

COUNCIL MEETING
17th April, 2013

Present:- The Mayor (Councillor Dave Pickering) (in the Chair); Councillors Ahmed, Akhtar, Ali, Andrews, Astbury, Atkin, Barron, Beaumont, Beck, Buckley, Burton, Clark, Currie, Dalton, Dodson, Donaldson, Doyle, Ellis, Falvey, Foden, Gilding, Godfrey, Gosling, Goulty, J. Hamilton, N. Hamilton, Havenhand, Hoddinott, Hussain, Kaye, Lakin, Lelliott, Mannion, McNeely, Middleton, Pitchley, Read, Robinson, Roddison, Rushforth, G. A. Russell, P. A. Russell, R. S. Russell, Sangster, Sharman, Sims, Smith, Steele, Stone, Swift, Wallis, Watson, Whelbourn, Whysall, Wootton and Wyatt.

A100 COMMUNICATIONS

The Chief Executive submitted apologies for absence from Councillors Jepson, Johnston, Roach and Tweed.

A101 PRESENTATION OF AWARDS

The Mayor (Councillor Dave Pickering) invited the Deputy Leader to present the Annual Employee Recognition Awards, which were an important opportunity to formally recognise the efforts and brilliant services employees provided on a daily basis of behalf of Rotherham's citizens, to:-

Employee of the Year Award 2012 – Chris Johnson from Environment and Development Services.

Team of the Year Award 2012 – Worksmart Team.

Manager of the Year Award 2012 – Colin Knight from Environment and Development Services

Congratulations were offered to all those involved in gaining these awards.

A102 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were no questions submitted from members of the public.

A103 STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Resolved:- That the reports and minutes of the meeting of the Standards Committee (Section P) (pages 8B to 11B) be adopted.

Mover: Councillor Gosling

Seconder: Councillor Sims

A104 CABINET MINUTES

Resolved:- That the reports and minutes of the meetings of the Cabinet (Section C) (pages 101C to 112C) be adopted.

Mover:- Councillor Stone

Seconder:- Councillor Akhtar

A105 DELEGATED POWERS

Resolved:- That the reports and minutes of the meetings of Cabinet Members as listed below be adopted:-

- Children, Young People and Families Services – Pages 52D to 64D (Section D)
- Communities and Cohesion – Pages 24E to 31E (Section E)
- Culture and Tourism– Pages 31F to 39F (Section F)
- Regeneration and Development – Pages 62G to 70G (Section G)
- Adult Social Care – Pages 54H to 62H (Section H)
- Safe and Attractive Neighbourhoods – Pages 54J to 65J (Section J)
- Health and Wellbeing – Pages 33K to 35K (Section K)
- Waste and Emergency Planning– Pages 54L to 59L (Section L)
- Deputy Leader – Pages 42N to 48N (Section N)

Mover:- Councillor Stone

Seconder:- Councillor Akhtar

A106 AUDIT COMMITTEE

Resolved:- That the reports and minutes of the meeting of the Audit Committee (Section P) (pages 38P to 40P) be adopted.

Mover: Councillor Kaye

Seconder: Councillor Sims

A107 LICENSING BOARD

Resolved:- That the reports and minutes of the meeting of the Licensing Board (Section Q) (Pages 25Q to 27Q) be adopted.

Mover:- Councillor Wootton

Seconder:- Councillor Barron

A108 HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

Resolved:- That the reports and minutes of the meeting of the Health and Wellbeing Board (Section S) (pages 45S to 55S) be adopted.

Mover:- Councillor Wyatt

Secunder:- Councillor Lakin

A109 PLANNING BOARD

Resolved:- That the reports and minutes of the meetings of the Planning Board (Section T) (pages 95T to 99T) be adopted.

Mover:- The Mayor
(Councillor Pickering)

Secunder:- Councillor Dodson

A110 QUESTIONS TO CABINET MEMBERS AND CHAIRMEN

(1) Councillor Gilding asked what action could this Council take regarding the fire damaged shop properties in Corporation Street? These premises created a bad impression of the town centre as visitors enter from the railway station.

Councillor Smith explained that the Council had made attempts to contact the owner of both buildings to open discussions on future use and what actions could be taken in the short term to remove what is widely acknowledged to be an eyesore. The landlord had not responded to any communications.

Building Control have recently examined both buildings to ascertain if they were dangerous structures in which case the landlords could be forced to carry out remediation works to make them safe. However, at the current time neither building was structurally unsafe.

A Compulsory Purchase Order for the buildings would need to be part of a wider town centre redevelopment scheme with an obvious public benefit and with funding to implement the scheme identified and confirmed. These conditions did not currently exist.

