

COUNCIL

10 July 2018

Present: Councillor R Martins (Chairman)
Councillor Asif Khan (Vice-Chair)
Councillors P Taylor, A Barton, S Bashir, N Bell, S Bolton,
S Cavinder, K Collett, K Crout, J Dhindsa, A Dychton, J Fahmy,
A Grimston, Hamid, P Jeffree, J Johnson, S Johnson, P Kloss,
R Laird, B Mauthoor, M Mills, M Parker, D Scudder, N Shah,
I Sharpe, N Steele, I Stotesbury, M Turmaine, D Walford and
T Williams

Also present: Mavis Tyrwhitt and Norman Tyrwhitt

Officers: Managing Director
Head of Democracy and Governance
Head of Corporate Strategy and Communications
Head of Service Transformation
Watford 2020 Programme Manager
Democratic Services Manager
Mayor's Political Assistant
Member Development and Civic Officer
Committee and Scrutiny Officer

17 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Connal, Hastrick, Hofman, Saffery, Smith and Watkin.

18 Disclosure of Interests

In reference to minute number 30, motion 3, Councillor Grimston declared that she was employed by the NHS. Councillor Mauthoor advised that one of her clients was Watford General Hospital.

19 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 22 May 2018 were submitted and signed.

Official Announcements

Former Mayor Sheila Rosser

The Chairman informed council of the passing of former Mayor Sheila Rosser on 5 June. He was sure that everyone's thoughts were with her family at this time. Ms Rosser had been Mayor from 1997-98.

Everyone stood for a minute's silence in her memory.

Councillors Bell and Williams and the Chairman spoke about Sheila Rosser.

By-election

The Chairman stated that Councillor Imran Hamid had been elected for Oxhey Ward at the by-election on 21 June. He welcomed Councillor Hamid to his first Council meeting.

Big Events

The Chairman reminded Council that the Big Screen had returned to the High Street and would be there until 22 July. This would be followed by the Big Beach from 4 to 19 August. He encouraged councillors to promote the events on their social media accounts.

Guideposts open day

The Chairman announced that Guideposts Trust would be holding an open day on 21 July between 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. at Henry Smith House. He said that the Trust was one of his chosen charities and he encouraged councillors to support the event.

Chairman's engagements

The Chairman informed council that he had recently attended the South West Herts Samaritans Annual General Meeting. The organisation had been awarded the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service on 2 June.

The Chairman advised that he had raised the flag in front of the Town Hall as part of the 'Fly the Flag for Armed Forces Day' national event.

Mayor's Report

A report of the Mayor had been circulated with the agenda.

The Chairman invited Members to indicate whether they wished to ask a question of the Mayor. Councillors Bashir, Dhindsa, Mauthoor and Mills indicated that they wished to ask questions.

- a) Councillor Bashir said that his question related to the Metropolitan Line Extension. There would be huge significant economic benefits to the town if the scheme were to go ahead. In his view there was no other alternative. He noted the Mayor had attended meetings with the Transport for London (TfL) and the County Council. He asked what steps Mayor Taylor would be taking to get all parties back to the negotiating table. The funding gap had led to the cancellation of the last project. He hoped the Mayor of Watford would be able to build a constructive relationship with the Mayor of London and to get the Metropolitan Line Extension going again. He understood that the August deadline would not be sufficient. He would prefer there was a re-negotiation bringing all parties together rather than looking at alternatives.

The Mayor said that he was pleased to have been able to have the meeting with TfL, the County Council and the Managing Director. It had given them an opportunity to discuss any possibility of resurrecting the scheme. It was clear there had been a funding gap which had been plugged. However, the scheme would not be delivered as TfL would not take the cost risk associated with it. It was confirmed the scheme was timed out. It was regrettable for everyone as it would have had big economic benefits.

