

Thursday, 13 July 2017

FOREST OF DEAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

FULL COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Full Council held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Coleford on Thursday, 13 July 2017 at 7.00 pm.

Present

Chairman Councillor Jane Horne

Vice Chairman Councillor Graham Morgan

Councillors Carole Allaway Martin, James Bevan, Richard Boyles, Philip Burford, Max Coborn, Gethyn Davies, Dave East, Maria Edwards, Clive Elsmore, Frankie Evans, Jackie Fraser, Andrew Gardiner, Julia Gooch, Alan Grant, Tim Gwilliam, Terry Hale, Carol Harris, Dave Hawthorne, Paul Hiatt, Martin Hill, Bruce Hogan, Gareth Hughes, Roger James, Brian Jones, Craig Lawton, Len Lawton, Richard Leppington, Di Martin, Chris McFarling, Helen Molyneux, Patrick Molyneux, Bernie O'Neill, Bill Osborne, Sid Phelps, Simon Phelps, Alan Preest, Brian Robinson, Douglas Scott, Jim Simpson, Marilyn Smart OBE, Lynn Sterry, Roger Sterry and Roger Yeates

Officers

Sue Pangbourne, Head of Paid Service
Claire Hughes, Legal Team Manager and Monitoring Officer
Paul Jones, Section 151 Officer
Julie Jones, Democratic Services Manager
Linda Bowdler, Democratic Services Officer
Alison Tomlin, Democratic Services Officer
Phil Measures, Service Leader, ERS

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Cllrs Diana Edwards and Clayton Williams.

2. MINUTES

Subject to the removal of the second word 'not' in paragraph 4 on page 12, the minutes of the meetings held on 25 May and 15 June 2017 were approved and signed as an accurate record.

3. URGENT BUSINESS

The chairman identified no items of urgent business.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllrs Grant and Simpson declared an interest in item 10 as they were private landlords.

Cllr Edwards declared an interest in item 10 as her husband was a private landlord.

5. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no chairman's announcements.

6. NOTICE OF MOTION

6.1 Cllr Bruce Hogan

In speaking to his motion, Cllr Hogan stated that this was not about an individual but about trust between groups. Cllr Molyneux had chaired the Boundary Review working group which had met 5 times and had finally reached consensus. The Solicitor had drawn up the report, despite her heavy workload and he thanked her for this. The Conservative group met on 13 June to hear Cllr Robinson's alternative proposals to create single member wards and these were only tabled at the Full Council meeting on 15 June. If Cllr Molyneux made no effort to encourage his group to support the report, then there was no choice but to support the motion. If he had asked his group to support the report, he had failed and should therefore be sacked. Since publication of the motion, Cllr Molyneux had acted in a petulant and bullying manner.

Cllr Martin seconded the motion.

Cllr Martin stated that it was with disappointment and anger that she urged members to support the motion. She had initially respected Cllr Molyneux as he had been inclusive in the creation of Cabinet groups. She had been optimistic about the Boundary Review Group, which was chaired by Cllr Molyneux, but she had been shocked and angered by his support of Cllr Robinson's amendment. The Conservatives were the largest group and Cllr Molyneux had threatened that the group would block every future decision taken. She had no confidence in Cllr Molyneux and neither did Cinderford or the wider District.

Cllr Robinson stated that Cllr Molyneux had served the Council well for a long time, including progress with the Cinderford Northern Quarter, keeping Council Tax low and moving the Council from special measures to receiving rewards. The Council had delivered again and again and Cllr Molyneux was part of this. The motion was based on one issue and this was unfair as the Conservative group were entitled to form a view on the Boundary Review. It was a slur on himself that he was gerrymandering and one seat per member had a logic to it. The motion was not a reason to question the leadership but he accepted that the Conservative group did not have a majority and therefore could be voted out and they would then take the opposition approach. The Council now had several political groups and he questioned how they could run the Council effectively with groups having opposite views to each other.

Cllr Boyles stated that he had been a cabinet member until recently and that he had worked well with the other groups including work on the capital strategy and asset management. He was sorry to hear what was being said tonight and added that Cllr Molyneux had articulated his position to the group but had not been successful in changing the view that single member wards were preferable. He was sorry that it had come to this.

Cllr Leppington stated that Cllr Molyneux had assured the other Group Leaders that the Conservative group would support the boundary review report. He was surprised and disappointed when the alternative proposals were put forward and that the Leader did not keep to his word. The Council needed a new Leader for the benefit of the whole District and he urged members to support the motion.

Cllr Molyneux stated that he had enjoyed his time as Leader for the last 6 years and that decisions taken had been in the best interests of the District. This was a democracy and the Boundary Review group was a task group whose purpose was to bring forward a proposal. It was not politically balanced and therefore not representative of the Council. The group put a set of proposals together for 48 councillors to decide on the way forward. The Conservative group were always in favour of single member wards. Two very

strong proposals had now been put forward to the Boundary Commission and they could now continue with their work. He referred to the hypocrisy of Cllr Leppington who had also agreed the report but then came forward with an amendment at the Full Council meeting. He would like to carry on as Leader but acknowledged that it was in the hands of the other members.

Cllr Burford agreed with Cllr Boyles that it was a great shame that it had come to this. He added that members needed to be careful what they wished for. Cllr Molyneux had faults but his biggest asset was his genuine care and concern for the District. He had made massive cost savings without cutting services and was successful with his work on Cinderford Northern Quarter and the leisure centres. The Conservative group had made one huge error of judgement and any confidence had now been lost. He believed that Cllr Molyneux was the best person to lead the Council and that any new administration would have to achieve a majority under a new Leader.

Cllr Smart, OBE said that this was a very sad day for the Council. Cllr Molyneux had served on the Council for over 10 years and he had been an excellent Leader and it had been a pleasure to serve as one of his Cabinet members. She advised members to be very careful when they vote as the consequences could be very dangerous for the District.

Cllr Grant referred to Cllr Molyneux's statement and commented that he had put in the amendment to Full Council, not Cllr Leppington.

Cllr Hale referred to the number of discretionary grants given by the Council and expressed concern that these grants could be taken away if there was a change of administration.

Cllr Gardiner commented that Cllr Molyneux's greatest achievement was in selling off the last great oak forest. He quite liked Cllr Molyneux but felt that he had wasted too much money.

Cllr Gwilliam commented that no deals had been made between groups. Any changes had to be about what was right for the District and the Council.

Cllr Hiatt referred to scaremongering by Cabinet members in stating that discretionary grants could be taken away. He understood why they would want to keep the Leader but scaremongering discredited them. He added that the grants were made on behalf of the Council not Cabinet.

