

Minutes of: THE COUNCIL OF THE METROPOLITAN BOROUGH OF BURY

Date of Meeting: 31 October 2007

Present: The Worshipful the Mayor (Councillor F A Chaudhry) in the Chair;
Councillors D M Ashworth, P Ashworth, K Audin, L E Baucutt, R L Baum, C A Berry, R A Bibby, D B Bigg, D Boden, K S Briggs, R C A Brown, J Byrne, W A Campbell, D M Cassidy, T P Chamberlain, S Cohen, M Connolly, S Costello, Y Creswell, A J Cummings, V D D'Albert, W J Davison, A J Garner, A S Garner, I B Gartside, M A Gibb, J Grimshaw, D L Gunther, M Hankey, D M Higgin, T Holt, A Isherwood, S P Magnall, A K Matthews, D O'Hanlon, S P Penketh, T D Pickstone, P H Redstone, K Rothwell, J Smith, S J Southworth, B J Sullivan, J W H Taylor, B Theckston, B Vincent, R E Walker, M J Wiseman, S D Wright and Y S Wright

Apologies for absence: Councillor J F Walton,

Public attendance: 20 members of the public attended the meeting.

C.400 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

- (a) Councillor Holt declared a personal interest in Motion (B) relating to the proposed closures of Post Offices across the Country as an employee of Royal Mail (Minute C.407 below).
- (b) Councillor Penketh declared a personal and prejudicial interest in that part of the report of the Independent Remuneration Panel relating to the Special Responsibility Allowance payable to this Council's representative on the Greater Manchester Waste Disposal Authority, as an employee of Consultants acting in the negotiation of contract terms on behalf of that Authority. Councillor Penketh left the Chamber for the entire debate on that item. (Minute C.409)

C.401 MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 5 September 2007 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

In response to a question from Councillor Connolly in relation to Minute C.228(2), Councillor A J Garner, the Council's representative on the Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Authority, undertook to inform Councillor Connolly on current progress of the upgrading of the Metrolink system and the outcomes from a recent transport seminar.

C.402 MAYORAL COMMUNICATIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Worshipful the Mayor informed the Council of the Borough's success in the North West in Bloom Competition.

For the fourth consecutive year, the Council had been awarded First Place in the Large Town Category. Additionally, the Council had been awarded the Best Environmental Quality Award in the Discretionary Awards Ceremony.

The Mayor also congratulated Councillor Berry for her success in the 'I'm a Councillor – Get Me Out of Here' contest. The contest had been arranged by local High Schools to promote Local Democracy and the candidates asked questions and were voted for by local pupils. As the contest winner, Councillor Berry will be the Spokesperson for Young People and Youth Issues for 2007/2008.

The Mayor presented Councillor Berry with a framed certificate to recognise her achievement and thanked all other Councillors who took part in the contest.

C.403 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

1. Mr G Berg on behalf of Manchester Against Road Tolls had given advance written notice of this question:

"Is Bury Council entirely happy with Greater Manchester's Councils and their transport authority spending nearly ten million pounds instead of the government granted three and a bit million pounds on submitting a draft bid that includes congestion charging to the government's Transport Innovation Fund and if not in what ways has Bury expressed any dissatisfaction it has over this matter?"

The Mayor allowed Mr Berg to ask a supplementary question on the plans to enforce financial control and accuracy of the estimates used to calculate the Congestion Charge.

The question was answered by Councillor Bibby.

2. Lynn Leyland–Mather of Bury Friends of the Earth, asked what action the Council was taking to increase the level of local produce.

The Leader reported that Ms Leyland –Mather had written to him separately and that a reply was being prepared to detail the Council's action.

3. Leslie O'Shea of Bury Friends of the Earth, asked for information on the number of people on the waiting lists for and the level of usage of the Council's Allotments.

The Leader was in the process of replying to a separate enquiry from Mr O'Shea.

4. Robert Largan asked for the Council's support for the British Legion Poppy Appeal.

The Leader reminded the Council of its unreserved support for the Appeal in the past and pledged continued support in the future. Most of the Councillors in the Chamber were wearing poppies.

C.404 RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE AND COUNCIL COMMITTEES

- (a) Minute EX.264 of the meeting of the Executive held on 12 September 2007 – Delegations to the Licensing and Safety Panel: Houses in Multiple Occupation.**

It was moved by Councillor Bibby and seconded by Councillor Creswell that the recommendations be approved.

On being put with no member voting against, it was

RESOLVED:

That the recommendations contained in Minute EX.264 be approved and adopted.

- (b) Minute EX.365 of the meeting of the Executive held on 17 October 2007 – The Youth Justice Plan 2007/2008.**

It was moved by Councillor Bibby and seconded by Councillor Creswell that the recommendations be approved.