The Mayor commented that his job was to see what could be done to take something forward. Benefits from the meeting included all monies would be returned; protection of the Croxley Link corridor and finally looking at alternatives. It was important to be realistic and not negative. TfL had said they would work with the Council, the County Council and the Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) to find a viable alternative. TfL had the transport experts who could provide important information about how much alternatives would cost and any benefits. It was right that the town needed better transport infrastructure; this had been a key topic with Councillor Dhindsa during the election campaign. He added that it was better to look forward than keep looking back.

- b) Councillor Dhindsa stated that his question was about the hop on hop off bus. He asked whether an impact assessment had been done on the

impact on the current taxi trade in Watford. He also questioned how it would work with a 12-seater bus and whether it was economical.

The Mayor advised that as yet the Council did not have the detailed scheme; only initial discussions had taken place. Councillors could look at how it had worked in other towns for example Sittingbourne in Kent and Oxford was just about to introduce a scheme. He would have hoped that Labour councillors would be keen on improving the infrastructure in the town.

The Mayor said that the aim was to have a fleet of approximately six minibuses going all over Watford. There was a team of people working on lots of algorithms to ensure the journey time would never be more than 20% of travelling from A to B. It would be flexible and have long hours. It would be huge advantage for the town. Whilst out canvassing, the subject of bus services came up time and again. This was a practical scheme; a modern bus service; high quality with Wi-Fi. It was exciting that by next year a new transport scheme could be introduced. Within a year of being Mayor he hoped to have delivered a bike hire scheme and a fleet of minibuses. He would do his best to improve transport infrastructure, but the detailed discussions still needed to be had.

The Mayor stated that an impact assessment on the taxi trade had not yet been done. He wanted to work with the taxi trade and had already met representatives. It was important that the taxi trade also modernised with high standard taxis and electric vehicles.

- c) Councillor Mauthoor said that the dementia-friendly town scheme was great. She had read the report and wanted to share the Mayor's passion for it. She had noted that reference was made to working with businesses, local organisations and Town Hall staff. She asked whether he would consider programmes for children in the local primary and secondary schools. It was known that some children had to help look after parents or grandparents who were suffering from dementia.

The Mayor thanked Councillor Mauthoor for her suggestion and was happy to look into it further. There were examples in other countries, for example Japan, where there were links with nurseries and old people's homes. There were some fantastic schools across the town and as the scheme progressed he would make sure schools were included.

- d) Councillor Mills asked the Mayor to provide council with the latest status of Woodside Indoor Bowling Club.

The Mayor responded that he was sure Councillor Mills was aware that there was an ongoing legal case. It was necessary for that to be completed before the outcome was known for certain. The Council had always been clear that the club had to pay the rent. The rent had been decided by an independent third party, setting out the appropriate rent to be paid by the Bowls Club. It had not been paid.

The Mayor added that it had also been made clear that the Council wanted to regenerate that site. There should be more facilities provided at Woodside. New things would include golf and high ropes. The hall could be used better. He had been clear throughout the election campaign about the difficult decision he would have to make as Mayor. He had talked about the Indoor Bowls Club. He was aware that it may make some of the bowls club members unhappy. As Mayor he had to do what was best for the whole town. At Woodside he wanted facilities that catered for all ages and every background. The hall currently occupied by the Bowls Club could be better used.

22 Questions by Members of the Council under Council Procedure Rule 10.0

No questions had been received.

23 Questions by Members of the Public under Council Procedure Rule 11.0

No questions had been received.

24 Petitions presented under Council Procedure Rule 12.0

No petitions had been received.

25 Business especially brought forward by the Chairman or the Head of Paid Service which in the opinion of the Chairman should be considered as a matter of urgency.

There was no urgent business.

26 Re-allocation of seats on committees

Council received a report of the Democratic Services Manager seeking the appointment of Councillor Hamid to Overview and Scrutiny Committee, following the Oxhey Ward by-election.

