

MINUTES of the MEETING of the  
SOUTH DERBYSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL  
held at Civic Offices, Civic Way, Swadlincote  
on 24th January 2008  
at 6.00 p.m.

**PRESENT:-**

**Conservative Group**

Councillor Bale (Chairman), Councillor Mrs. Hood (Vice-Chairman) and Councillors Atkin, Bladen, Mrs. Coyle, Mrs. Farrington, Ford, Harrison, Hewlett, Jones, Lemmon, Murray, Mrs. Patten, Mrs. Plenderleith, Roberts, Stanton, Timms, Watson, Mrs. Wheeler and Wheeler.

**Labour Group**

Councillors Bambrick, Dunn, Mrs. Gillespie, Mrs. Lane, Lane, Mrs. Mead, Pabla, Rhind, Richards, Shepherd, Southerd, Taylor, Tilley and Wilkins.

**Independent Member**

Councillor Mrs. Brown.

**APOLOGY**

An apology for absence from the Meeting was received from Councillor Grant (Conservative Group).

CL/97. **MINUTES**

The Open Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 8th November 2007 (Minutes Nos. CL/72 – CL/88) and the Open Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Council held on 20th December 2007 (Minutes Nos. CL/91 – CL/95), were taken as read, approved as true records, subject to the inclusion of Councillor Rhind on the list of attendees for the Special Meeting and signed by the Chairman.

CL/98. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Atkin declared a prejudicial interest in respect of the Exempt Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Council held 20th December, as a principal landowner and tenant of sites subject to applications for development.

On behalf of all Members, the Chairman recorded personal interests in respect of the report of the Independent Remuneration Panel, in accordance with Clause 10(2)(c)(iv) of the Members' Code of Conduct, as this matter related to a function of the Authority in respect of an allowance, payment or indemnity for Members.

CL/99. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman gave an update on his engagements since the last Meeting. These included carol services held just prior to Christmas and visits to two of

the District's elderly residents, Mrs. Steele and Mrs. Dolman. The Chairman referred to his recent holiday to Japan, which had included a number of events to reinforce civic connections between South Derbyshire and Toyota City. He spoke highly of the way in which he was received, the assistance provided with translation and a visit to the Council of Toyota City. In addition, he had visited a number of temples, museums and the Toyota Motor Company.

The Chairman publicised events to commemorate Holocaust Memorial Day and the arrangements for his Civic Dinner and Dance on 8th March at the Pavilion, Branston Golf and Country Club.

Finally, the Chairman advised that it would be necessary to withdraw an item later on the agenda about the decriminalisation of car parking.

#### CL/100. **LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Leader of the Council referred to Councillor Bale's recent holiday to Japan and she thanked everyone involved for making it such a success. She confirmed that the Post Office closures raised at previous meetings had now taken place. She had met with the 50+ Forum at Church Gresley Post Office for the launch of a weekly mobility bus service to Swadlincote Post Office. Similar initiatives and assistance were being pursued to provide a service to other residents affected by the post office closures. She thanked the South Derbyshire community for pulling together in this way.

The Leader spoke about Disabled Facility Grants and a meeting between Councillor Harrison, Mark Todd M.P. and Baroness Andrews. This had resulted in an additional £20,000 of resources for Disabled Facility Grants, which was welcomed, but compared to the £300,000 shortfall, it was still disappointing.

The Leader then referred to the Grovewood "Eco" town. She asked the Chief Executive whether the Council could write to the Housing Minister, to advise how this proposed 'eco' town sat within of the Council's planning policies. He replied that the Council could provide the facts of its planning policy, as this was not giving an opinion.

Note: At 6.15 p.m., Councillor Roberts left the Meeting.

