

Minutes of: THE COUNCIL OF THE METROPOLITAN BOROUGH OF BURY

Date of Meeting: 25 June 2008

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

Apologies for absence: Councillors K S Briggs, W A Campbell and A J Cummings

Public attendance: 6 members of the public attended the meeting

C.101 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- (a) Councillor Rothwell declared a personal interest in Minute C.109 below (Notice of Motion) as a member of the National Federation of the Blind which is opposed to the closure of Post Offices.
- (b) Councillor Holt declared a personal interest in Minute C.109 below (Notice of Motion) as an employee of Royal Mail.
- (c) Councillor Cassidy declared a personal interest in Minute C.109 below (Notice of Motion) as a member of an organisation which is opposed to the closure of Post Offices.

C.102 ORDER OF BUSINESS

Prior to the commencement of the formal business of the Council, the Worshipful the Mayor requested that, in accordance with paragraph 13(c) of the Council Procedure Rules, the order of business to the agenda be changed so that Item 8 (Questions at Meetings) be considered prior to Item 7 (Notice of Motion). The proposed alteration was to enable the Leader, Councillor Bibby to participate in the debate on Item 8 prior to leaving the meeting to visit a relative in hospital currently.

On being put, with no Member voting against, the order of business was changed.

C.103 MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 14 May 2008 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

C.104 MAYORAL COMMUNICATIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor reported that Lieutenant Colonel Eric Davidson, Ms Zahida Fazaley, Dr Kumar Kotegaonkar, Mr John Crawford, Ms Victoria Wood and Mr Tyndale Thomas had all been included in the Queen's Birthday Honours List. Mr Barry Dixon, County Fire Officer and Chief Executive of the Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Authority had been appointed Deputy Lieutenant of Greater Manchester in an earlier Honours List.

All are residents or have associations with this Borough and their recognition by the Queen was most fitting and well deserved.

The congratulations and good wishes of the Council and the Borough had been sent to all those honoured.

C.105 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Mrs A Audin asked the Leader when the fifteen-minute free parking initiative would be implemented; whether existing charges would be reviewed; how the initiative would be monitored; and whether the loss of income to the Council had been budgeted.

The Leader and Councillor Redstone reported jointly on the terms of this initiative and the anticipated benefits to the community and its businesses.

C.106 RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE AND COUNCIL COMMITTEES

**(a) Minute EX.29 of the meeting of the Executive held on 21 May 2008 –
Future Governance of the Association of Greater Manchester Authorities**

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

On being put, with no Member voting against and with 10 abstentions, it was

RESOLVED:

That the recommendations contained in Minute EX.29 be approved and adopted.

**(b) Minute EX.75 of the meeting of the Executive held on 11 June 2008 – Risk
Management Annual Report 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 and with the Mayor abstaining, it was

RESOLVED:

That the recommendations contained in Minute EX.75 be approved and adopted.

C.107 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 Councillors on the following issues:-

(a) Written Questions (Notice Given)

No	Issue	Questioner	Answered by (and action)
1.	1. Estate Committees established by Six Town Housing 2. Pilot project re Council house garden fencing	Councillor Boden	Councillor Gartside
2.	Condition of public toilets at Bury Interchange	Councillor Boden	Councillor Gunther Councillor Bibby
3.	1. Removal of bulky domestic refuse 2. Future service improvements	Councillor Boden	Councillor Gunther
4.	Use of Information Technology at meetings	Councillor Holt	Councillor Redstone
5.	Traffic congestion at Primrose Drive, Bury	Councillor Holt	Councillor Gunther (Officers to investigate and report back)
6.	1. Greater Manchester Transport Innovation Fund Bid 2. Proposed outer-charging ring 3. Effects of Congestion Charging on Simister Village 4. Technical Options to exempt certain journeys from the Charge	Councillor Pickstone	Councillor Gunther (To examine possible options in relation to Congestion Charging and report back to Councillor Pickstone)
7.	1. Removal of offensive graffiti. 2. Review of the Council's Policy to remove graffiti – Pending Review	Councillor Pickstone	Councillor Gunther