On being put with no member voting against, it was

RESOLVED:

That the recommendations contained in Minute EX.365, be approved and adopted.

C.405 LEADER’S STATEMENT AND EXECUTIVE QUESTION TIME

The Leader of the Council, Councillor R A Bibby, made a statement on the work of the Executive since the date of the last Council meeting.

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

- (a) Written Questions (Notice Given)**

No	Issue	Questioner	Answered by (and action)
1.	1. Involvement of District Auditors in the proposals for Radcliffe Riverside School. 2. The timespan for planning the building of this new school.	Councillor Pickstone	Councillor D A Ashworth

No	Issue	Questioner	Answered by (and action)
2.	1. Operational date for the opening of Radcliffe Riverside School. 2. Consultations on future amended proposals for the school.	Councillor Cummings	Councillor D M Ashworth
3.	1. Request for the replacement of the Mini-roundabout with traffic signals at Ringley Road/Stand Lane, Whitefield . 2. Criteria for providing traffic signals	Councillor Boden	Councillor Gunther
4.	1. Value for Money from the split Cycle and Offset Optimisation Technique (SCOOT – Traffic Signals) 2. Flaws in the system.	Councillor O’Hanlon	Councillor Gunther
5.	1. The proportion of recycled materials which is deposited in landfill sites because of contamination. 2. Processing of contaminated recycled materials.	Councillor D’Albert	Councillor Gunther
6.	1. Collection of commercial waste for recycling. 2. Review of the Trade Refuse Collection Service	Councillor S D Wright	Councillor Gunther
7.	1. Referrals to the Bury Independent Advice Service from other agencies. 2. Further discussions on the Service’s future operation.	Councillor D Boden	Councillor Creswell
8.	Surplus balances on School Budgets	Councillor D’Albert	Councillor D M Ashworth

No	Issue	Questioner	Answered by (and action)
9.	<p>1. Council initiative to erect gates in alleyways in residential areas to prevent unauthorised access.</p> <p>2. Enabling local residents to erect gates where they are prepared to fund the cost.</p>	Councillor Pickstone	Councillor Wiseman (To report back during 2007/2008 on pilot projects)
10.	<p>1. The personal safety of young people – Briefing by Community Safety Partnership to all pupils and students.</p> <p>2. Encouragement of all schools to take up these safety initiatives.</p>	Councillor A S Garner	Councillor Wiseman
11.	Proposals of East Lancashire Railway for a Heritage Centre at Buckley Wells, Bury	Councillor Southworth	Councillor Sullivan
12.	<p>1. Estimates of the numbers of homeless people and empty properties in the Borough.</p> <p>2. Government funding to reduce the number of empty properties.</p>	Councillor Davison	Councillor Gartside

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

No	Issue	Questioner	Answered by (and action)
13.	<p>1. Authorisation of the consultations on the new Radcliffe Riverside School.</p> <p>2. Inclusion of “educational attainment” in the consultations</p>	Councillor Campbell	Councillor Bibby (to report to the Executive on the outcome of the consultations)
14.	Intention to bid for Government funding for shortbreaks for children with disabilities.	Councillor Gibb	Councillor D M Ashworth

No	Issue	Questioner	Answered by (and action)
15.	1. Funding of voluntary organisations by the Council – Independent review of the policy. 2. Need transparency in approving grants	Councillor Walker	Councillor Creswell
16.	1. Sale of Council – owned land at Bradley Fold. 2. Response to his open letter to the Bury Times.	Councillor Byrne	Councillors Bibby and Wiseman (to meet with Councillor Byrne)
17.	Licensing of Hackney Carriages – suggestion from the Trade Association to establish a sub group of the Licensing and Safety Panel.	Councillor Redstone	Councillor Brown

C.406 SCRUTINY REVIEW REPORTS AND SPECIFIC ITEMS “CALLED IN” BY SCRUTINY COMMISSIONS

There were no Scrutiny Review Reports or specific items ‘called-in’ by Scrutiny Commissions to be considered at this Council meeting.

C.407 NOTICES OF MOTION

Two Notices of Motion had been received in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 12.

- (i) It was moved by Councillor Byrne and seconded by Councillor Boden that the following Motion be approved:-

(A) Introduction of National Concessionary Bus Travel for Children and Young People

“This Council congratulates the Government for introducing free off-peak bus travel for over 60s and disabled people in England. We are also delighted that GMPTA and AGMA have agreed to extend this provision in Greater Manchester to trams and trains.

We now call on the Government to give support to families by examining the possibility of introducing a national concessionary bus travel scheme for children and young people in full-time education.