In summing up, Cllr Hogan stated that Cllr Molyneux had lost the confidence of this Council and some members of his own group. It was time for a fresh start and, with 7 groups, this was probably the most fractured Council in the Country. There was no obvious Leader but Cllr Molyneux must pay the price of his duplicity regarding the Boundary Review. If the motion was successful,

he urged the Conservative group not to walk away and he hoped that they could come forward with a nomination of someone with integrity.

Cllr Hogan proposed and Cllr Martin seconded the motion.

RESOLVED – *the working group set up by the Forest of Dean District Council to submit proposals to the Boundary Commission was chaired by the Leader of the Council Cllr Patrick Molyneux. After many meetings involving the inevitable compromises, the working group reached a consensus, By tabling a number of last minute amendments to the agreed proposal of the working group, the minority Conservative Group broke faith with the other groups. As a result, the Council did not submit any proposal to the Commission. This also illustrated that Cllr Molyneux did not have the ability to deliver on an agreement negotiated with other groups. Consequently, this Council has no confidence in Cllr Molyneux as Leader of the Council.*

Voting was as follows

For (22) Andrew Gardiner, Sid Phelps, Chris McFarling, Gethyn Davies, Jim Simpson, Martin Hill, Richard Leppington, Alan Grant, Carol Harris, Paul Hiatt, Roger James, Bill Osborne, Tim Gwilliam, Bernie O'Neill, Max Coborn, Bruce Hogan, Lynn Sterry, Di Martin, Jackie Fraser, Douglas Scott, Roger Sterry, Graham Morgan.

Against (19) Jane Horne, Roger Yeates, Brian Jones, Gareth Hughes, Frankie Evans, Helen Molyneux, Maria Edwards, Alan Preest, Clive Elsmore, Philip Burford, Simon Phelps, Dave East, Richard Boyles, Dave Hawthorne, Carole Allaway Martin, Terry Hale, Marilyn Smart OBE, Patrick Molyneux, Brian Robinson.

Abstain (2) James Bevan, Julia Gooch.

Total (43)

Cllr Molyneux accepted the will of the Council and stated that he had tried to do the work to the best of his ability and it had not been easy being the Leader. He thanked officers for their support over the years and he thanked the Cabinet members who had worked well together as a team. He thanked the majority of his group and wished everyone good luck.

6.2 Election of Leader

The chairman asked for nominations for a new Leader of the Council in accordance with part 2, Chapter 1 of the Constitution.

Cllr Hiatt nominated Cllr Gwilliam and this was seconded by Cllr Osborne.

RESOLVED that Councillor Tim Gwilliam be appointed to the office of Leader of the Council for the remaining term of the Council until 2019.

Voting was as follows

For (13) Andrew Gardiner, Sid Phelps, Chris McFarling, Gethyn Davies, Jim Simpson, Martin Hill, Richard Leppington, Alan Grant, Carol Harris, Paul Hiatt, Roger James, Bill Osborne, Tim Gwilliam.

Against (0)

Abstain (0)

Total (13)

Cllr Gwilliam stated that he was sorry that today had happened but that the Council had to try and do things differently. He would continue to put the Forest of Dean first and he needed all councillors to play their part. Everyone should work together for the people of the Forest of Dean.

The Monitoring Officer advised that, as there were currently no Cabinet Portfolio holders in place, officers would present the reports at this meeting and that written responses would be sent for any supplementary questions asked by the public or members.

7. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Question 1

The following question has been received from Jill Raymond, 71 Woodside Street, Cinderford, Cinderford, Glos.
GL14 2NU

Having read the Governance Structure report in advance I attended the last full council meeting in April and listened to the discussion on the proposal to change the council governance from the cabinet system to the committee structure.

The officers had had 4 months to prepare and present their report detailing the implications of the change. The proposal was rejected by 37 votes against, 3 abstentions and 10 for.

However, some councillors, including those who made the proposal last December, suggested that it should come back to council after more time to put more detail into the proposal. Just how much more time was not specified although a 2 year wait until after the next District Council election was mentioned.

The Cabinet leader, the man who gets to pick his cabinet members, claimed to be open to an inclusive cabinet; another councillor pointed out that a cabinet can have up to 9 members plus the leader. Indeed, previous meetings have been questioned by a member of the public regarding the lack of cross party representation in the cabinet.

My question is: If we are to wait for 2 years before this proposal is returned for reconsideration, in the interim would Cllr Molyneux consider inviting 4 more cabinet members, drawn from non- conservative party members, to demonstrate to voters his commitment to the inclusivity he claims to have?

Response from Councillor Patrick Molyneux, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Thriving Economy

Thank you for your question. I have always tried hard to be inclusive of other party groups, providing the opportunity for their members to ask questions at Cabinet meetings. I have previously offered a Cabinet seat to a member from another group and if I thought it was in the best interests of the Council, I would consider doing this again.

Supplementary question

Ms Raymond was interested in a straw poll of all councillors about the suggestion of opening Cabinet up to a rainbow cabinet but events tonight had overtaken this.

Question 2

The following questions have been received from Paul Hiatt on behalf of West Dean Parish Council, The Parish Office, The West Dean Centre, High Street, Bream, Glos GL15 6JW

- a) Can the Portfolio Holder explain why enforcement action is only taken reactively following complaints by residents and the Parish Council, rather than proactively driven by the Planning Department?
- b) Can the portfolio holder explain why there are currently extensive delays in taking enforcement action?
- c) Can the Portfolio Holder tell us whether he considers it appropriate that the Chair of WDPC has had to escalate enforcement queries to the Council's solicitor and the Head of Paid Service in order to obtain adequate responses to his questions?

- d) Can the Portfolio Holder please tell us why the Planning Department is so poorly resourced that they are unable to respond to resident's and Parish Council's questions in a timely manner, and what he is doing to address this?
- e) What assurances can the Portfolio Holder give us that enforcement actions will be acted upon in a timely manner?
- f) Will the Portfolio Holder request that the Strategic Group Manager and the Senior Enforcement Officer attends a full meeting of West Dean Parish Council to convince local residents that their concerns are being meaningfully addressed?
- g) Will the Portfolio Holder comment on what he could personally have done to avoid the necessity of West Dean Parish Council raising a formal complaint regarding the conduct of the Planning Department?

