

Minutes of: THE COUNCIL OF THE METROPOLITAN BOROUGH OF BURY

Date of Meeting: 14 December 2005

Present: The Worshipful the Mayor (Councillor S J Treadgold) in the Chair;
Councillors K Audin, R A Bibby, D B Bigg, D Boden, E B Briggs, K S Briggs, R C A Brown, J Byrne, G Campbell, L E Campbell, W A Campbell, D M Cassidy, T P Chamberlain, S Cohen, M Connolly, J P Costello, S Costello, Y Creswell, A J Cummings, V D D'Albert, W J Davison, W Flood, A J Garner, A S Garner, I B Gartside, M A Gibb, E K Grime, J Grimshaw, D L Gunther, D M Higgin, T Holt, K Hussain, A Isherwood, S P Magnall, A K Matthews, R H J Nuttall, S R Perkins, T D Pickstone, H Redstone, K Rothwell, G Sharkey, J Smith, S J Southworth, J W H Taylor, B Theckston, B Vincent, R E Walker, J F Walton, M J Wiseman and Y S Wright

Apologies for absence: -

Public attendance: Approximately 45 members of the public attended the meeting.

C.835 THE LEADERS' COMMEMORATIVE PLAQUE – UNVEILING CEREMONY

The Worshipful the Mayor reported that a Plaque commemorating the service of Leaders of the Council had been placed permanently in the Chamber. The Mayor welcomed former Councillors Albert Little OBE, Brian Makin, Colin Jones and Laurie Bullas who had all been Leaders of the Council since 1974, together with Councillors Derek Boden, John Byrne and the current Leader, Councillor Wayne Campbell, and invited Mr Little to unveil the Commemorative Plaque.

On behalf of the Council and the residents of the Borough, the Mayor placed on record his appreciation for their loyal service and dedication to the affairs of the Borough.

Councillor W A Campbell responded on behalf of the Council and thanked Mr Little for unveiling the Plaque.

C.836 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- (a) Councillor Connolly declared a personal interest in Minute EX.817 of the Executive held on 30 November 2005 (Children's Services – Fairfield Hospital) and in the Notice of Motion (Minute C.842 below) as the Chair of the Caring for Bury Project Group.
- (b) Councillor Gartside declared a personal interest in any matter relating to the strategic review of secondary provision as a Governor of Tottington High School.

- (c) Councillor Pickstone declared a prejudicial interest in Minute EX.817 of the Executive held on 30 November 2005 (Children's Services – Fairfield Hospital) and in the Notice of Motion (Minute C.842 below), as a Non-Executive Director of the Trust which provides Children's Services.
- (d) Councillor Gibb declared a prejudicial interest in Minute EX.817 of the Executive held on 30 November 2005 (Children's Services – Fairfield Hospital) and in the Notice of Motion (Minute C.842 below), as an employee of the National Health Services.
- (e) The Mayor, Councillor Treadgold declared a personal interest in Minute EX.817 of the Executive held on 30 November 2005 (Children's Services – Fairfield Hospital) and in the Notice of Motion (Minute C.842 below) as Chair of Baby Lifeline and an employee of the Primary Care Trust.
- (f) Councillor Byrne declared a prejudicial interest in Minute EX.817 of the Executive held on 30 November 2005 (Children's Services – Fairfield Hospital) and in the Notice of Motion (Minute C.842 below).

C.837 MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting of Council held on 2 November 2005 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

C.838 MAYORAL COMMUNICATIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Worshipful the Mayor wished all Councillors, Officers and residents of the Borough a Happy Christmas with every good wish for the New Year 2006.

C.839 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

- a) The following issues were raised in relation to the ongoing strategic review of secondary educational provision by members of the public to which responses were given by Councillor Gibb.
 - The effects on local County high schools of increases in the intake-limits of high schools in the Voluntary Aided Sector. (Written response promised.)
 - Representation of the Voluntary Aided Sector with voting rights on the School Organisation Committee which will consider the final proposals. (Written response promised.)
 - Several of the affected schools are currently oversubscribed.
 - An allegation that the forecasts of future pupil numbers were inaccurate.
 - The use of land at Philips High School.
 - The time lost to the consultation period by the Christmas/New Year holiday.
 - Possible disruption to the education of pupils particularly those completing their GCSEs in 2007.
 - The responses to the review by the Governors' Forum and Secondary School Headteachers.

- The effect of the consultations which will create rivalries between affected schools.
- Involvement of affected pupils in the consultation through School Councils.
- Forecasts of new house building in the Borough which would affect the demand for school places.
- Sales of land surplus to educational needs. The Leader gave a commitment that proceeds from sales of educational land would be retained within the Education Service.
- Several requests for an extension of the consultation period were submitted from members of the public. Councillor Gibb responded by stating that the need for further time for consultations could only be assessed at the expiry of the specified Phase 2 deadline of 6 January 2006.
- A request for representations to be made to the Government to provide the necessary funding to enable all of the affected high schools to continue to operate at their current levels.

