

Council



Forest Heath
District Council

Minutes of a meeting of the **Council** held on
Wednesday 26 July 2017 at **6.00 pm** at the **Council Chamber, District**
Offices, College Heath Road, Mildenhall IP28 7EY

Present: **Councillors**

Chairman Ruth Bowman J.P.

Vice Chairman Brian Harvey

Michael Anderson	Stephen Edwards
Chris Barker	Victor Lukaniuk
John Bloodworth	Carol Lynch
David Bowman	Nigel Roman
Rona Burt	Reg Silvester
Louis Busuttill	Lance Stanbury
Simon Cole	James Waters
Roger Dicker	

244. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 June 2017 were unanimously accepted as an accurate record and were signed by the Chairman.

245. **Chairman's Announcements (Report No: COU/FH/17/017)**

The report was noted.

246. **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Ruth Allen, Andy Drummond, Robin Millar and Louise Marston.

Councillors Andrew Appleby, Christine Mason, Colin Noble, David Palmer and Peter Ridgwell were also unable to attend the meeting. The Chairman made reference to the road traffic incident that had occurred that afternoon at the fiveways roundabout in Barton Mills; and remarked that it was likely that some District Councillors had been held up in the traffic jams caused by the incident.

247. **Declarations of Interest**

The following Councillors declared non-pecuniary interests in Agenda Item 8. 'Community Governance Review' (Report No: COU/FH/17/020) as Members of the Parish Council (Mildenhall) that the report proposed Parish boundary changes in respect of:

- Councillor John Bloodworth

- Councillor Ruth Bowman J.P.
- Councillor Nigel Roman

248. **The Leader's Report (Report No: COU/FH/17/018)**

The Leader presented his statement to the meeting, as set out in Report No COU/FH/17/018.

He welcomed Councillor Simon Cole to the Conservative Group and explained that he looked forward to working alongside him.

Councillor Reg Silvester addressed the meeting and voiced strong objection to Councillor Cole continuing to act as Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee now that he was no longer an opposition Member.

The Leader explained that the Council's Constitution did not stipulate that the Committee needed to be chaired by an opposition Member and this was also confirmed by the Service Manager (Democratic Services).

Councillor Lance Stanbury spoke in defence of Councillor Cole and requested that Councillor Silvester withdraw his strongly worded comments which he considered to be inappropriate and harmful to Councillor Cole's character.

Councillor Cole also spoke directly to Councillor Silvester and asked that he withdraw the comments he made.

Councillor Silvester refused both requests, in light of which the Chairman called a halt on the discussion and the Service Manager (Democratic Services) advised that the matter could only be settled outside of the meeting.

The report was noted.

(Councillors Louis Busuttil and Roger Dicker joined the meeting during the discussion of this item at 6.04pm and 6.05pm, respectively.)

249. **Public Participation**

Agenda Item 8. Community Governance Review (Report No: COU/FH/17/020)

Councillor Roz Hamill, Member of Mildenhall Parish Council (West Row Ward), addressed the meeting in respect of the above item and specifically Issue No. 2: Mildenhall/West Row.

Councillor Hamill spoke in support of West Row forming a new parish from the existing West Row parish ward of Mildenhall Parish.

She informed the meeting that West Row contained a number of varied, established communities who were able to work together effectively for the benefit of the village as a whole.

Council were advised that the West Row Action Group had consulted West Row residents in relation to the proposal to form a separate parish and the response had been largely in support.

John Smith, West Row resident, also addressed the meeting in respect of the above item and specifically Issue No. 2: Mildenhall/West Row.

Mr Smith likened West Row village in size to Exning, which was a separate parish and not submerged within its neighbouring town of Newmarket.

He spoke on the great opportunity that the Community Governance Review could bring about to both West Row in forming its own parish and to Mildenhall in subsequently establishing itself as a Town Council.

The Chairman thanked both speakers and confirmed their representations would be considered during the relevant agenda item.

250. **Referrals Report of Recommendations from Cabinet (Report No: COU/FH/17/019)**

The Council considered the referrals report of recommendations from Cabinet as set out in Report No: COU/FH/17/019:

1. Mildenhall Hub – Investing in Renewable Energy
(Cabinet: 20 June 2017)

The Chairman advised Members that they were simply asked to note this item which was the subject of a separate report later on the agenda.

2. West Suffolk Pay Policy Statement 2017/2018
(Cabinet: 20 June 2017)

Councillor Stephen Edwards, Cabinet Member for Resources and Performance, explained that Section 38/11 of the Localism Act required local authorities to provide a Pay Police Statement annually.

On the motion of the Cabinet Member, seconded by Councillor David Bowman and with the vote being unanimous, it was

RESOLVED:

That the West Suffolk Joint Pay Policy Statement for 2017/2018, as contained in Appendix 1 (as amended) to Report No CAB/FH/17/034, be approved.

251. **Community Governance Review (Report No: COU/FH/17/020)**

The Director reminded all present that during consideration of this matter at the Council meeting on 14 June 2017 Members opted to defer consideration of Issue No 2: Mildenhall/West Row in order to allow Mildenhall Parish Council time in which to clarify its formal response.

The Parish Council had confirmed to the District Council that it did not wish to change its original response to the consultation.

