

COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES - 23 JUNE 2009

Present: Councillor Pugh (Mayor);

Councillors Ayub, Ballsdon, Bayes, Beard, Benson, Byrne, Chowdhary, Cumpsty, Duveen, Edwards, Ennis, Epps, Gittings, Goodall, Hanley, C Harris, T Harris, Hartley, Hoskin, Hussain, Janjua, P Jones, T Jones, Khan, Lovelock, Lockett, Merriott, Orton, Page, Ralph, Ruhemann, Rynn, Singleton-White, Skeats, Stainthorp, Stanway, Steele, Stevens, Swaine, Tickner, Townend, Warman and Willis.

Apologies: Councillors Maskell and Watson.

At the commencement of the meeting, the Mayor referred to the recent tragic deaths of Rifleman Cyrus Thatcher, while on duty in Afghanistan, and Air Cadet Nicholas Rice, in an air crash. The Council then stood in silence as a tribute to their memory.

11. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 20 May 2009 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

12. PETITION IN ACCORDANCE WITH STANDING ORDER NO 8

Mrs C Muir presented a petition in the following terms:

"We the residents of Luscinia View, Napier Road, protest at the recent changes in the bus service, which have resulted in a worsened service, particularly for schoolchildren and the disabled.

We call upon Reading Borough Council, Reading Buses and Tesco (using their subsidy) to work together to reinstate the formerly hourly daytime service, starting at 8.30am with buses that are fully accessible to wheelchair users." (162 signatures).

In his response, Councillor Page (Lead Councillor for Planning and Transport) stated:

"I thank Mrs Muir and the residents of Luscinia View for the petition, which I recognise is on an issue of great importance to their community.

In July 2008 Reading Buses concluded a consultation, which involved the proposal to withdraw the then commercial hourly daytime service 19 between Napier Road and Central Reading in September 2008. This resulted in a petition in July 2008 from residents and staff at the Tesco Store calling for the retention of the bus service.

Pending a review of the use of this service, and a full consideration of options, an interim replacement service was secured as an emergency contract by Reading Borough Council.

Officers were aware of the then concurrent proposals by Tesco to introduce a limited free bus service to their Napier Road store. As a result, discussions were held with their agents to investigate the potential for a joint service. Tesco decided to proceed with their own arrangements, which were introduced on 9th February 2009, on the basis of a free bus service from Blagrove Street round the town centre loop via the Station and Kings Meadow Road, Tesco and then finishing at Vastern Road.

COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES - 23 JUNE 2009

Whilst I warmly welcome the principle of large stores subsidising and encouraging the use of local public transport I believe this should be done in a way that complements and, ideally, enhances existing services. Regrettably the current free Tesco service operates only on Monday, Wednesday and Friday between 9.30am - 2.10pm using a coach that is not accessible to any wheelchair users.

Usage of this free service appears low, but sufficient to deprive Reading Buses of revenue on what is already a subsidised service.

Further network changes by Reading Buses in April 2009 resulted in other areas of Reading losing services and essential replacement facilities for these were combined with a basic service for Napier Road into a single contract using one bus. This is a very cost effective arrangement that makes the best use of the Reading Council's limited revenue support budget for bus services.

I have arranged a further meeting with Tesco next Monday 29th June to explore whether they are prepared to support any enhancement of the current service levels. I would invite Mr Muir as the petition organiser to attend this meeting.

The Council will continue to explore value for money options for providing bus services to meet the needs of residents in all areas where there are no commercial bus routes."

13. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC IN ACCORDANCE WITH STANDING ORDER NO 9

Questions on the following matters were submitted:

	<u>Questioner</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Answer</u>
1.	Mustafa Chaudhary	Prevent and NI35	Cllr Lovelock
2.	Mustafa Chaudhary	Prevent and NI35	Cllr Lovelock
3.	Mustafa Chaudhary	Prevent and NI35	Cllr Lovelock
4.	Nizam Khan	Preventing Violent Extremism	Cllr Lovelock

Mr Khan was not present at the meeting and his question was answered in writing in accordance with Standing Order 11(3).

(NB - The full text of the questions and replies was made available on the Reading Borough Council website).

14. QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS IN ACCORDANCE WITH STANDING ORDER NO 10

Questions on the following matters were submitted:

COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES - 23 JUNE 2009

	<u>Questioner</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Answer</u>
1.	Cllr T Harris	River View Care Home	Cllr Orton
2.	Cllr T Harris	Heating in Care Homes	Cllr Orton
3.	Cllr Epps	Use of provisions of Regulation of Investigatory Powers (RIPA) Act 2000	Cllr Lovelock
4.	Cllr Willis	Salary Packages	Cllr Lovelock
5.	Cllr Goodall	Graffiti Removal	Cllr Gittings
6.	Cllr Swaine	Parking Permits	Cllr Page
7.	Cllr Byrne	Issue of Parking Permits Review	Cllr Page
8.	Cllr Stanway	Payment Services Regulations	Cllr Lovelock
9.	Cllr Willis	Trips to Non-UK Destinations	Cllr Lovelock
10.	Cllr Willis	European Election Results	Cllr Lovelock

As there was insufficient time, pursuant to Standing Order 10(4), written replies to Questions 7-10 above would be provided in accordance with Standing Order 11(3).