RESOLVED –

1. that the revised allocation of seats to Council Committees and Scrutiny Committees i.e., to increase the Liberal Democrat group membership by one seat and to decrease the Labour group membership by one seat on Overview and Scrutiny Committee be agreed.
2. that the revised committee membership of Overview and Scrutiny Committee be agreed.

27

Watford 2020 Programme

Council received a report from Cabinet held on 4 June 2018, which was accompanied by the Head of Service Transformation's original report to Cabinet. There was one recommendation to Council.

RESOLVED –

that the financial resources necessary to deliver the programme as set out in section 8 of the report to Cabinet be approved.

28

Neighbourhood Locality Funds

Council received a report of the Committee and Scrutiny Officer which set out the annual report for the Neighbourhood Locality Funds in 2017/18.

RESOLVED –

that the annual report be noted.

29

Annual Report of Overview and Scrutiny in Watford Borough Council 2017/18

Council received a report of the Committee and Scrutiny Officer and the Annual report of Overview and Scrutiny in Watford Borough Council for 2017/18.

RESOLVED –

that the Annual Report of Overview and Scrutiny in Watford Borough Council for 2017/18 be noted.

Motions submitted under Council Procedure Rule 13.0

Council was informed that three motions had been received.

Motion 1

The following motion was proposed by Councillor Ian Stotesbury and originally seconded by Councillor Mark Hofman; at the meeting councillors were informed that it was now seconded by Councillor Stephen Bolton

“This Council notes that currently stations in Watford Borough sit in Zone 7 in the case of Watford Metropolitan Line Station, Zone 8 in the case of Watford High Street and Bushey, or in Zone ‘W’ in the case of Watford Junction station.

This Council notes that commuters in Watford, which is 16.5 miles from their main central London terminus, pay around £1000 a year more than a commuter from Epping, which is also 16.5 miles from its central London terminus but in Zone 6.

This Council notes that this is deeply unfair on Watford commuters who travel from all Watford stations, who currently have to pay more to travel the same distance into central London.

This Council resolves to ask the Elected Mayor to write to TfL and the Mayor of London to ask on behalf of the Council for all stations in Watford Borough to be moved into Zone 6.”

Members debated the motion.

On being put to council the motion was AGREED.

RESOLVED –

This Council notes that currently stations in Watford Borough sit in Zone 7 in the case of Watford Metropolitan Line Station, Zone 8 in the case of Watford High Street and Bushey, or in Zone ‘W’ in the case of Watford Junction station.

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Motion 2

The following motion was moved by Councillor Williams and seconded by Councillor Bell

“The Council opposes Hertfordshire's Police and Crime Commissioner's proposal to become the Fire and Rescue Authority for Hertfordshire and that the Fire and Rescue Service should remain under the control and democratic accountability of Hertfordshire County Council.

The Council therefore fully supports the view taken by Hertfordshire County Council in this regard, and its Leader's submission to the Home Office dated 22nd June, 2018 (attached).

The Council therefore instructs the Elected Mayor to write to the Minister of State for Policing and the Fire Service in similar vein as the Leader of Hertfordshire County Council, highlighting that this Council opposes Hertfordshire's Police and Crime Commissioner's proposal to become the Fire and Rescue Authority for Hertfordshire.”

Members debated the motion.

On being put to council the motion was AGREED.

RESOLVED –

The Council opposes Hertfordshire's Police and Crime Commissioner's proposal to become the Fire and Rescue Authority for Hertfordshire and that the Fire and Rescue Service should remain under the control and democratic accountability of Hertfordshire County Council.

The Council therefore fully supports the view taken by Hertfordshire County Council in this regard, and its Leader's submission to the Home Office dated 22nd June, 2018 (attached).

The Council therefore instructs the Elected Mayor to write to the Minister of State for Policing and the Fire Service in similar vein as the Leader of Hertfordshire County Council, highlighting that this Council opposes Hertfordshire's Police and Crime Commissioner's proposal to become the Fire and Rescue Authority for Hertfordshire.