The Local Planning Authority also had powers to undertake the clean up works themselves and to recover the costs from the landowner. Where the works were undertaken in default, then formal debt recovery procedures could be followed. This included securing a charge against the property and recovery of the debt through the County or High Court bailiffs or even the enforced sale of the property.

(2) Councillor Donaldson asked could she have an update on the development of the old Ford car site at Parkgate and the Council's involvement in the project?

Councillor Smith explained that the developer hoped to secure planning approval for retail and leisure facilities to complement the existing provision on Great Eastern Way which also housed Asda, Morrisons and The Foundry Retail Park.

Gregory Projects was working in collaboration with land owner and local business Ron Hull Jnr. with a view to submitting a planning application for the provision of a 16,000 sq ft discount food store, 22,000 sq ft of non-food retail and 18,000 sq ft of leisure facilities alongside more than 250 car parking spaces.

Colliers International was handling the planning process. GVA in Leeds was advising Gregory Projects on the lettings and the Sheffield office of Knight Frank was acting for Ron Hull Jnr.

(3) Councillor Mannion asked what would be the final and total cost to the Council of the ending of the RBT Partnership?

The Leader explained that there would be no 'cost' to the Council of ending the RBT Partnership. The Council made no payment for getting out of the contract early.

The Council paid BT for the investments it made in services, financial investments that RBT had been recovering through the charges for the delivery of services and payments that ended sooner than originally envisaged.

The Council had achieved substantial financial benefits since the early completion of the partnership through (a) savings made while re-integrating services into the Council and (b) income generated by providing a HR and payroll service to Doncaster Council. The ability and freedom to achieve these benefits was one of the key reasons for ending the partnership early.

(4) Councillor Gilding asked how much had this Council spent on translation services in 2002 and 2012?

Councillor Lakin confirmed that in respect of Children and Young People's Services the cost of translation and interpretation was not captured in 2002, but by 2009 was the following was in place:-

Cost for 2009/10 was £63,994.64.

Cost for 2012/13 was £63,404.24.

In respect of Council wide translation services, this would be collated and provided in writing.

(5) Councillor Donaldson asked could the Cabinet Member tell her if anything was going to happen to the old Perry garage site on Wellgate in the near future and how long had it remained empty?

Councillor Smith explained that the site was previously owned by the development company Gladedale and had a planning approval to build 128, one and two bed apartments. The developer did not deliver the scheme as it was financially unviable due to a weakening housing market and the application had now expired. In 2009 the Council acquired the site as a distressed sale from the developer using Housing Market Renewal grant funding.

The aim in acquiring the site was to assist future development and accord with the principles of the Town Centre Renaissance Plan.

The Council had explored interest from Housing Associations and private developers in the past, however, given the continuing economic downturn and Government austerity measures the Council had been unable to attract grant funding to enable development.

The site had been used as a temporary storage depot for materials associated with environmental improvement works being carried out in the Town Centre.

The Council had recently had an offer to purchase the site from a commercial developer and the response was being managed by the Council's Land and Property Team. The Council were also exploring the option of building a market rent housing development on the site.

The Home and Communities Agency were funding an options analysis on the site which would be completed by the end of May 2013 and this would include detailed:-

- Site investigation/topographical surveys to determine the extent of land contamination from previous uses.
- Land ownership surveys.
- Options appraisal to identify the full range of development options for the site in the current housing market and economic conditions.
- Robust site development appraisal and financial business case.

The outcome of the Options Analysis would help the Council decide on the best approach to site development, the shape and form of development and likely timescales for delivery.

A111 QUESTIONS TO SPOKESPERSONS

There were none.

A112 AMENDMENTS TO THE CODE OF CONDUCT

Further to Minute B16 of the meeting of the Standards Committee held on 14th March, 2013 consideration was given to the proposed amendments to the Code of Conduct as set out in the report submitted.

Resolved:- That the proposed amendments to the Code of Conduct be approved.

Mover:- Councillor Stone

Seconder:- Councillor Akhtar

A113 LOCALISM ACT 2011 AND THE STANDARDS REGIME - APPOINTMENT OF THE INDEPENDENT PERSON

Further to Minute B19 of the meeting of the Standards Committee held on 14th March, 2013 consideration was given to the recruitment process for the Independent Person, which been undertaken.

Resolved:- (1) That the appointment of David Roper-Newman as Independent Person, for a period of four years

(2) That the establishment of a post for an additional Independent Person be approved.

Mover:- Councillor Stone

Seconder:- Councillor Akhtar