(NB - The full text of all of the questions and replies was made available on the Reading Borough Council website).

At this point in the proceedings, the Mayor exercised his discretion pursuant to Standing Order 5(3)(a) to enable the following item to be brought forward on the agenda.

15. WORKING TOGETHER TO PREVENT VIOLENT EXTREMISM IN READING

The Director of Housing and Community Care submitted a report seeking the Council's approval to the action plan and governance framework for 'Working Together To Prevent Violent Extremism In Reading'.

The report had appended:

Appendix 1 - Working Together To Prevent Violent Extremism In Reading Action Plan;

Appendix 2 - Governance framework for Working Together To Prevent Violent Extremism In Reading.

A motion was moved by Councillor Tickner and seconded by Councillor Lovelock.

An amendment was moved by Councillor Ralph and seconded by Councillor Townend. In the course of the debate on the amendment, the Council gave its consent for the

COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES - 23 JUNE 2009

amendment to be re-worded. The amendment, as re-worded, was then put to the vote and CARRIED as follows:

"Delete all words after 'That' and insert the following words:

'there be acknowledgement of already good community and race relations in Reading;

- (2) That there be further acknowledgement that good community relations are achieved by policies which integrate and bring together all communities and ethnic groups;
- (3) That there be clear differentiation between the national programme, NI 35, and local interpretation to ensure there is no separation or targeting of any individual community or ethnic group;
- (4) That the opportunity to bid for funding be promoted to the wider community eg schools, faith groups;
- (5) That successful bidders be selected by a panel of representatives from the Reading Community;
- (6) That all bids be published and must include clear:
 - Actions
 - Deliverables
 - Metrics for evaluation
 - Value for money criteria
- (7) That the entire action plan and the governance framework of 'Working Together To Prevent Violent Extremism in Reading' be approved as work in progress, having regard to items (2) to (6) above, but revised and re-presented by the Management Group to the CCEA Scrutiny Panel in December 2009, where the Panel will be asked to:
 - Recommend the governance framework as being appropriate to enable robust management of the programme
 - Review the actions plans and timescales to ensure they are making progress towards their objectives and that the associated funding is being spent effectively.' "

The following amendment was moved by Councillor Bayes and seconded by Councillor Epps and LOST:

"That this matter be referred to the CCEA Scrutiny Panel for its consideration at its next meeting."

The amended substantive motion was then put to the vote and CARRIED as follows:

Resolved:

- (1) That there be acknowledgement of already good community and race relations in Reading;

COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES - 23 JUNE 2009

- (2) That there be further acknowledgement that good community relations are achieved by policies which integrate and bring together all communities and ethnic groups;
- (3) That there be clear differentiation between the national programme, NI 35, and local interpretation to ensure there is no separation or targeting of any individual community or ethnic group;
- (4) That the opportunity to bid for funding be promoted to the wider community eg schools, faith groups;
- (5) That successful bidders be selected by a panel of representatives from the Reading Community;
- (6) That all bids be published and must include clear:
 - Actions
 - Deliverables
 - Metrics for evaluation
 - Value for money criteria
- (7) That the entire action plan and the governance framework of 'Working Together To Prevent Violent Extremism in Reading' be approved as work in progress, having regard to items (2) to (6) above, but revised and re-presented by the Management Group to the CCEA Scrutiny Panel in December 2009, where the Panel will be asked to:
 - Recommend the governance framework as being appropriate to enable robust management of the programme
 - Review the actions plans and timescales to ensure they are making progress towards their objectives and that the associated funding is being spent effectively.

The meeting was adjourned at 8.42pm and reconvened at 8.47pm.

16. INTRODUCTION OF COMPREHENSIVE AREA ASSESSMENT 2009

The Chief Executive submitted a report on the Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) which was to be reported in November 2009. Zoë Hanim, Head of Policy, Performance & Community, also gave a presentation.

The report stated that CAA had replaced Comprehensive Performance Assessment in April 2009. CAA would consist of an Area Assessment which considered the work of all local partners in achieving the priorities set out in the Sustainable Community Strategy and Local Area Agreement, and 'Organisational Assessments' of local authorities and fire and rescue services, aligned with assessments of other public sector partners

The report contained a timetable setting out the work required in the run up to the first CAA and this was being project managed to ensure the Council was well prepared.

COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES - 23 JUNE 2009

The following motion was moved by Councillor Lovelock and seconded by Councillor Page and CARRIED:

Resolved:

That the presentation be noted and the methodology and timetable for the CAA be received.

(Councillor Benson declared a personal, non-prejudicial interest in the above item, on the basis that she was employed by the Audit Commission.)

17. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE PLAN 2009-12

Further to Minute 17 of the meeting of Cabinet of 1 June 2009, the Director of Education and Children's Services submitted a report presenting the final draft version of the re-written Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) from Reading's Children's Trust, for endorsement by Council.

Copies of the Plan had been placed in the Group rooms.

The following motion was moved by Councillor Ennis and seconded by Councillor Hartley and CARRIED:

Resolved:

- (1) That the re-written Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) from the Reading Children's Trust be endorsed;
- (2) That CYPP performance measures be monitored by the Children's Trust Board and through Scrutiny.

18. A BIG VOICE IN OUR LIVES - THE READING LEARNING DISABILITY PARTNERSHIP'S STRATEGY FOR 2009-14

The Director of Housing and Community Care submitted a report on the Reading Learning Disability Partnership's Strategy for 2009-14, entitled "A Big Voice in Our Lives."

The report stated that the Strategy was not confined to considering the needs of those eligible under current local criteria for statutory services, but also considered the needs of the wider learning disabled population. It was a strategy for adults, but included young people in transition from childhood to adulthood. Its emphasis was on increasing choice and control for all Reading adults with learning disabilities, and helping those who were eligible for support services to make the most of the opportunities opened up by self-directed support, now being rolled out as part of the Community Care Transformation Programme.

An easy-read summary of the final Strategy was attached, and drafts of the full-length version had been placed in the Group rooms.

The following motion was moved by Councillor Orton and seconded by Councillor Hoskin and CARRIED:

COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES - 23 JUNE 2009

Resolved:

That the publication of the Reading Learning Disability Partnership's Strategy for 2009-14 be endorsed, the key points of which were set out in the attached easy-read Summary, Consultation Report and Action Plan.

19. PROVISIONAL DRAFT FINAL ACCOUNTS 2008-09

The Head of Finance submitted a report summarising the financial position at the end of the 2008/09 financial year, and presenting the draft statement of accounts for approval prior to audit.

The report included a summary of outstanding debt owed to the Council as at 31 March 2009.

The following documents were attached:

- Appendix A: A Summary showing the main budget variances in the year.
- Appendix B: Treasury Outturn Report
- Appendix C: General Debtor Arrears (accounts over 60 days old).

Copies of the Statement of Accounts had been placed in the Group rooms.

The following motion was moved by Councillor Lovelock and seconded by Councillor Page and CARRIED:

Resolved:

- (1) That the Accounts be approved;
- (2) That the end of year Treasury Outturn Report attached at Appendix B be received.

20. WIND TURBINES

Pursuant to Notice a motion was moved by Councillor Byrne and seconded by Councillor Stanway.

The following amendment was moved by Councillor Gittings and seconded by Councillor Page and CARRIED:

"Add the following words:

'In addition, this Council supports the work of our sustainability team in:

1. Developing a comprehensive energy action plan for our corporate and schools estate.
2. Seeking funding from national and regional sources to enable large-scale energy efficiency and renewable energy solutions such as wind power and solar panels for the domestic sector.

COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES - 23 JUNE 2009

3. Promoting the Heatseeker programme which identifies the properties in Reading that need remedial energy efficiency measures such as cavity wall and loft insulation.
4. Leading the Climate Berkshire Partnership that is examining renewable energy solutions on a county and sub-regional basis and sourcing the necessary funding for such measures.' "

The amended substantive motion was then put to the vote and CARRIED as follows:

Resolved:

This Council requests the Director of Housing and Community Care to investigate the feasibility of sighting micro-generation wind turbines and solar panels on top of the Coley Park high rise blocks and also on any other Council owned social housing blocks that are over three storeys high, and submit a report to Cabinet.

In addition, this Council supports the work of our sustainability team in:

1. Developing a comprehensive energy action plan for our corporate and schools estate.
2. Seeking funding from national and regional sources to enable large-scale energy efficiency and renewable energy solutions such as wind power and solar panels for the domestic sector.
3. Promoting the Heatseeker programme which identifies the properties in Reading that need remedial energy efficiency measures such as cavity wall and loft insulation.
4. Leading the Climate Berkshire Partnership that is examining renewable energy solutions on a county and sub-regional basis and sourcing the necessary funding for such measures.