Response from Councillor Patrick Molyneux, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Thriving Economy

- a) *The Council has to carefully consider its budget and prioritise the resources, both human and financial, it deploys. Planning enforcement is a discretionary function and resources are allocated accordingly. It is a developer's or land owner's responsibility to obtain and work to any planning permission granted.*
- b) *The Council has both an enforcement policy and enforcement plan that set out priorities for enforcement. Clearly, complex cases involving potential multiple breaches of control can take a long time to investigate and resolve. The enforcement process is tempered by a number of safeguards for those enforced against, such as appeal rights, that can significantly extend the process.*
- c) *Appropriate updates should be available in a timely manner. Where the Council hasn't provided a satisfactory service it is necessary to have the ability to escalate matters. I understand that the Cllr Hiatt has discussed these matters directly with the Strategic Group Manager recently. He is happy to work direct with Cllr Hiatt to improve communications.*
- d) *I believe the department is appropriately resourced now. Additional resources have been made available to the department this financial year and 1.5 fte additional staff are in the process of being recruited. In terms of improving responses I refer to the previous answer and the offer from the SGM to work with Cllr Hiatt to improve communications.*

- e) *I believe that the specific cases that Cllr Hiatt is concerned about were considered by the planning committee on Tuesday. The formal decisions of the committee will now be acted upon by both the planning and legal teams having regard to the due diligence that is necessary. I would stress that once formal notices are served the timescale for action is not wholly within the control, of the Council in light of the safeguards in the system I referred to previously.*
- f) *I am aware that a request has been made to the SGM to attend West Dean Parish Council in respect of specific enforcement cases. That is not an appropriate forum for the discussion of specific investigations. I am advised that the SGM is happy to attend a Parish Council meeting to discuss enforcement processes and policy. Alternatively you may request a private meeting for yourself, as Chairman and perhaps your clerk to discuss specific issues on a confidential basis.*
- g) *Had you raised these issues with me direct I would have happily convened a meeting with the relevant officers to discuss the situation and try to resolve the communication problems.*

Supplementary question

Forest of Dean District Council has a duty to be open and transparent in its dealings with residents. Given this, can the portfolio holder (if he is still in place) please commit to reviewing and, if necessary, change in conjunction with the Strategic Manager and Constitution committee the current farcical situation where concerned residents are unable to ask questions/make comments on enforcement either at Planning or Full Council.

Response

As there was no portfolio holder currently in place, a written response would be sent to West Dean Parish Council.

Question 3

The following questions have been received from Nicola Packer, 48 Buckshaft Road, Ruspidge, Cinderford, Glos GL14 3DU

Question A

It is usual for minutes of meetings to be published soon after the meeting in draft form. Why are draft minutes of the Cinderford Regeneration Board not published? It cannot be for reasons of commercial sensitivity because the minutes are usually heavily redacted. Not publishing a draft version of the minutes means that the public have no information until over six months after the meeting.

Question B

- i. The Cinderford Regeneration Board Community Forum is supposed to be the mechanism by which the local community are consulted about the Cinderford Northern Quarter development. The Forum has only met three times in total; July 2014, March 2016 and June 2017. Attendance is by invitation only. Although people can apply to attend, the meetings are not advertised and those members of the public interested in the Cinderford Northern Quarter development are unaware of its existence. Why are the Community Forum meetings not advertised?
- ii. People who had already expressed an interest in attending the Community Forum were only given 6 days notice of the June 2017 meeting. Why was the meeting called at such short notice?
- iii. Why was the length of the June 2017 meeting restricted to just over an hour?
- iv. What evaluation process is in place to assess how effective the Cinderford Regeneration Board Community Forum is at its stated objective of informing the community? Apart from development partners, at the 2014 meeting only schools and Artspace attended from the community; at the 2016 meeting, only one head teacher one governor and two members of the public attended from the community; at the 2017 meeting, apart from 6 District and 3 Parish councillors and 2 people from Steam Mills school, only two members of the public attended from the community. At the meeting, there was no discussion of how those present would disseminate information to the wider community. How can this be considered to be effective public consultation?
- v. In what other ways does the Cinderford Regeneration Board fulfil clause 3.1.7 of their MOU with FoDDC; '*communicate regularly and clearly with **residents**, businesses and regeneration partners through the resources it has available*'? Please list specifically all channels of communication with residents that are instigated by FoDDC (rather than in response to being contacted by residents).

Question C

The notes of the 8 February 2017 meeting of the Cinderford Regeneration Board state that '*Discussions are currently ongoing with Natural England regarding two conditions which requires a certain number of bats to be occupying the replacement bat roosts prior to demolition of the Northern United buildings. FoDDC have commissioned additional monitoring work and are hoping to be in a position to apply for variation of the condition at the end of the year, in order to demolish the Bath House building.*

The Cinderford Regeneration Environmental Forum met two weeks earlier on 25th January 2017, yet there is no mention in the notes of the variation of this important condition having been discussed at the meeting.

- i. Did FoDDC notify CREF that they were planning to contact NE to discuss these conditions **before** they contacted NE?
- ii. Did FoDDC provided details of the additional bat monitoring work to CREF **before** the monitoring took place?
- iii. Did FoDDC invite CREF members to comment regarding the additional bat monitoring work **before** the monitoring took place?
- iv. Did FoDDC consult with CREF and invite comments from CREF members about the planned variation to the condition either before or after contacting NE? If they have consulted with CREF, on what date, with which members of CREF and by what means?
- v. Has FoDDC provided CREF with the results of the additional bat monitoring work?
- vi. When will the results of the additional bat monitoring work be published and how?

Question D

The notes of the 8th February 2017 meeting of the Cinderford Regeneration Board state that *'Wendy also noted that there are plans to commence Phase 2 of the Ground Investigation works in order to commence detailed design of the remaining phase of the road'*. Has CREF been consulted about these proposed works; ie scope, detailed nature of the works, timescales?

Question E

On 7/10/14 Keith Chaplin responded to the P0663/14/OUT hybrid planning application by saying that *'Core Strategy Policy CSP.5-Housing requires that a 40% affordable housing contribution will be sought on all housing sites in towns which are greater than 10 units or larger than 0.3 ha.*

With the applicant citing that due to the viability of the proposed scheme that it would be unable to provide affordable housing in accordance with Core Strategy Policy CSP.5. A viability assessment of the applicants' revised proposal has been independently assessed by the council, which identified that the proposed development could not provide an affordable housing contribution and remain viable'. This comment relates to the housing plots G1 and H within the planning application. With regard to these housing plots:

- i. Is the viability assessment mentioned above published? If so where?
- ii. Reports show that the only shortage of housing in the Forest of Dean is for affordable housing. How does the Council justify destroying a habitat rich in wildlife to provide only unaffordable housing?
- iii. At the June 2017 Community Forum meeting, Wendy Jackson stated that in May, the LEP invited FoDDC to re-register interest for the Site Preparation Programme bid. If, as seems likely, the bid is successful, will 40% affordable housing be included in plots G1 and H, since the public money awarded should make the development more financially viable?