We are asking that 3 options are considered:-

- I. The introduction of a standard 50p bus fare across England
- II. The long-term objective of free bus fares in England

III. The extension of the 'Yellow Bus Scheme' to all secondary schools"

In the names of Councillors Boden, Byrne, Campbell and Connolly.

Councillor Byrne, as the mover of the Motion, sought the permission of the Council under Procedure Rule 14.7, to alter the Motion by the addition of the word "initially" in the first of the 3 options in the motion which would now read;

"1. Initially the introduction of a standard 50p bus fare across England."

- (ii) An amendment was moved by Councillor Baum and seconded by Councillor A J Garner by way of the substitution of the following Motion:-

"This Council congratulates the Government for introducing free off-peak bus travel for the over 60s and disabled people in England. We are also delighted that GMPTA and AGMA have agreed to extend this provision in Greater Manchester to trams and trains.

We now call on the Government to give support to families by introducing a national concessionary bus travel scheme for children and young people in full-time education.

We are seeking that 2 options are considered:-

1. The introduction of FREE bus fares in England
2. The extension of the "Yellow Bus Scheme" to all secondary schools."

On being put, 49 Members voted for, none against with one abstention, the amendment was declared carried.

- (iii) A further amendment was moved by Councillor Brown and seconded by Councillor Bibby by way of the insertion of the following additional paragraph immediately after the paragraph ending with the words "full-time education":-

"We call upon the Government to so finance the proposed national concessionary bus travel scheme that the cost of subsidising the proposal does not fall upon local authorities such as Bury MBC, nor upon other users of public transport."

On being put, 49 Members voted for, none against with one abstention, the amendment was declared carried.

The substantive Motion on being put, 49 Members voted for, none against and with the Mayor abstaining, was declared carried and it was:-

RESOLVED:

That the Motion as amended at (iii) above be approved and adopted

(B) Post Office Closures

It was moved by Councillor D'Albert and seconded by Councillor O'Hanlon that the following Motion be approved:-

"This Council notes with concern the announcement by the Labour Government on 17 May 2007 to close 2,500 more Post Office branches across the country. This will equate to the closure of nearly one in five of the remaining Post Offices in the network.

The impact on Bury could be the loss of 6 more Post Offices, in addition to the 16 branches that have been lost since 1999.

This Council further notes the social importance of Post Offices to the well being of both individuals and communities in the Borough.

This Council believes that the latest closure programme is unnecessary and

1. Calls on the government to:
 - a) Halt the Post Office branch closure programme
 - b) Stop removing Government business from Post Offices
 - c) Carry out a review of which additional Government functions could be carried out through Post Offices;
2. Resolves that the Leader of the Council should write to Government to make clear the views of this Authority.
3. Calls on our local MPs to lobby the Government to save the Post Office from gradual demolition and to protect this vital service for local people."

In the names of Councillors Baum, D'Albert, Davison, A J Garner, A S Garner, O'Hanlon, Pickstone and S J Wright.

The Motion on being put, 49 Members voted for, none against with the Mayor abstaining and it was:-

RESOLVED:

That the Motion be approved and adopted.

C.408 REVIEW OF POLLING ARRANGEMENTS

Consideration was given to a report by the Returning Officer reviewing the arrangements by which electors cast their votes.

It was moved by Councillor Bibby and seconded by Councillor Creswell that the recommendations in the report be approved.

On being put with none voting against, it was:-

RESOLVED:

That the recommendations set out in the report by the Returning Officer be approved and adopted.

C.409 REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL – MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES

The Council received the report of the Independent Remuneration Panel which had made recommendations in respect of:

- (i) the Allowance paid to the Council's representatives on the Greater Manchester Waste Disposal Authority and
- (ii) Mayoral Allowances.

It was moved by Councillor Bibby and seconded by Councillor Creswell that the recommendations set out in the report, be approved.

On being put with none voting against it was:-

RESOLVED:

That the recommendations in the report be approved and adopted.

C.410 JOINT AUTHORITIES – REPORTS BY THE COUNCIL'S REPRESENTATIVES AND QUESTIONS

- (a) Councillor Walker, the Council's representative on the Greater Manchester Police Authority, gave an oral report on the work of that Joint Authority.
- (b) There were no written questions submitted in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 11.2.

C.411 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.412 DELEGATED DECISIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE AND COUNCIL COMMITTEES

There were no questions asked on the delegated decisions of the Executive, Committees or Scrutiny Commissions contained in the Digests of Decisions 4 and 5 (2007/2008).

THE WORSHIPFUL THE MAYOR

(NOTE: The meeting started at 7.00 pm and ended at 9.50 pm).