#### CL/101. **REPORTS OF COMMITTEES**

##### **RESOLVED:-**

***That the Open reports of the following Committees be received and noted and any recommendations contained therein be approved and adopted:-***

***Standards Committee, 12th November 2007 (Minutes Nos. SC/1 - SC/8)***

***Environmental and Development Services Committee, 15th November 2007 (Minutes Nos. EDS/22 - EDS/28)***

***(Councillor Taylor referred to the Parish Liaison Meeting held the previous evening, particularly about comments made by the Leader. He***

*commented that he would not wish the Council to do anything that would affect its current partnership arrangements with the County Council. A point of order was raised, as this matter was not included within the Minutes of that Committee. The Chairman of the Committee, Councillor Bladen replied that the Council would continue to work in partnership with Derbyshire County Council.*

*Minute No. EDS/27 – Councillor Southerd reported the difficulties caused by on-street parking, when undertaking road sweeping works. He questioned whether there was a schedule of such works that could be publicised, to ensure that vehicles were moved and the works completed effectively. The Chairman of the Committee confirmed this was in place and he explained the approach taken elsewhere to resolve a similar problem. The Service Manager was looking to introduce this on a District-wide basis. Officers would be asked to pursue this matter and to respond to Councillor Southerd.)*

*Development Control Committee, 20th November 2007 (Minutes Nos. DC/60 - DC/66)*

*Housing and Community Services Committee, 22nd November 2007 (Minutes Nos. HCS/43 - HCS/53)*

*(The Leader referred to the recent announcement regarding the Etwall Leisure Centre. She praised the staff involved and invited the Chairman of the Committee to provide further information. Councillor Lemmon reminded of the history of the current leisure centre. He mentioned the partners involved in the new project and spoke particularly about the efforts of the community group. He congratulated those involved for their time and commitment and paid tribute to the Council's staff for their efforts. These comments were endorsed by Councillor Mrs. Brown. The Chief Executive added that the Toyota Motor Company had given a pledge of further revenue funding for the future, because of the environmentally friendly design of the new facility.)*

*Licensing and Appeals Sub-Committee, 26th November 2007 (Minutes Nos. LAS/36 - LAS/37)*

*Standards Committee (Special), 26th November 2007 (Minutes Nos. SC/9 - SC/11)*

*Finance and Management Committee, 29th November 2007 (Minutes Nos. FM/80 – FM/91)*

*(Councillor Wilkins referred to the review of Area Meeting boundaries. Announcements had been made at Area Meetings earlier in the week, that following the consultation, the current arrangements were being retained. He thought that the Council should have been the first body to determine this matter, rather than informing the public and parish councils. The Chairman agreed, but it had seemed opportune to announce it at the recent Area Meetings. The Leader of the Opposition asked if the Council could endorse the decision at this Meeting, but the Chief Executive clarified that as no change was proposed, the existing structure remained. The Chairman of the Committee reminded of the*

***Boundary Commission's review that had increased the number of County Council Divisions and he explained how this had impacted on arrangements for area meetings in South Derbyshire. For this reason, it was proposed to retain the status quo.)***

***Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 5th December 2007 (Minutes Nos. OS/33 – OS/36)***

***Development Control Committee, 11th December 2007 (Minutes Nos. DC/69 - DC/76)***

***Licensing and Appeals Sub-Committee, 18th December 2007 (Minutes Nos. LAS/39 - LAS/40)***

***Development Control Committee, 15th January 2008 (Minutes Nos. DC/79-DC/86)***

**Area Meetings**

***Newhall, 6th November 2007 (Minutes Nos. NA/1 - NA/8)***

***Swadlincote, 7th November 2007 (Minutes Nos. SA/1 – SA/9)***

***Melbourne, 14th November 2007 (Minutes Nos. MA/1 – MA/9)***

***Etwall, 21st November 2007 (Minutes Nos. EA/1 – EA/9)***

***Repton, 27th November 2007 (Minutes Nos. RA/1 – RA/9)***

***Linton, 4th December 2007 (Minutes Nos. LA/1 – LA/11)***

CL/102. **SEALING OF DOCUMENTS**

**RESOLVED:-**

***That the sealed documents listed at Annexe “SMB1” to the Signed Minute Book, which have no specific authority, be duly authorised.***

CL/103. **COMPOSITIONS OF COMMITTEES, SUB-COMMITTEES AND WORKING PANELS**

***That Councillor Rhind replaces Councillor Richards on the Environmental and Development Services Committee.***

CL/104. **COMPOSITION OF SUBSTITUTE PANELS**

There were no amendments to the composition of Substitute Panels.