No	Issue	Questioner	Answered by (and action)
8.	1. Condition of the roads and pavements in the Borough 2. Budgetary provision for highway repairs	Councillor M D'Albert	Councillor Gunther
9.	1. Use of Bio-fuels for Council vehicles 2. Independent research on sustainability of Bio-fuels.	Councillor Baum	Councillor Gunther
10.	1. The provisions of the Sustainable Communities Act 2007. 2. Implementation Statement – involvement of all parties	Councillor V D'Albert	Councillor Creswell
11.	1. Initiatives to tackle binge-drinking 2. Initiatives developed by other authorities	Councillor S Wright	Councillor Gunther
12.	1. Regeneration of the various Town Centres in the Borough 2. Position relating to the Radcliffe SUN Quarter Development	Councillor O'Hanlon	Councillor Gunther (To brief all Councillors on the SUN Quarter Development)
13.	1. Condition of the roads at the junction of Bury Old Road, Sheepfoot Lane and Scholes Lane, Prestwich. 2. Operation of the Pelican crossing at the junction	Councillor A J Garner	Councillor Gunther

(b) Oral Questions (Without Notice)

No	Issue	Questioner	Answered by (and action)
14.	Suggested Referendum across Greater Manchester on the proposed Congestion Charge	Councillor Isherwood	Councillor Bibby

No	Issue	Questioner	Answered by (and action)
15.	Public notice of times and dates of street cleansing regime in Prestwich (Minute C.854(a)(6))	Councillor O'Hanlon	Councillor Gunther (Referral to E,E&T Scrutiny Commission)
16.	Creation of the new Portfolio of Human Resource and Performance	Councillor Connolly	Councillor Bibby (Review of all Portfolios being undertaken)
17.	Provision by the Dog Warden Service of bags for the disposal of dog excrement	Councillor Costello	Councillor Bibby (Written response to Councillor Costello)
18.	Provision in the Revenue Budget 2008/2009 for the employee pay award	Councillor Connolly	Councillor Redstone

In an exchange of comments, Councillor Connolly requested that his objection to Councillor Redstone's raised voice during the debate be recorded in the Minutes. Councillor Redstone requested that his objection to Councillor Connolly's interruption of his reply to question 18 above, be also recorded in the Minutes.

C.108 QUESTIONS AT MEETINGS

Further to Minute C.08 of the last meeting of the Council held on 14 May 2008, consideration was given to a report by the Leader of the Council reviewing the provisions of the Council Constitution in respect of questions asked by Councillors and members of the public at meetings. The Democratic Arrangements Forum had met on 9 June 2008 to discuss the proposals and a copy of the Minutes of that meeting was attached to the report.

It was moved by Councillor Bibby and seconded by Councillor Creswell that the following proposals be approved:-

"1. Public Questions at Meetings

- (a) Public questions for Council be submitted in writing to the Head of Paid Service (Chief Executive) four clear working days prior to the meeting. No supplementary questions to be asked.
- (b) Public questions for the Executive to be allowed at the discretion of the Chairman.
- (c) Public involvement at Scrutiny Commissions, Licensing and Safety Panel, Standards Committee and Planning Control Committee remain the same.

2. Questions by Members

- (a) All questions asked at Council by Members be received in writing by the Head of Paid Service (Chief Executive) four clear working days prior to the meeting, with one supplementary question arising out of the same issue allowed at the discretion of the Mayor.
- (b) It is also proposed that any one Member may ask up to two written questions on different subjects at Council meetings. There will be a 30 minute time limit on this part of the Council proceedings.
- (c) Verbal questions on the work of the Executive at Council meetings, to be in addition to written questions, but limited to one per Councillor, subject to the discretion of the Mayor, and to be limited in total to 20 minutes.

Questions at the Executive relating to items on the agenda may be submitted by a Ward Councillor provided the question relates specifically to his/her Ward. The question should be submitted to the Head of Paid Service (Chief Executive) three working days prior to the Executive meeting. One supplementary question may be asked.

3. Urgent Items of Business

Questions by Members on urgent items of business may be allowed at the discretion of the Chair.