Question F

What were the results of the 'Strategic Feasibility of Renewable Energy' consultation?

What provision for renewable energy has been made for the Cinderford Northern Quarter development?

Response from Councillor Patrick Molyneux, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Thriving Economy

Question A

Draft minutes are presented to CRB members at the quarterly CRB meeting. Final minutes are published when accuracy is agreed by CRB members and have been signed off by the CRB Chair. Where confidential information is redacted the minutes are clearly marked.

Question B

- i. The Community Forum is an open meeting and is currently hosted by Steam Mills Primary School. Details of the Forum were advertised on the District Council website and emailed to all District Council members at the earliest opportunity. Managing attendance at this Forum is requested by the school to comply with their facility management and site security requirements.*
- ii. The aim was to hold a Forum meeting before the Primary School closed for summer holidays. The date was identified by the school at short notice as the most suitable date to host the*

meeting. The alternative would have been to delay and hold the meeting in in September/October.

- iii. The aim is to keep all Forum meetings to an hour in length unless site visits/walkovers are included.*
- iv. Notes of all CRB fora are presented to CRB meetings and published on FoDDC website with the CRB minutes.*
- v. FoDDC all member briefings*

FoDDC Cabinet, Scrutiny and Full Council Reports

FoDDC website and FoDDC Facebook and Twitter social media platforms

FoDDC officer attendance at Cinderford Town Council meetings

FoDDC led or other CRB member led press releases and press briefings

Question C

- i. No. Discussions are at a very early stage.*
- ii. CREF advised that annual surveys of both bats and great crested newts are ongoing.*
- iii. No. Annual monitoring is a requirement of the HCA hybrid planning approval.*
- iv. Any variation to planning conditions comes from the applicant which to date has been the Homes and Communities Agency.*
- v. Where FoDDC commission bat monitoring work, all resulting survey data is freely available from FoDDC website.*
- vi. Annual bat monitoring data is likely to be published on FoDDC website each Winter.*

Question D

Phase 2 spine road ground investigation works will be commissioned by Gloucestershire County Council subject to funding availability. This activity has yet to start but CREF will be kept informed.

Question E

- i. *No. Both the applicant's and FoDDC's independent viability assessments contain commercially sensitive information and are not available for public release.*
- ii. *The Cinderford Area Action Plan and supporting technical guidance documents are approved planning policy documents that will guide sustainable mixed-use development.*
- iii. *The Site Preparation Programme is designed to bring forward employment and housing plots for development by clearing the sites and remediating any below ground issues where these exist. LEP funding is geared towards promoting economic growth where jobs, business starts and commercial floorspace are key outcomes. The number of housing units is also a measured outcome but this does not specify housing tenure. The revised bid submission will include a measured outcome to enable the delivery of 195 housing units.*

Question F

The Cinderford Area Action Plan - Strategic Feasibility of Renewable Energy (Sep 09) forms part of the AAP evidence base and is available from the FoDDC website.

Please refer to Cinderford Area Action Plan Policy 33 – Renewable Energy. This document is available from the FoDDC website.

Supplementary question

Ms Packer did not attend the meeting. The Council would send the answer to her questions.

Question 4

The following question has been received from Roger James, on behalf of West Dean Parish Council, The Parish Office, The West Dean Centre, High Street, Bream, Glos GL15 6JW

Does the portfolio holder for Governance, Regeneration and Planning, consider that on the last day of a six week Reg 16 stage NDP public consultation it was appropriate for this council to submit comments that fundamentally oppose the very core of the Berry Hill Christchurch and Edge End Communities Neighbourhood Development Plan?

Contrary to this council's own practice when dealing with the move of Gloscol from Five Acres to the Northern Quarter site in Cinderford, this council had the effrontery at the eleven-hour of consultation to suggest that the neighbourhood development plan should be able to demonstrate certainty at the current stage of the plan's development.

It has been well established via previous discussion and understanding with senior council officers that the potential for developing the site in line with public aspiration can and will only be achieved on a step by step basis, as the site becomes available, and is returned to Community ownership.

Are we to understand that the partnership with the council, and council's apparent support for the NDP and involvement in the West Dean and Coleford regeneration board is now in practice at an end?

Response from Councillor Patrick Molyneux, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Thriving Economy

Thank you for your question. The response referred to was the District Council's comments on the draft NDP which has been submitted for examination. It refers to one outstanding matter and also confirms that in the FoDDC's opinion the NDP as drafted meets the basic conditions and can therefore go forward to examination. That is the main requirement of a consultation with the FoDDC (as Local Planning Authority) at this stage.

There was one outstanding matter which affects the potential compliance of the NDP with the (emerging) Development Plan at this stage and which relates to the NDP's policy in relation to the Five Acres site. The FoDDC's concern which has been relayed previously relates to the implementation of the NDP policy and how it may be delivered. It is a comment made in the context that the NDP will when "made" (ie finalised) be part of the development plan and that the FoDDC as planning authority will be responsible for its implementation. The comment which is reproduced in full below offers a way in which the NDP policy could be modified whilst retaining its intent. The next stage for the NDP is its examination during which the appointed examiner will consider the various policies and may recommend changes.

The comment is intended to enable positive changes to the NDP which will enable it to be implemented and influence the development of the locality. I am aware that the Parish Council has requested a meeting with officers to clarify the situation and our Forward Plan Manager has been in touch with your clerk to arrange a mutually convenient date and time. I would expect such a meeting to be able to clarify the situation.

“Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the version of the NDP tendered for examination. Overall the plan and its supporting material is comprehensive and very well produced.

Apart from one issue considered below, which the FoDDC have raised previously there are none which we wish to draw attention to at the present time.

We have in the past commented on previous versions of the NDP and have said that it does in our view meet the “basic conditions”. This requires a plan to be generally in accord with the current (adopted) development plan. Where there is a possible issue is that the emerging development plan does seek to promote a different mix of development which may include a greater scale of housing on the Five Acres site than that supported by the NDP. It is recognised however that the AP draft policy is not an allocation but an aspirational policy seeking a number of changes on the site allowing for a range of outcomes. There is flexibility in the AP and the policy (AP58) is drafted to provide policy guidance for the whole of the Five Acres site and some adjoining areas too.