Motion 3

The following motion was proposed by Councillor Khan and seconded by Councillor Bell

“70 Year of the NHS

The Council notes that;

This July sees the 70th anniversary of the creation of our National Health Service. It is one of this country's proudest and greatest achievements.

We cherish the way it puts people first and supports us at every stage of our lives, but we need to guarantee that it serves us for generations to come.

Over the past 8 years the Tories have starved the NHS of the resources it needs, they have allowed more and more local services to be privatised and undermined staff doing their best to care for the sick.

We note that the government has pledged to increase funding by £20billion, however we need more funding to transform our NHS to make it even better.

Our A&E is overstretched, The Hospital Trust is in financial crisis as well as the Herts Valley Clinical Commissioning Group. Cuts are being made to our local NHS services, including the inspirational Nascot Lawn centre.

One in four people now wait a week or more to see a GP. Despite all this, our NHS front line staff do a fantastic job.

The Council calls on the Mayor to write to the Health Secretary and Chancellor demanding that they

- Fully fund the NHS nationally and locally so that the cuts to our services are reversed.
- Finance the building of a new hospital in Watford at its current site without further delay.
- Protect patients and staff, ensuring the long-term sustainability of our health service.

This Council will set up a **Watford NHS covenant**, open to all residents, councillors and organisations to sign, pledging their support of the ideals of the NHS and ensuring that those who work in the NHS are treated fairly and with respect.

- that it meet the needs of everyone
- that it be free at the point of delivery
- that it be based on clinical need, not ability to pay”

Councillor Collett moved the following amendment, which was seconded by Councillor Sharpe

“Delete ‘Over the past 8 years’ (paragraph 3)

Insert after ‘The Council calls on the Mayor to:…’

‘1. Continue to work in partnership with West Hertfordshire Hospitals Trust towards the goal of providing improved healthcare facilities at Watford General Hospital, ensuring that Council land can be used to meet the hospital’s needs, as has been done with Thomas Sawyer Way.’

Insert numeral ‘2.’ Before ‘Write to the…’

After ‘long-term sustainability of our health service’

Insert

- Introduce a 1p rise in the basic, higher and additional rates of income tax to raise an extra £7 billion of additional revenue ringfenced for the NHS and social care.
- Direct this investment to the following priority areas, which will have the greatest impact on quality of care: social care, primary care (and other out-of-hospital care), mental health and public health.
- Bring together NHS and social care into one seamless service – pooling budgets in every area and developing integrated care organisations.
- Ensure that Brexit does not adversely affect recruitment and retention of NHS staff from the EU.”

Councillor Turmaine proposed that the amendment be amended further

“The last bullet point be amended to start ‘Make every effort’ instead of ‘Ensure’.”

Councillor Collett was happy for the amendment to be changed to reflect Councillor Turmaine's proposal and Councillor Khan accepted the changes to his original motion.

Members debated the amended motion.

On being put to council the amended motion was AGREED.

RESOLVED –

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2. Write to the Health Secretary and Chancellor demanding that they
 - Fully fund the NHS nationally and locally so that the cuts to our services are reversed.

- Finance the building of a new hospital in Watford at its current site without further delay.
- Protect patients and staff, ensuring the long-term sustainability of our health service.
- Introduce a 1p rise in the basic, higher and additional rates of income tax to raise an extra £7 billion of additional revenue ringfenced for the NHS and social care.
- Direct this investment to the following priority areas, which will have the greatest impact on quality of care: social care, primary care (and other out-of-hospital care), mental health and public health.
- Bring together NHS and social care into one seamless service – pooling budgets in every area and developing integrated care organisations.
- Make every effort that Brexit does not adversely affect recruitment and retention of NHS staff from the EU.

This Council will set up a **Watford NHS covenant**, open to all residents, councillors and organisations to sign, pledging their support of the ideals of the NHS and ensuring that those who work in the NHS are treated fairly and with respect.

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Chair

The Meeting started at 7.30 pm
and finished at 8.55 pm