Accordingly, in light of the confirmed response from the Parish Council, the evidence received and the presentations to the meeting by the public speakers, Council was being asked to make one of two decisions: i.e. whether to:

- A. Maintain the status quo (Mildenhall Parish stays as it currently is and a new parish for West Row is not created); or
- B. Create a new parish council in 2019 from the existing West Row parish ward of Mildenhall Parish.

The Leader spoke on the item and voiced disappointment that it had been inaccurately reported in the local press that the District Council had 'lost' submitted evidence in relation to this matter.

On the basis of the evidence received and the presentations made to the meeting, the Leader proposed Option B (create a new parish council) and this was duly seconded by Councillor David Bowman.

Councillor Lance Stanbury also spoke in support of Option B and spoke on the distinct community that existed within West Row.

Upon being put to the vote and with the vote being unanimous, it was

RESOLVED:

Issue No 2: Mildenhall/West Row

That, on the basis of the evidence received and the presentations made to the meeting, a new parish of West Row be created in 2019 from the existing West Row parish ward of Mildenhall Parish, with the same boundary, and the Parish be served by a Parish Council with nine Councillors and no wards.

252. **Mildenhall Hub - Business Case for Investing in Renewable Energy Technologies (Report No: COU/FH/17/021)**

The Service Manager (Environmental Health) sought Council approval to finalise the business case for the Mildenhall Hub in relation to investing in renewable energy technologies, should planning consent be granted.

Members were advised that both the Cabinet and the Overview & Scrutiny Committee had also considered the principles of the report in June 2017.

The Officer explained that if the project didn't meet the set requirements, as outlined in Report No COU/FH/17/021, then the proposals would be brought back to Council and subject to further consultation.

The Leader spoke in support of this item and moved that the recommendation be approved, this was duly seconded by Councillor Simon Cole.

With the vote being unanimous, it was

RESOLVED:

That:-

1. The business case for an investment of up to £2m in renewable energy provision in the Mildenhall Hub, be approved;
2. The funding model, with estimated project budget and cash flow as set out in Report No COU/FH/17/021 and its Appendix 3, be agreed;
3. Further detailed assessment and procurement of the renewable energy provision on the basis of this report, be approved; and
4. The Council's S151 Officer make the necessary changes to the Council's prudential indicators as a result of Recommendation 1. above.

253. Annual Scrutiny Report: 2016/2017 (Report No: COU/FH/17/022)

Councillor Simon Cole, Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, presented Forest Heath's Annual Scrutiny Report for 2016/2017. He thanked his fellow Overview and Scrutiny Members for all their support and input over the past year.

Councillor Louis Busuttil also spoke in support of the report in his capacity as Chairman of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee.

It was moved by Councillor Simon Cole, seconded by Councillor Louis Busuttil and with the vote being unanimous, it was

RESOLVED:

That the Annual Scrutiny Report for 2016/2017 be received and noted.

254. Review of Political Balance and Appointment to Politically Balanced Bodies (Report No: COU/FH/17/023)

Members were advised that the Council had received a written Notice under the requirements of the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups Regulations 1990) confirming that Councillor Simon Cole had become a member of the Conservative Group on Forest Heath District Council and, as such, ceased to be a member of the West Suffolk Independent Group.

Accordingly, this had altered the political composition of the District Council and Council was, therefore, requested to review the allocation of seats and substitutes to political groups in accordance with the political balance rules, together with the membership of the Council's Scrutiny Committees which were not required to be politically balanced.

The Service Manager (Democratic Services) confirmed that Councillor Andrew Appleby, as the new West Suffolk Independent Group Leader, had confirmed in writing to her that his group's (outstanding) nomination for the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee (as indicated in Paragraph 1.2.3 of Report No COU/FH/17/023) was himself.

Accordingly, the Leader moved the report's recommendations, inclusive of the WSI's nomination for the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee, and this was duly seconded by Councillor Louis Busutil.

The Chairman asked Members to note a correction in respect of Paragraph 1.2.2 of the report, in relation to the membership of the Licensing and Regulatory Committee where Councillor Chris Barker had mistakenly been listed as Chairman of this Committee, when it was in fact Councillor Brian Harvey.

Upon being put to the vote, and with the vote being unanimous, it was

RESOLVED:

That:-

1. The formula for the allocation of seats to the political groups on those Committees which are required by law to be politically balanced, as set out in Appendix 1 of Report No COU/FH/17/023, be approved;
2. The allocation of seats on the Committees which are required by law to be politically balanced, as indicated in Appendix 1 and Paragraph 1.2.1 of Report No COU/FH/17/023, be approved;
3. The allocation of seats on the Overview and Scrutiny Committee as indicated in Paragraph 1.2.3 of Report No COU/FH/17/023, be approved. This Committee is not required to be politically balanced;
4. The allocation of seats on the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee as indicated in Paragraph 1.2.3 of Report No COU/FH/17/023, together with Councillor Andrew Appleby as the West Suffolk Independent Member be approved. This Committee is not required to be politically balanced;
5. If the Council is unable to confirm the appointment of Members and Substitute Members at the Council meeting on 26 July 2017 the Service Manager (Democratic Services) be given Delegated Authority to appoint Members and Substitute Members to those bodies set out in recommendations 2., 3. and 4. above, on the basis of nominations from the relevant Group Leaders.

255. Questions to Chairmen of other Committees

There were no questions to Chairmen of other Committees.

256. Urgent Questions on Notice

There were no urgent questions on notice.

The meeting concluded at 6.44 pm

Signed by:

Chairman