The FoDDC’s main concern is about the implementation of the proposals for the Five Acres site. The available land may not be able to accommodate all of the uses referred to in the NDP. It is not large especially when the undeveloped open space is set aside. The NDP policy as written lists in priority order various uses and also requires an element of housing. The policy expects to:

- Provide a mix of recreational opportunities (requires indoor and outdoor space but may be within leisure centre?)*
- Develop theatre (requires retention of theatre)*
- Develop health facility (not specified would require dedicated space).*
- Add dining options and associated facilities (not specified)*
- Provide training facilities inc catering (implies retention of some buildings or new build)*
- Support pedestrian and cycle network (links to the site- would not in itself need additional space)*
- Create visitor accommodation (not specified-)*
- Allocate around 40 homes - This implies a minimum of 1ha but probably more appropriately 1.5ha of the already developed area is given over to housing. The policy as worded implies the housing acting as enabling development able to subsidise other uses. This may be very difficult to achieve given the indications elsewhere in the district of development viability.*

The built up part of the site is about 2.7 ha. And if the housing is to be provided 1.7ha at the most would remain for the other uses listed.

If the sports centre is to remain, there is after the car parking has been allowed for, not a lot of space remaining for housing and any other community/ employment uses. Further guidance in the plan regarding the nature of the planned uses may help as some that are envisaged may be small in scale or may be envisaged as the intensification of existing uses (for example the leisure centre).

In addition there is a lack of guidance regarding how the uses planned may be implemented- and although the plan may allocate in anticipation, there should be some reasonable expectation that they can be achieved.

The policy could be re cast as one which simply expresses the range of uses that will be permitted, with indications of the scale of each. It would be better if it specifically identified geographic areas for some uses such as the open space, the recreational/ sports element and the housing on a basic masterplan. Such a masterplan could be in accord with the AP and take it a stage further by showing in more detail how the site is expected to be developed. The suggested general policy would ensure that the land would be developed for the uses the plans (NDP and AP) support without requiring them all. It would be more closely in accord with the new AP if it were able to show how up to 80 dwellings could be accommodated on the wider site:

...”land at five Acres will be identified for open space (xha), indoor sport and recreation (xha) and for about ##dwellings on xha of land...”

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment. We have received some comments from others and will forward them shortly after today’s closing of the NDP consultation. Please let me know if you would like to discuss the above.

Nigel”

Supplementary question

In the case of the Berry Hill/Christchurch/Edge End NDP is it not correct that FoDDC Officers and cabinet members have in the last five years or so, produced a FoDDC scrutiny report upon the future of Five Acres, sat on the NDP committee and steering groups, taken part in numerous discussions, public consultations and meetings including with the member of parliament to discuss, and agree the future of the Five Acres site.

Does the portfolio holder not recall the two-day event held by the Homes and Community Agency?

Does the portfolio holder not accept that this council has had every opportunity at all stages in the formation of the NDP, and at every step been given access to all West Dean Parish Council public consultations, evidence gathering and feasibility studies, and in addition is a party to a legal memorandum of understanding with West Dean Parish Council over the future and hand over of the Five Acres Site?

Does the Leader not accept that the issue referred to in his response has previously been discussed and cannot be progressed until the site is handed over. Therefore the Council's submission was wholly inappropriate. There are parallels with the Northern Quarter so why treat the Berry Hill Christchurch and Edge End NDP differently.

Bearing in mind that the Portfolio holder and the author of the council submission both sit on the West Dean and Coleford Regeneration Board. What assurance can the community have that this council is not working with a different agenda in mind.

Response

As there was no portfolio holder currently in place, a written response would be sent to West Dean Parish Council.

8. MEMBER QUESTIONS

8.1 Cllr Bernie O'Neill

It would appear that the sanctions available for a Breach of the General Principles of Conduct by Members, lack any meaningful substance. Furthermore, the contemptuous disregard by some members of sanctions imposed upon them by the Standards Committee, have rendered them useless!

What, therefore, is the purpose and relevance of the Standards Committee?

Response from Councillor Lynn Sterry, Chairman, Standards Committee

The Council established a Standards Committee to carry out its functions relating to ethical matters under the Localism Act 2011. Whilst there is no longer a legal requirement for such a committee, Council considered that members were best placed to scrutinise and challenge their peers' behavior, rather than the function being solely delegated to the Monitoring Officer.

Part of the role of the Standards Committee is to consider reports from the Monitoring Officer in relation to allegations of misconduct and determine whether a breach of the Code of Conduct has occurred and if so, whether any sanctions should be imposed on the offending councillor.

A number of the previously available sanctions were removed from the Council upon the introduction of the Localism Act, the result of which is that the sanctions available are now limited and there is little that can be done if the offending councillor disregards a sanction.

Whilst it is appreciated that the sanctions are somewhat restricted, there remains a public interest in ensuring that councillors adhere to the Code of Conduct. However, this does not necessarily mean that a standards committee is the best vehicle for this. Therefore, whilst I am chairman I intend to work with the Monitoring Officer to conduct a review of the suitability of Standards Committee, with a view to presenting a report to Council on how standards can be most effectively managed.

Supplementary question

Can I thank the chair for her response and welcome her intention to conduct a review of the suitability of the Standards Committee and hopefully this will include its sanctions which appear to have little effect. Some recent decisions have been completely ignored by members without recourse and some decisions have been incredulous, and have done nothing to reassure the public of the standards expected of members. Can I ask if the chair intends to include in this review the role of the Independent member in the process as his/her opinion should be valued and not treated with as much disrespect as at the last meeting!

Response from Councillor Lynn Sterry, Chairman, Standards Committee

This was a big piece of work and she assured Cllr O'Neill that the whole picture and all issues he raised would be looked at.

8.2 Cllr Di Martin

At the special meeting of Full Council called on 15th June 2017, the Conservative Group proposed some last minute amendments to the proposals on a new warding structure agreed by the cross-party working group. Subsequently, both the Conservative amendments and the original recommendation were lost on the votes of members. This resulted in the Council having no official position on the boundary review.

Subsequently, the Labour Group submitted the original recommendations of the working group (as amended by the addendum from Cllr Burford) as their submission. The group informed all councillors that they had done so. Will the Leader of Council be equally open and tell Full Council if the Conservative Group has made a submission to the Boundary Commission? If so, will he share that submission with all the members of Council?

Response from Councillor Patrick Molyneux, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Thriving Economy

Yes, the Conservative Group did make a submission to the Boundary Commission and received confirmation from the Boundary Commission that it had been received.

The Conservative submission has been emailed to all members by Councillor Brian Robinson.

Supplementary question

None.

