

MINUTES of the MEETING of the
SOUTH DERBYSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL
held at Civic Offices, Civic Way, Swadlincote
on 7th November 2013
at 6.00 p.m.

PRESENT:-

Conservative Group

Councillor Mrs. Hood (Chairman), Councillor Murray (Vice-Chairman) and Councillors Atkin, Bale, Mrs. Brown, Ford, Mrs. Hall, Harrison, Hewlett, Jones, Lemmon, Mrs. Patten, Mrs. Plenderleith, Smith, Stanton, Watson and Wheeler.

Labour Group

Councillors Bambrick, Bell, Chahal, Dunn, Frost, Mrs. Heath, Mrs. Mead, Mulgrew, Pearson, Rhind, Richards, Shepherd, Southerd, Stuart, Tilley and Wilkins.

CL/44. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence from the Meeting were received from Councillors Mrs. Watson and Roberts (Conservative Group) and Councillor Taylor (Labour Group).

CL/45. **MINUTES**

The Open Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 26th September 2013 (Minute Nos. CL/31 – CL/41) were taken as read, approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

CL/46. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman reported that she had recently carried out a very enjoyable visit to Japan where she was made very welcome. The annual Poppy Appeal had also been a great success, and the Civic Service had been held at All Saints Church, Findern.

CL/47. **LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Leader reported on the successful Japan Visit and confirmed that no Council Tax money had been spent. He also reported that Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Service was currently consulting on proposed changes. There would be a presentation for Members in the Chamber on 20th November 2013. The consultation document would then be reported to Housing and Community Services Committee for Members to agree a formal response. Public consultation was also proposed to take place on The Delph in Swadlincote.

The Leader concluded by introducing the BBC Programme 'Inside Out', from which a short excerpt on Swadlincote was shown to members.

CL/48. **HEAD OF PAID SERVICES ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Head of Paid Services advised Members of the new Visitor Guide, which covered the District. He added that tourism was very important to the District with £167 million visitor spend during April 2012 – April 2013.

He also spoke about the Japan visit which had traditionally been very important in bringing investment to the District.

CL/49. **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, subject to any matters annotated:-

Planning Committee, 17th September 2013 (Minute Nos. PL/35 – PL/41).

(Minute No. PL/35 – subject to Councillor Dunn being noted under Apologies. It was also requested that either ipads or paper copies of agendas be made available at Planning Meetings as members of the public should have access. The Chief Executive agreed to consider options for future meetings),

Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 18th September 2013 (Minute Nos. OS/1 – OS/6).

(Subject to Councillor Dunn replacing Councillor Bell as present).

Licensing and Appeals Sub-Committee, 23rd September 2013 (Minute Nos. LAS/12 – LAS/13),

Licensing and Appeals Sub-Committee, 23rd September 2013 (Minute No. LAS/15).

(A Member asked if an article in the Burton Mail had involved a licensed driver from South Derbyshire. The Chief Executive confirmed that he understood that it did not involve a licensed driver, and therefore wasn't a matter for the Licensing Committee).

Licensing and Appeals Sub-Committee, 23rd September 2013 (Minute No. LAS/21).

Special Finance and Management Committee 25th September 2013 (Minute Nos. FM41 – FM/43).

***Environmental and Development Services Committee, 3rd October 2013
(Minute Nos. EDS/11 – EDS/15).***

(Subject to Councillor Stuart being noted as present).

***Housing and Community Services Committee, 10th October 2013
(Minutes Nos. HCS/10 - HCS/16).***

***Finance and Management Committee, 17th October 2013 (Minute Nos.
FM44 – FM/51).***

***(Minute No. FM/47 – It was requested that the Chairman of Finance and
Management Committee provide further information on his recent trip to
Westminster to discuss the Government Grant***

***Councillor Wheeler responded he had had a positive meeting, and
provided full details on his talks regarding Government Grant, New
Homes Bonus and Transformation Grant.***

***A supplementary question was asked - if the New Homes Bonus was
being shared appropriately and if Councillor Wheeler could assert any
influence in this area, Councillor Wheeler responded that it was very
difficult to assert any influence although he would make every effort to
do so).***

CL/50. **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/51. **LOCAL GOVERNMENT OMBUDSMAN – ANNUAL REVIEW LETTER
2012/13 AND UPDATE ON RECENT DEVELOPMENTS TO THE
OMBUDSMAN SERVICE**

A report was submitted which informed Members of the Council’s Annual Report, together with updates on the recent developments to the ombudsman service.

On the 16th July 2013 the Council received the annual review letter for the period 2012/2013. In contrast to previous years, the Local Government Ombudsman had only stated how many complaints were received, but had not provided any statistical data, as the Local Government Ombudsman had changed its business processes considerably during the course of 2012/13 and would, therefore, be unable to provide a consistent set of data for the entire year.

The Ombudsman’s Office received 11 complaints about the Council in 2012/13. The Ombudsman decided not to investigate 8 of the complaints, 2 investigations were discontinued and 1 complaint was not in the Local

Government Offices jurisdiction. There were no findings of maladministration causing injustice during this period.

RESOLVED:

- 1) *That the Local Government Ombudsman's Annual Review 2012/2013 be accepted.*
- 2) *That no decisions of maladministration causing injustice against the authority during 2012/13 be noted.*

CL/52. **ANNUAL AUDIT LETTER 2012/13**

A report was submitted from Grant Thornton (as the Council's appointed Auditor) to present the Annual Audit Letter for 2012/13.

The Letter covered key messages and conclusions from work on:-

- Auditing the 2012/13 year end accounts.
- The accuracy of grant claims and returns to various government departments and other agencies.
- Assessing the Council's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness to ensure that Value for Money was achieved.

RESOLVED:

That the report be approved.

CL/53. **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 26th September 2013, 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:-

Licensing and Appeals Sub-Committee, 23rd September 2013.

Licensing and Appeals Sub- Committee, 23rd September 2013.

Environment and Development Services Committee, 3 October 2013.

Housing and Community Services Committee, 10 October 2013.

Finance and Management Committee, 17 October 2013.

A. HOOD

CHAIRMAN