CL/105. **REPRESENTATION ON OUTSIDE BODIES**

**RESOLVED:-**

- (1) That the Chairman of the Housing and Community Services Committee be appointed as the Council's representative on the Supporting People Commissioning Body for Derbyshire.***
- (2) That the Chairman of the Environmental and Development Services Committee be appointed as the Council's representative on the Building Control Joint Working Project Board.***

CL/106. **REVIEW OF MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES – REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL**

Members were reminded that the report of the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) was considered at the Full Council Meeting on 8th November 2007. At that time, it was agreed to refer the report to the Finance and Management Committee for further consideration and this took place at a Meeting on 29th November 2007 (Minute No. FM/83 refers). A report was circulated, which included a series of recommendations on the levels of Members' allowances.

The Leader of the Council spoke to this item and reminded Members of previous debates. She considered that being a Councillor was a privilege rather than a career and ultimately, Members' remuneration was funded through the Council Tax. She referred to the IRP report and whilst not wholeheartedly received, she thanked the Panel for its work. She spoke to the revised recommendations that had been circulated prior to the Meeting. In particular, she referred to pensions, the proposed telephone allowance, the appointment of a permanent Chairman of Licensing and Appeals and the levels of remuneration proposed.

The Leader of the Opposition Group responded, referring to the historic rises of the previous Controlling Group. The increase proposed was actually 8%. This was more than that paid to Council staff or the level of inflation and the Opposition Group would vote against these recommendations. Councillor Harrison replied, making reference to previous Panel recommendations and the levels of remuneration approved at those times. He disagreed with the findings of Councillor Richards, who subsequently invited the media to look at the figures.

**RESOLVED:-**

- (1) That, subject to resolutions (2)–(7) below, the Council accepts the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel on the Scheme of Members' Allowances detailed in I – VIII of Annexe 'SMB2' to the Signed Minute Book.***
- (2) That a Basic Allowance of £5,280 be paid for 2007/08, being the existing Basic Allowance.***
- (3) That a taxable telephone allowance of £300 be paid alongside the Basic Allowance, as recommended by the Panel, and this be implemented from 2007/08.***
- (4) That the difference of £360 between the existing Basic Allowance (£5,280) and that recommended by the Independent Remuneration Panel (£5,640) be phased over the years 2008/09, 2009/10 and 2010/11 by three equal sums of £120 being added to the Basic Allowance.***

- (5) That the Council appoints a permanent Chairman of the Licensing and Appeals Committee and its associated Sub-Committees and that this position receives a Special Responsibility Allowance within Band 4 in the report of the IRP, as indicated in Annexe 'SMB2'.**
- (6) That all allowances with the exception of the telephone allowance be increased each year (including 2007/08) by the annual local government pay percentage increase agreed each April (linked to spinal column point 49 of the NJC Scheme).**
- (7) That, on this occasion, the Council does not take up the option to enable Members to join the Local Government Pension Scheme on the grounds of affordability, but investigates the possibility of Stakeholder Pensions.**

Note: Members of the Labour Group wished it to be recorded that they had voted against this decision. At 6.55 p.m., Councillor Atkin left the Meeting.

CL/107. **LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 (AS AMENDED BY THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT [ACCESS TO INFORMATION] ACT 1985**

**RESOLVED:-**

***That in accordance with Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) the press and public be excluded from the remainder of the Meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined under the paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act as indicated in the reports of Committees.***

**MINUTES**

***The Exempt Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 8th November 2007 and of the Special Meeting held on 20th December 2007 were duly received and approved.***

**REPORTS OF COMMITTEES**

***The Exempt reports of the following Committees were received and noted and any recommendations contained therein approved and adopted:-***

***Environmental and Development Services Committee, 15th November 2007.***

***Development Control Committee, 20th November 2007***

***Housing and Community Services Committee, 22nd November 2007***

***Licensing and Appeals Sub-Committee, 26th November 2007***

***Finance and Management Committee, 29th November 2007***

***Development Control Committee, 11th December 2007***

***Development Control Committee, 15th January 2008***

M. J. P. BALE

CHAIRMAN