9. TREASURY MANAGEMENT ACTIVITY AND PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS 2016/2017

The S151 Officer presented report F.374 detailing the Treasury Management Activity and Prudential Indicators for 2016/2017. The treasury report had been scrutinised by the Audit Committee on 29 June 2017 and there were no breaches of the prudential indicators during the year. The Council's investments totalled £21.7M and overall interest of £142,000 was earned compared to the budget estimate of £150,000. The team had out-performed against the benchmark but it was acknowledged that with interest being so low, the Council had received a poor return on its investments. Council were asked to approve the increase in authorised and operational boundary limits for 2017/18 in recognition of the Council's aspirations formally agreed by Full Council in October 2016.

Cllr Craig Lawton referred to the interest of £142,000 against the budget estimate of £150,000 and asked whether this had any impact. The S151 Officer advised that this had not had a material impact on the overall finances but confirmed that the shortfall was a direct result of the base rate falling by 0.25% post Brexit.

In response to a query from Cllr Gardiner, the S151 Officer advised that the Treasury Management Strategy would consider the security of Council investments and the Asset Management Cabinet Support group had considered other areas for example by diversifying into assets. He added that any business case requiring prudential borrowing would have to come back to Full Council for approval.

Cllr Martin proposed and Cllr McFarling seconded the motion.

RESOLVED – That Council

- a) Approve the actual 2016/17 prudential and treasury indicators within Annex A;*
- b) Not the treasury management activity report for 2016/17;*
- c) Approve the increase in Authorised and Operational Boundary Limits for 2017/18.*

Voting was as follows

For (26) Clive Elsmore, Philip Burford, Simon Phelps, Andrew Gardiner, Sid Phelps, Chris McFarling, James Bevan Julia Gooch, Gethyn Davies, Jim

Simpson, Martin Hill, Richard Leppington, Alan Grant, Carol Harris, Paul Hiatt, Bill Osborne, Tim Gwilliam, Bernie O'Neill, Max Coborn, Bruce Hogan, Lynn Sterry, Di Martin, Jackie Fraser, Douglas Scott, Roger Sterry, Graham Morgan.

Against (0)

Abstain (0)

Total (26)

10. **THE REDRESS SCHEME FOR LETTINGS AGENCY WORK AND PROPERTY MANAGEMENT WORK (REQUIREMENT TO BELONG TO A SCHEME) (ENGLAND) ORDER 2014**

The Service Leader, Environmental and Regulatory Services (ERS) presented report E.106 which outlined the redress scheme for lettings agency work and property management work (requirement to belong to a scheme) (England) order 2014. The requirement means that tenants, prospective tenants, landlords dealing with lettings agents in the private rented sector; leaseholders and freeholders dealing with property managers in the residential sector, can complain to an independent body about bad service. It was a legal requirement for all lettings agents and property managers to join one of three government approved redress schemes from 1 October 2014. District Councils had a duty to enforce this legislation and a fine of £5,000 could be given to any agent or property manager who had not yet joined a scheme. There was also an appeal process in place. It was recommended that this function be delegated to Officers.

The Service Leader, ERS advised members that the scheme had already started and that private landlords were one of a number of exclusions from having to join the scheme.

Cllr Hogan proposed and Cllr McFarling seconded the motion.

RESOLVED –

- a) *That the contents of the report be noted.*
- b) *That the Head of Environmental and Regulatory Services be granted delegated powers to deal with the matter specified under paragraph 2.6 of the report.*
- c) *That the Council be requested to incorporate the approved delegations into the Officer delegation Rules contained in Part 4 of the constitution; and*
- d) *That the level of Fixed Penalty Notice is set at £5,000.*

Voting was as follows

For (26) Jane Horne, Clive Elsmore, Philip Burford, Simon Phelps, Andrew Gardiner, Sid Phelps, Chris McFarling, James Bevan, Dave East, Julia Gooch, Gethyn Davies, Richard Leppington, Carol Harris, Paul Hiatt, Roger James, Bill Osborne, Tim Gwilliam, Bernie O'Neill, Max Coborn, Bruce Hogan, Lynn Sterry, Di Martin, Jackie Fraser, Douglas Scott, Roger Sterry, Graham Morgan.

Against (0)

Abstain (2) Jim Simpson, Martin Hill

11. **CONSTITUTION**

The Monitoring Officer presented report LD.585 which sought authority to make appropriate changes to the Constitution to facilitate the transfer of services to Publica. A vires audit was currently being undertaken which would identify which functions remained with the Council and which ones could be delegated to the company. The recommendation was for delegated authority to be given to the Monitoring Officer in consultation with Group Leaders to make the changes.

Cllr Hogan referred to the transfer of employees to Publica and the assurance that Publica would recognise the Trade Unions. However, he had heard that this was not going smoothly. The Head of Paid Service confirmed that the Council had asked for assurance of Union recognition and that Publica were minded to recognise one of more Trade Unions in the future and that they were happy with the current interim consultation arrangements.

Cllr Hogan stated that he had always understood that Publica would recognise the same Trade Unions as the Council did and he was furious that Publica might recognise some of the Trade Unions but not all of them.

Cllr Hiatt agreed with Cllr Hogan and this was the reason that he had voted for Publica. He understood that employees would remain members of their Trade Union when TUPED over.

The Head of Paid Service stated that no-one had to change Trade Unions. Formal recognition had not yet happened and the Publica Board were fully aware of the views of this Council.

The Head of Paid Service made a declaration of Interest at this stage in her capacity as an Executive Director of Publica.

Cllr Hiatt asked how many roles would remain with the Council. The Monitoring Officer advised that this figure was not yet known. Cllr Hiatt asked to have this information when it became available.

Cllr Martin proposed and Cllr Lynn Sterry seconded the motion.

RESOLVED – that Council

- a) Give delegated authority to the Monitoring Officer in consultation with Group Leaders to make the necessary changes to the Constitution to facilitate the transfer of services to Publica; and
- b) Note that a schedule of the changes will be provided to Council in October 2017.

Voting was as follows

For (27) Clive Elsmore, Philip Burford, Simon Phelps, Andrew Gardiner, Sid Phelps, Chris McFarling, James Bevan, Dave East, Julia Gooch, Gethyn Davies, Jim Simpson, Martin Hill, Richard Leppington, Alan Grant, Carol Harris, Roger James, Bill Osborne, Tim Gwilliam, Bernie O'Neill, Max Coborn, Bruce Hogan, Lynn Sterry, Di Martin, Jackie Fraser, Douglas Scott, Roger Sterry, Graham Morgan.

Against (0)

Abstain (1) Paul Hiatt

Total (28)

12. MEMBER CHAMPION APPOINTMENT

The chairman asked for nominations to the position of Member Champion for Equalities. Cllr Martin referred to the importance of this role and proposed Cllr O'Neill. This was seconded by Cllr Hogan.