21. KENNET MEADOWS

Pursuant to Notice a motion was moved by Councillor Ruhemann and seconded by Councillor Gittings and CARRIED as follows:

Resolved:

This Council:

1. Notes that the Kennet Meadows, to the south-west of the Reading Urban Area lies in the floodplain of the River Kennet, with large parts being classified as functional floodplain by Environment Agency. Under the policies of PPS25, *Development and Flood Risk*, development within functional floodplain should be restricted to essential infrastructure.
2. Therefore welcomes the decision of the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government - following representations

COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES - 23 JUNE 2009

from Reading Borough Council, West Berkshire Council, elected representatives, amenity groups and local residents - not to include the Kennet Meadows as a Strategic Development Area as recommended by the EIP Panel in the South-East Plan, published on 6 May 2009.

3. Also welcomes West Berkshire Council's decision not to include the Kennet Meadows as a preferred option for development in their draft Core Strategy, now out for consultation.
4. Requests that the Chief Executive responds to West Berkshire's Core Strategy consultation on behalf of the Council, proposing that the Core Area of Kennet Meadows, as identified in the Kennet Valley Management Plan (2002), jointly commissioned by both Councils, be identified as a strategic landscape feature and important area of open space that provides essential amenity, wildlife habitat and a clear settlement edge to the Reading Urban Area.
5. Believes that, if development of this area is precluded by national and local planning policies, Reading and West Berkshire Councils should seek the agreement of the landowners to put the Core Area in trust and then manage it as 'an important area of open space, a community and ecological asset for a wide range of different users and stakeholders, for landscape, recreational, wildlife, and educational purposes', as proposed in the Kennet Valley Management Plan, and requests the Chief Executive to initiate early discussions with West Berkshire to this end.

22. ORGANISATIONS RECEIVING GRANT FUNDING - CRB CHECKS

Pursuant to Notice a motion was moved by Councillor Townend and seconded by Councillor Chowdhary.

The following amendment was moved by Councillor Tickner and seconded by Councillor Stainthorp and CARRIED:

"Delete all words after 'problems' in the third line and insert the following words:

'It further recognises its responsibility to ensure that voluntary and community organisations, funded wholly or in part by council grants, and that deal with vulnerable adults or children and young people, are rigorous in applying the necessary checks and safeguards.

This council shall continue to ensure, by means of its monitoring and liaison work with the voluntary sector and community organisations, that all such bodies receiving grants or funding from Reading Borough Council routinely carry out all the necessary Criminal Records Bureau checks on their staff and volunteers by means of an ongoing process.

This council shall be prepared for implementation of the new Vetting and Barring Scheme being introduced by the Independent Safeguarding Authority.

COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES - 23 JUNE 2009

For those organisations receiving grant funding in the current council year, the council shall conduct an audit to ensure that the required CRB checks have been carried out by all organisations working with vulnerable adults or children and young people. It shall report its findings and any proposed corrective action, where necessary, to the CCEA Scrutiny Panel and the Cabinet.' "

The following amendment was moved by Councillor Stainthorp and seconded by Councillor P Jones and LOST:

"Add the following words:

'In order to demonstrate the Council's commitment to working safely with vulnerable groups, young people and children; and in order to consolidate good practice throughout the Council's areas of work; and as councillors frequently work with and for vulnerable adults, young people and children in the course of their duties:

Reading Borough Council shall carry out Criminal Records checks as expeditiously as possible on all current borough councillors who do not have a current CRB record.

In subsequent years Reading Borough Council shall carry out a Criminal Record Check on all newly elected councillors at the beginning of their term of office.

It shall thereafter renew such checks as and when necessary, in line with the guidance and good practice agreed for staff.' "

The amended substantive motion was then put to the vote and CARRIED as follows:

Resolved:

This Council recognises that voluntary and community organisations are a tremendous asset to the people of Reading, and that they are at the forefront of identifying and tackling some of the most pressing social problems. It further recognises its responsibility to ensure that voluntary and community organisations, funded wholly or in part by council grants, and that deal with vulnerable adults or children and young people, are rigorous in applying the necessary checks and safeguards.

This council shall continue to ensure, by means of its monitoring and liaison work with the voluntary sector and community organisations, that all such bodies receiving grants or funding from Reading Borough Council routinely carry out all the necessary Criminal Records Bureau checks on their staff and volunteers by means of an ongoing process.

This council shall be prepared for implementation of the new Vetting and Barring Scheme being introduced by the Independent Safeguarding Authority.

For those organisations receiving grant funding in the current council year, the council shall conduct an audit to ensure that the required CRB checks have been carried out by all organisations working with vulnerable adults or children and young people. It shall report its findings and any proposed corrective action, where necessary, to the CCEA Scrutiny Panel and the Cabinet.

COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES - 23 JUNE 2009

(The meeting closed at 11.06pm)