- 4. That the Council Constitution be amended as necessary to implement these proposals.
- 5. That a review of the effectiveness of these new arrangements for the submission of questions at meetings, be undertaken in October 2008".
 - (i) An amendment was moved by Councillor Pickstone and seconded by Councillor V D'Albert by way of the deletion of paragraph (a) in Section 1 above relating to questions by the public, and the substitution of the following paragraph:-

"Members of the public are allowed to ask questions at full meetings of the Council. In addition, members of the public will be able to submit questions in writing in advance of the meeting. In both cases a supplementary question will be allowed at the discretion of the Mayor."

On being put, with 21 Members voting for, 25 against and the Mayor abstaining, the amendment was declared lost.

- (ii) A further amendment was moved by Councillor Boden and seconded by Councillor Byrne that paragraphs 1(a), (b) and (c) above be deleted and the substitution of the following paragraph:-

"1. That so far as Members' questions are concerned, the status quo be maintained subject to a review of the effectiveness in October 2008."

On being put, with 21 Members voting for, 25 against and with the Mayor abstaining, the amendment was declared lost.

The substantive motion, on being put, 25 Members voted for, 21 against with the Mayor abstaining, it was:-

RESOLVED:

That the Motion set out above be approved and adopted and the Council Constitution amended accordingly.

C.109 NOTICE OF MOTION

The following Notice of Motion had been received in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 12:-

POST OFFICE CLOSURES

It was moved by Councillor Baum and seconded by Council Davison that the following motion be approved:-

“This Council:

1. Condemns the Government for the impact its Post Office closure programme will have on the Borough.
2. Notes that the result of this programme will be at least 5 Post Office closures in Bury, which is a callous attack on vulnerable people, on our communities and on business activity within Bury.

This Council notes that this Post Office closure programme will have a detrimental impact on

1. local communities and businesses, including the effect on our local centres
2. areas where there are high levels of deprivation
3. accessibility, particularly in the more rural areas of the Borough.

This Council further notes:

1. That the Government is currently deciding which company will operate the successor to the Post Office Card Account, used by over four million pensioners to receive their pension and other benefits and tax credits

This Council therefore

1. Commits itself to continue to fight for our post offices using the criteria above, and to prepare a detailed response opposing these closures
2. Calls on both of Bury's MPs to publicly commit themselves to the fight to save our Post Offices, and to use all means to achieve this.

3. Calls on the Government, even at this late hour, to withdraw these proposals so that a measured discussion can take place about the maintenance of Post Office services within the community
4. Bury's two MPs to sign Early Day Motion 1584 which calls on the Government to announce that the Post Office will provide the successor to the card account.

This Council further notes that in other consultations the Government has ignored local views and continued to close Post Offices and calls on Council Officers also to continue exploring how Post Office services can be maintained in our communities, even if Post Offices themselves are regrettably closed.”

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

On being put, with all Members, including the Mayor, voting for, it was:-

RESOLVED:

That the Motion above be approved and adopted.

At the conclusion of the debate on the above Motion, the Mayor in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 9.1, asked the Leader, Councillor Bibby, to move 'that the whole of remaining business before the Council be approved'. On being put with the Mayor abstaining, the Motion was declared carried.

C.110 SCRUTINY 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.111 JOINT AUTHORITIES – REPORTS BY THE COUNCIL'S REPRESENTATIVES AND QUESTIONS

- (a) Councillor Walker, the Council's representative on the Greater Manchester Police Authority, would circulate a copy of this report on the work of that Joint Authority to all Members of the Council.
- (b) The nominated Spokespersons, as indicated below, would forward to all Members of the Council the answers to the following questions submitted in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 11.2:-

No	Joint Authority and Questioner	Issue	Answered by (and action)
1.	Greater Manchester Police Authority Councillor S Wright	Use of the Police Helicopter	Councillor Walker

2.	Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Authority Councillor O'Hanlon	Road congestion and bus lanes on arterial routes in the Borough	Councillor Creswell
3.	Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Authority Councillor Baum	Metrolink ticketing machines	Councillor Creswell

C.112 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.113 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 Decision 6 and 7 (2007/2008).

THE WORSHIPFUL THE MAYOR

(NOTES: The meeting started at 7.00 pm and ended at 10.05 pm)