RESOLVED – that Cllr Bernie O'Neill be appointed as Member Champion for Equalities from 2017 to 2019.

This was approved by a show of hands.

13. NOTICE OF MOTIONS

13.1 Cllr Sid Phelps

In speaking to his motion, Cllr Sid Phelps referred to the legislation which related to public access to Council meetings and the increased duty on

Councils to be open and transparent. All meetings should be held in public unless there was a good reason not to. Nationally, there was a move towards more transparency and the reactions of the public towards closed meetings showed how badly things can go wrong. He referred to planning briefings and added that there was no need for these to be in private unless there were exempt matters. If these meetings were held in public, it would go some way to scotch any suspicion or accusation of irregularity. He also referred to scrutiny task groups being held in closed session in order that people would open up. His experience was the opposite with people being frank and honest under public scrutiny. Scrutiny was a powerful tool in modern local government and was so much more effective when done in the public spotlight.

He hoped that this motion would challenge the culture of the Council and move towards more openness and transparency. It was important for the public to see how decisions were made.

Cllr Burford noted that everyone agreed on transparency but was concerned about chairman's briefings being held in public as these were just a way of ensuring that meetings ran smoothly. He added that, on occasions, there were briefings between officers and members regarding a particular planning application which would happen several months ahead of any decision taken. Cllr Hogan agreed that there was no reason why these could not be held in public.

Cllr James referred to scrutiny task groups and that individuals could choose whether they attended or not. The Council did not have the powers to insist the people attended nor that they disclosed information.

In summing up, Cllr Phelps stated that there was a need to be sensible about this and to seek advice from the Monitoring Officer. The legislation and guidance was there and the Council needed to embrace this as most public thought that the Council were working against them. Maybe the motion was not perfect but the whole mood was about openness and transparency.

The Monitoring Officer suggested that the motion should refer to those meetings that were open to all members, thereby excluding chairman's briefings. Cllr Phelps agreed to this amendment.

Cllr Sid Phelps proposed and Cllr Grant seconded the motion.

RESOLVED – that

Council notes that it is in everyone's interest to be as open and honest as possible in all our deliberations and decision-making. Indeed, the Nolan Principles of Accountability and Openness should be the cornerstones of how we carry out our meetings.

Council further notes that whilst many of our meetings are in public, some are not (e.g. scrutiny task groups and council briefings) – and this can lead to suspicion of “something to hide” by the public.

Council therefore agrees that all meetings and briefings which are open to all members to attend are held in public, unless the provisions of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (exempt business) applies.

Note: Meetings held in public (what this motion proposes) are not the same as public meetings. For meetings held in public, the public can observe but cannot take part unless at the express wish of the Chair.

Voting was as follows

For (26), Clive Elsmore, Philip Burford, Simon Phelps, Andrew Gardiner, Sid Phelps, Chris McFarling, James Bevan, Gethyn Davies, Jim Simpson, Martin Hill, Richard Leppington, Alan Grant, Carol Harris, Paul Hiett, Roger James, Bill Osborne, Tim Gwilliam, Bernie O’Neill, Max Coborn, Bruce Hogan, Lynn Sterry, Di Martin, Jackie Fraser, Douglas Scott, Roger Sterry, Graham Morgan.

Against (0)

Abstain (2) Dave East, Julia Gooch

Total (28)

13.2 Cllr Chris McFarling

In speaking to his motion, Cllr McFarling asked members to give it their objective consideration. Forms of Proportional Representation (PR) were successfully used in 92 countries and great weight was given to fairness, a more equal society and increased political participation. It was clear that the current first past the post system increased inequality, reduced the value of voting and supported divisive, competitive politics between 2 opposing parties.

With the current threats to our society, there was an urgent need for a cleaner, more transparent politics that everyone could support and engage with. The Electoral Reform Society calculated that 74% of votes cast in 2015 were wasted on losing candidates or on winning candidates above the amount required to win. The advantages of a PR system were cleaner politics, a more equal society, a fairer distribution of public goods, gender equality and increased political participation. He asked members to consider the motion objectively and without prejudice.

Cllr Hogan stated that he had sympathy with the motion but that it was inaccurate. There was no such body as the Labour Campaign for PR and that this should be the Labour Campaign for Electoral Reform. The introduction of

a proportional voting system should be changed to a reformed voting system. If these changes were made, he would be happy to vote for the motion.

Cllr Burford stated that people wanted to know the person that they were voting for and that democracy was about the person who received the most votes would win and that the current system worked well. He was therefore unable to support the motion.

In summing up, Cllr McFarling stated that he was happy to change the wording in b) to state Labour Campaign for Electoral Reform. He was unsure about changing the wording in d) and whether this included proportional representation. There was a need for a stable Government that was representative of all voters, not just a few. PR was a fair system which had been tried and tested. Cllr Hogan suggested including the word 'more' before proportional voting system in d). Cllr McFarling agreed to this.

Cllr McFarling proposed and Cllr Sid Phelps seconded the motion.

RESOLVED – that

This Council understands that a Parliament that more accurately reflects the views of the nation, enabling people to feel that their votes count, is more likely to develop an economic, social and environmental agenda that benefits Forest of Dean residents.

Following the recent general election, this Council agrees that the 'First Past the Post' voting system:

has again failed to live up to its reputation to provide strong and stable government;

has again yielded a wildly disproportionate allocation of seats with, for example, the Democratic Unionist Party gaining 10 seats from 292,316 votes compared with 12 seats from 2.4 million votes for the Liberal Democrats;

has spectacularly failed to match votes to seats with 27,930 votes required to elect one MP from the Scottish National Party compared with 525,371 votes to elect one Green Party MP.

This Council:

a) recognises that a robust democracy must include a fair voting system and that nobody should be disenfranchised because of where they live;

b) applauds the many groups and organisations campaigning for fair votes including the Electoral Reform Society, Make Votes Matter and the Labour Campaign for Electoral Reform;

c) notes that the Single Transferable Vote system is already used for local elections in Scotland and in both Northern Irish local elections and the Northern Ireland Assembly while proportional electoral systems are used to elect the devolved parliaments and assemblies in Scotland, Wales and London;

d) therefore calls for the introduction of a more proportional voting system

(i) for local elections in England and Wales;

(ii) for Westminster elections; and

e) directs that a copy of this motion be forwarded to the Leaders of all political parties represented in the UK Parliament.

Voting was as follows

For (17), Andrew Gardiner, Sid Phelps, Chris McFarling, Dave East, Julia Gooch, Gethyn Davies, Jim Simpson, Martin Hill, Richard Leppington, Alan Grant, Carol Harris, Tim Gwilliam, Bruce Hogan, Lynn Sterry, Di Martin, Jackie Fraser, Graham Morgan.

