may address the relevant committee to express views in favour or against the application for a maximum of three minutes. Ward members wishing to speak to Planning and Highways Regulatory Committee must register with Democratic Services before noon on the Thursday before the committee meets, and must indicate their position in relation to the application in order to be fair to the applicant.*

And a new Council Procedure Rule 27.3 be inserted:

*The procedures for Ward Members wishing to speak at Licensing Regulatory Committee are set out in the rights of the public to speak at Licensing Regulatory Committee in Part 4, Section 8 of the Constitution.*

Reference to the three minute speaking limit would be reviewed in light of the decision of the Planning and Highways Regulatory Committee, in connection with (1) above.

- (3) That the guidance leaflet, *Participation at Planning and Highways Regulatory Committee*, be amended in line with the revised Council Procedure Rule 27.2 and circulated to the committee for comments.

## **29 MEMBER DEVELOPMENT CHARTER LEVEL 1**

The Democratic Services Manager introduced a report on the council's successful retention of the Member Development Charter, Level One.

It was noted that the awarding body, North West Employers, had made some recommendations for improvement and members were asked for their views on those suggestions.

In the course of discussion, it was suggested that member champions be encouraged to disseminate a greater amount of information about their subject areas, and suggest related topics for member development.

It was also agreed that the report should be referred to each political group on the council, for their views on how to continue the improvement of member development.

**Resolved:**

- (1) That this report be referred to all political groups on the council for comment, with a further report to a subsequent meeting with the findings;
- (2) That officers be requested to arrange training sessions on the Lancaster City Council Constitution, focussing on delegated powers and the remit and scope of the various committees.

**30 APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES AND CHANGES TO MEMBERSHIP**

There were no appointments to committees or changes of membership.

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Chairman

(The meeting ended at 7:30pm)

**Any queries regarding these Minutes, please contact  
Peter Baines, Democratic Services - 01524 582074 or email [pbaines@lancaster.gov.uk](mailto:pbaines@lancaster.gov.uk)**

## TIMETABLE 2014/2015

2015

2014

	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May
Mon					1			1 Planning Site Visit					
Tue			1		2 Cabinet LTH			2 Cabinet MTH					
Wed			2 JCC Personnel		3	1		3			1		
Thur	1		3 Member Briefing		4 Licensing Reg Member Briefing	2 Member Briefing		4 Licensing Act	1 Bank Holiday		2		
Fri	2		4	1	5	3		5	2		3 Bank Holiday		1
Sat	3	1	5	2	6	4	1	6	3	2 Planning	4	1	2
Sun	4	2	6	3	7	5	2	7	4	3 JCC Personnel	5	2	3
Mon	5 Bank Holiday	2	7	4	8 Planning Site Visit	6 Planning Site Visit	3 Planning Site Visit	8 Planning	5 Planning	2 Planning	2 Planning	6 Bank Holiday	4 Bank Holiday
Tue	6 Planning	3	8	5	9 Budget and Performance Panel	7 Cabinet MTH	4 Cabinet LTH	9	6	3 JCC Personnel	3	7 Planning	5 Planning
Wed	7	4	9 Overview and Scrutiny Committee	6	10 Overview and Scrutiny Committee	8	5	10 Overview & Scrutiny Committee	7	4 Council	4 Budget Council	8 Overview and Scrutiny Committee	6
Thur	8	5 Licensing Reg Member Briefing	10	7	11	9	6 Council Business Committee	11	8 Licensing Reg	5 Member Briefing	5 Member Briefing	9	7 ELECTION
Fri	9 Annual Council	6	11	8	12	10	7	12	9	6	6	10	8
Sat	10	7	12	9	13	11	8	13	10	7	7	11	9
Sun	11	8	13	10	14	12	9	14	11	8	8	12	10
Mon	12 Business Council	9	14 Planning Site Visit	11 Planning Site Visit	15 Planning	13 Planning	10 Planning	15	12	9	9	13	11
Tue	13	10	15	12	16	14	11 Budget & Performance Panel	16	13	10	10	14	12
Wed	14	11 Overview & Scrutiny Committee	16 Council	13	17 Audit	15 Overview and Scrutiny Committee	12	17 Council	14	11	11	15 Council	13
Thur	15	12 Standards	17 Licensing Reg	14	18	16 Licensing Reg	13 Member Briefing Licensing Reg	18	15 Member Briefing	12 Licensing Reg	12 Council Business Committee	16	14
Fri	16	13	18	15	19	17	14	19	16	13	13	17	15
Sat	17	14	19	16	20	18	15	20	17	14	14	18	16
Sun	18	15	20	17	21	19	16	21	18	15	15	19	17
Mon	19 Planning Site Visit	16 Planning Site Visit	21 Planning	18 Planning	22	20	17	22	19	16	16	20	18
Tue	20	17	22 Budget and Performance Panel	19	23	21	18	23	20 Cabinet LTH	17 Cabinet MTH	17	21	19
Wed	21	18 Audit	23	20	24 Special Council	22 Council	19 Overview & Scrutiny Committee	24	21 Audit	18	18	22	20
Thur	22 ELECTION	19	24	21	25	23	20	25 Bank Holiday	22 Standards	19	19	23	21
Fri	23	20	25	22	26	24	21	26 Bank Holiday	23	20	20	24	22 Annual Council
Sat	24	21	26	23	27	25	22	27	24	21	21	25	23
Sun	25	22	27	24	28	26	23	28	25	22	22	26	24
Mon	26 Bank Holiday	23 Planning	28	25 Bank Holiday	29	27	24	29 Planning Site Visit	26 Planning Site Visit	23 Planning Site Visit	23	27 Planning Site Visit	25 Bank Holiday
Tue	27 Cabinet MTH	24 Cabinet LTH	29 Cabinet MTH	26	30	28	25	30	27 Budget & Perf Panel - MTH	24 Budget and Performance Panel	24 Cabinet LTH	28	26 Business Council
Wed	28 Planning	25	30	27		29	26	31	28 Overview and Scrutiny Committee	25 Overview and Scrutiny Committee	25	29	27
Thur	29 Licensing Act	26 Council Bus Com	31	28		30	27		29	26	26 Licensing Reg	30	28
Fri	30	27		29		31	28		30	27	27		29
Sat	31	28		30			29		31	28			30
Sun		29		31			30			29			31
Mon		30									30 Planning Site Visit		
Tue											31		