In response, Councillor Gibb reported on the extensive lobbying of the Government for additional funding for the Education Service and reiterated that with falling secondary pupil numbers in the future, the secondary schools would become unsustainable. Councillor Gibb was concerned that the high educational standards within the Authority were maintained.

Several Councillors and members of the public expressed the view that educational staff morale must be maintained for the benefit of pupils' educational attainments.

The Mayor, in thanking those members of the public who had spoken for their contribution, accepted a petition containing approximately 2,000 signatures in opposition to the proposals set out in the Consultation Paper.

C.840 RECOMMENDATION OF THE EXECUTIVE

Minute EX.817 of the Executive held on 30 November 2005 - Children's Services – Fairfield Hospital

It was moved by Councillor W A Campbell, seconded by Councillor Connolly and endorsed by Councillors Bibby and Davison.

The Mayor accepted a petition from Dr Hany, Chair of Bury Fairfield Lifeline, addressed to the Prime Minister requesting a review of proposals for the reconfiguration of Children's Services at Fairfield Hospital.

RESOLVED:

That the recommendations contained in Minute EX.817 relating to the proposals of the Strategic Health Authority to reconfigure services provided at Fairfield Hospital, be approved and adopted.

C.841 LEADER'S STATEMENT AND EXECUTIVE QUESTION TIME

The Leader of the Council made a statement on the work of the Executive.

The Leader and the relevant Executive Members answered questions raised by Members of the Council on the following issues:

a) Written Questions (Notice given)

No	Issue	Questioner	Answered by (and Action)
1	Strategic Review of Secondary School Provision	Councillors Davison, D'Albert, A S Garner, Pickstone and Walker	Councillor Gibb
2	Reclamation of land at Pilsworth	Councillor A J Garner	Councillor Byrne
3	Emergency Planning Provision	Councillor A J Garner	Councillor Connolly
4	Forecast Budget Position 2005/2006 Financial Year	Councillor Pickstone	Councillor Connolly
5	Teenage Pregnancy Initiative	Councillor Walker	Councillor Chamberlain
6	Start time for meetings	Councillor Gunther	Councillor W A Campbell

b) Oral Questions (submitted at the meeting without notice)

7	Review of the Race Equality Scheme	Councillor Cohen	Councillor W A Campbell
8	Possibility of introducing a Local Congestion Charge	Councillor Davison	Councillor Byrne
9	Local Government Financial Settlement 2006/2007	Councillor Redstone	Councillor Connolly

C.842 NOTICE OF MOTION

It was moved by Councillor Wiseman and seconded by Councillor Creswell that the following Notice of Motion which had been received in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 12, be approved:-

'In view of the front page headlines in the Bury Times (24 November 2005) claiming that the Baby Unit, Children's in-patient, ante-natal and maternity services at Fairfield Hospital face closure, that the Council of the Metropolitan Borough of Bury:-

- 1) Expresses its grave concern that the views of 40,000 local residents calling for the retention of these facilities, as expressed in petitions, public meetings and a march through Bury Town Centre, have been totally ignored.
- 2) Takes all necessary actions, including the lobbying of appropriate Government Departments and responsible Local Health Authorities, to save and retain these Critical Services along with all other services expected from and as at present provided by this major hospital.

- 3) Demands Local MP's and MEP's confirm their unqualified support for the continued operation of all services of Fairfield Hospital in Bury and the retention of all its critical facilities.
- 4) Actively encourage residents and friends of Bury Fairfield Hospital to take up the invitation of the 'Bury Times' to express their views on these proposals with a view to mounting a Public Campaign to preserve these vital and life saving services for patients from Bury and its surrounding area".

In the names of Councillors R A Bibby, J W H Taylor, M J Wiseman and Y Creswell.

RESOLVED:

That the Notice of Motion as set out above, be approved and adopted.
(Councillor Byrne requested that his abstention from the vote on this Motion be recorded.)

C.843 SCRUTINY REVIEW REPORTS AND SPECIFIC ITEMS 'CALLED IN' BY SCRUTINY PANELS AND COMMISSIONS

There were no scrutiny review reports or specific items 'called-in' by Scrutiny Panels/Commissions to be considered at this Council meeting.

C.844 QUESTIONS ON THE FUNCTIONS OF THE JOINT AUTHORITIES

There were no written questions submitted in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 11.2 relating to the functions of Joint Authorities:-

C.845 QUESTIONS ON THE WORK OF OUTSIDE BODIES OR PARTNERSHIPS

There were no written questions on the work of outside bodies or partnerships on which the Council is represented submitted in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 11.2

C.846 DELEGATED DECISIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE AND COUNCIL COMMITTEES

There were no questions asked on the delegated decisions of the Executive and Council Committees contained in the Digests of Decisions 7 and 8 (2005/2006) published since the last ordinary meeting of the Council.

THE WORSHIPFUL THE MAYOR

(Note: The meeting started at 7.00 pm and ended at 9.29 pm)