Against (8) Clive Elsmore, Philip Burford, Simon Phelps, James Bevan, Paul Hiett, Roger James, Bernie O'Neill, Max Coborn

Abstain (3) Bill Osborne, Douglas Scott, Roger Sterry.

Total (28)

13.3 Cllr Sid Phelps

Cllr Sid Phelps stated that the Green and Non Aligned Independent group were opposed to the development of the Cinderford Northern Quarter (CNQ) as it was at the wrong site. However, the Regeneration Board and the Council were intent on carrying on, despite the concerns of environmental groups. He was putting forward this motion as his fears voiced some years ago that there was unlikely to be any affordable housing now transpired to be true. The Council's planning policy indicated a target of 40% affordable housing on large projects but the developer had informed the Council that they could not build 197 homes and make a profit if they were to build any affordable housing. The Council was now planning to sell the land and there would be nothing affordable for Foresters trying to get onto the housing ladder.

Other schemes were available to the Council, including Community Land Trusts, Self-build and rent-to-buy schemes and the motion simply asked the Housing Strategy Manager to assess the feasibility of these schemes.

Cllr Hogan referred to the need for affordable housing throughout the District, not just in the Northern Quarter and added that it was up to the Council to decide what to do with the land, not the CNQ Board. He suggested a friendly amendment to include the need for affordable housing across the whole District, including CNQ. Cllr Phelps agreed to the amendment.

Cllr Martin was pleased that Cllr Phelps had agreed to the amendment but was disappointed with his comments about CNQ. It was difficult for young people to stay in the District and affordable and social housing was needed throughout the area.

Cllr Hiatt commented that he was also able to support the motion now and he would like to see the level of affordable housing getting back to 40%. This was not just about young people and there was a need to look at things differently.

Cllr Morgan also supported the motion and noted that the Regeneration Board had already agreed to look at self-build and added that there would be social housing on the CNQ.

Cllr Leppington thanked Cllr Phelps for having the courage to address this issue and added that there was a need to look at this through fresh eyes.

Cllr Burford agreed with the need for affordable housing throughout the District. He did not agree with the views relating to CNQ as the land belonged to the Council and it was up to the Council to decide what to do with it. There were some innovative ways to provide homes which did not always fall within the requirement of affordable housing.

The chairman advised that she had wanted affordable housing in her ward about 10 years ago and a housing needs survey had been undertaken and there was now affordable housing in the area. It was not easy and required the help of the ward members.

In summing up, Cllr Phelps accepted Cllr Hogan's friendly amendment as he was happy to look at all sources of land. The motion would enable a paper to be produced for further discussion.

Cllr Sid Phelps proposed and Cllr McFarling seconded the motion.

RESOLVED – that

Council notes that some 195 homes have been given planning consent for council land at Cinderford Northern Quarter (plots H and G1).

Council further notes that at this point in time there is zero affordable housing planned for these plots, indeed at this juncture it is unlikely there will be any affordable housing on the whole of CNQ.

The established route for housing provision would be to sell the land plots to a developer. In the current economic climate however this route is unlikely to result in affordable housing.

Council notes that simply selling council land to a developer is not the only course of action. Indeed, using a Community Land Trust model and/or Self-build are more likely to result in housing for local people that would not otherwise be able to afford to buy.

Council therefore requests that the Housing Manager to prepare a paper on options for council-owned land parcels including CNQ for consideration by the Council as soon as practicable.

Voting was as follows

For (26) Clive Elsmore, Philip Burford, Simon Phelps, Sid Phelps, Chris McFarling, James Bevan, Dave East, Julia Gooch, Gethyn Davies, Jim Simpson, Martin Hill, Richard Leppington, Alan Grant, Carol Harris, Paul Hiett, Roger James, Bill Osborne, Tim Gwilliam, Bernie O'Neill, Max Coborn, Bruce Hogan, Lynn Sterry, Di Martin, Jackie Fraser, Douglas Scott, Graham Morgan.

Against (0)

Abstain (0)

Total (26)

14. ANNUAL REPORTS

Cllr Jones presented the Audit Committee Annual Report for 2016/17 which included the role of the Audit Committee, its key activities in 2016/17 and its annual programme of work.

Full Council noted the Audit Committee report for 2016/17.

Cllr Craig Lawton presented his report as Member Champion for Health. He referred to the consultation on the Minor Injury Units and he welcomed the £100,000 investment for The Dilke but hoped that this would not affect Lydney's Minor Injury Unit and he would write to Gloucestershire NHS Trust regarding this issue. He had worked with stakeholders and raised concerns regarding any indirect affects upon health as a result of their decisions, for example BT's announcement of their intention to close over 70 telephone boxes, some of which had been used for emergency calls. As a result, BT agreed to extend their consultation period with local residents. He had also trained to become a Dementia Friend and encouraged other members to take part.

Cllr Martin noted that the Forest of Dean District Council were leading the way in dementia care and Cllr Lawton welcomed the extra funding.

Cllr Leppington thanked Cllr Elsmore, Member Champion for Transport, for his help in the campaign to preserve bus services. He referred to the HC5 form (reclaiming of patient travel expenses) and asked why this area was being treated as a guinea pig. Cllr Elsmore stated that this issue had not been forgotten and was raised at most meetings.

Cllr Craig Lawton asked whether there was any update on the amount of money available for pot holes. Cllr Elsmore advised that this was an ongoing problem and it was his opinion that the whole road should be fixed, not just the pot holes.

Full Council noted the Member Champion reports.

Cllr Morgan presented the Member Development Annual Report for 2016/17 and added that a training programme had been put forward and urged members to attend.

Cllr Leppington thanked officers for their work and stated that it was commendable to put together a programme like this.

Full Council noted the Member Development Annual Report for 2016/17.

Cllr James presented the Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Committee report for 2016/17 and noted that the final reports of the sheep scrutiny task group and the Yorkley Court Farm would be submitted to the Scrutiny Committee in the near future. He had enjoyed his role as chairman of this committee and thanked Democratic Services and the Monitoring Officer for their help and advice.

Cllr Hiatt thanked Cllr James for his work on the sheep scrutiny task group as some meetings had been very trying but he had maintained a level of calmness. The outcome was not what was wanted but a resolution would be sought at a later date.

Full Council noted the Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Committee Report for 2016/2017.

15. CABINET AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE REPORTS

Full Council noted the report.

16. FUTURE MEETINGS

Full Council noted the calendar of meetings for 2017/2018 civic year.

The meeting ended at 9.54 pm

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