

COUNCIL

23 February 2016

Commenced: 5.00 pm

Terminated: 7.55 pm

Present: Councillors Kitchen (Chair), Ricci (Civic Mayor), Affleck, Bailey, Ballagher, Beeley, Bowerman, Buckley, Cartey, Cooney, Cooper, Downs, Drennan, Fairfoull, J Fitzpatrick, P Fitzpatrick, Fowler, Glover, Gwynne, A Holland, B Holland, Jackson, Kinsey, D Lane, J Lane, McNally, R Miah, Patrick, Pearce, Peet, Piddington, K Quinn, S Quinn, Reid, Reynolds, Robinson, Ryan, Sidebottom, M Smith, T Smith, Sweeton, Taylor, F Travis, L Travis, Ward, Warrington, Welsh, White, Whitehead and Wild.

Apologies for Absence: Councillors Bell, Bowden, Bray, Dickinson, I Miah, Middleton and Shember-Critchley.

Civic Mayor (Councillor Ricci) in the Chair

42. CIVIC MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Civic Mayor announced, with great sadness, the recent deaths of Jack Davis, Elizabeth (Betty) Hatton and Winifred Poole. Jack had served on Tameside Council from 1998 until his retirement in 2010, representing St Peters Ward and he served as Civic Mayor of Tameside in 2008/09 and Deputy Mayor in 2001/02. For many years Jack had also held the position of Chair of Council Business.

Betty was Mayoress of Tameside in 1993/94 when her husband, Albert Hatton, was Mayor of the Borough. Winifred was Mayoress in 2001/02 when her son, Stephen Poole, was Mayor.

The Civic Mayor extended condolences to families and friends and those present stood in silence for a few moments in memory of Jack, Betty and Winifred.

The Civic Mayor further announced that a number of Tameside citizens had been recognised in the New Year Honours list. In addition to the MBE awarded to Chief Executive, as mentioned at the extra-ordinary meeting of the Council on 21 January 2016, (Minute 31 refers), the MBE was awarded to Sandra Marston from Denton for services to the community in Tameside and to Anthony Chaba, also of Denton, for services to Minority Ethnic Communities in Manchester.

Mr Peter Fish of Hollingworth was awarded the British Empire Medal for services to the elderly in Hollingworth, Hyde and Glossop and Mr Alan Humphries, a retired Police Officer from Stalybridge, was awarded the Queen's Police Medal to recognise his distinguished service in neighbourhoods across the region. Members joined the Civic Mayor in extending their sincere congratulations to the Chief Executive, Sandra, Anthony, Peter and Alan.

Councillor Kitchen, Chair of Council Business, in the Chair

43. MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the proceedings of the extra-ordinary meeting of the Council held on 21 January 2015 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair of Council Business.

44. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

DISPENSATION Item 6 – Budget 2016/17 and future years		
Councillors Affleck, Bailey, Ballagher, Beeley, Bowerman, Buckley, Cartey, Cooney, Cooper, Downs, Drennan, Fairfoull, J Fitzpatrick, P Fitzpatrick, Fowler, Glover, Gwynne, A Holland, B Holland, Jackson, Kinsey, Kitchen, D Lane, J Lane, McNally, R Miah, Patrick, Pearce, Peet, Piddington, K Quinn, S Quinn, Reid, Reynolds, Ricci, Robinson, Ryan, Sidebottom, M Smith, T Smith, Sweeton, Taylor, F Travis, L Travis, Ward, Warrington, Welsh, White, Whitehead and Wild.	Prejudicial – Section 33(2)(a) of the Localism Act 2011 – that without the dispensation the number of Members prohibited from participating in any particular business would be so great a proportion of the body transacting the business as to impede the transaction of the business.	Beneficial interest in property in Tameside, namely residence.

45. COMMUNICATIONS OR ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Executive Leader announced that Councillor Idu Miah had formally submitted his intention to stand down as a Councillor for the Mossley Ward, owing to pressure of work and the impact it was having on his health and that of his family. Councillor Miah had decided to step down at the earliest opportunity so that any by-election could be held at the same time as the Local elections on 5 May 2016 and avoid the need for a separate election.

The Executive Leader, on behalf of the Council and the people of Mossley, thanked Councillor Miah for his enthusiasm and commitment to Mossley.

Councillor L Travis, Executive Member, Lifelong Learning, with reference to school achievements, was very pleased to announce that Tameside was in the top 10 Boroughs nationally for improved GCSE results, with 53.7% of pupils achieving A – C grades, including (English and Mathematics), which was a 3.6% improvement on the previous year.

Councillor Downs made reference to her forthcoming retirement from the Council and informed Members that this was her last Council meeting. Councillor Downs thanked all Councillors past and present and staff for their support during her 25 years of service on the Council and wished everyone well for the future.

46. COUNCIL BIG CONVERSATION

The Chair reported that one question had been submitted by a member of the public in accordance with Standing orders 31.12 and 31.13 however it had been received after the deadline for receipt of questions and would therefore be dealt with at the next ordinary Council meeting.

47. JOINT MEETING OF EXECUTIVE CABINET AND AUDIT PANEL

Consideration was given to the Minutes of the Joint Meeting of Executive Cabinet and Overview (Audit) Panel held on 10 February 2016. It was moved by Councillor K Quinn, seconded by Councillor Taylor that the minutes be received.

Councillor B Holland added that, Minutes of all future meetings of the Carbon and Waste Reduction Panel would be submitted to Executive Cabinet.

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Joint Meeting of Executive Cabinet and Overview (Audit) Panel held on 10 February 2016 be received.

48. BUDGET 2015/16 AND FUTURE YEARS

The Executive Leader presented the budget for 2016/17 and future years, which set out what the Council intended to do for its residents and businesses over the coming year.

The Executive Leader began by welcoming everyone to Guardsman Tony Downes House, the new home of the Greater Manchester Pension Fund. He added that this was the first meeting of Full Council to be held in Droylsden since the days of the Urban District Council.

He made reference to the continuing difficulties faced by the Council during six years of austerity due to funding cuts imposed by the Government. He highlighted the pressures on adult social care and explained that Tameside would be taking the full 'precept' of 2% increase in council tax over and above any other rise, in order to help preserve adult social care services and to support and protect the most vulnerable members of the community.

The Executive Leader commented on Greater Manchester devolution and stressed the importance of both devolved responsibilities and control of resources to give Greater Manchester the tools it needed to forge its own destiny.

He outlined the results of the second Budget Consultation launched in September 2015. It was reported that there had been 215 budget consultation events held across the Borough and there had been engagement with almost 3000 residents with 1019 responses received. 80% of respondents had said that people should be prioritised over buildings and accordingly, a target had been set to raise £15 million in capital receipts a year for the next three years from selling off council buildings and land to build more homes and encourage business growth. Protecting funding for social care and safeguarding, for school and pupil support and for family support and early years help was also supported. Three quarters of respondents supported an average council tax increase of 12% to protect vital services from the worst impact of the cuts faced. He stated that he was proposing a rise in council tax for the 2016/17 financial year of 1.99%.

The Executive Leader reported on the 15 Pledges for 2015 and explained how they had supported businesses to invest in apprenticeships; provided the cheapest long stay council car parking in Greater Manchester; launched the Big Tidy Up, making Tameside a more attractive place to live and travel in. He then announced the launch of 16 Pledges for 2016, which would include transforming marginal land into new allotment sites; planting trees, providing recycling facilities in all Council buildings and town centres and cleaning up streets across Tameside. He made further reference to continued work turning Ashton Old Baths into a state of the art digital hub.

Consolidation and modernisation of leisure buildings was also a priority and over 1000 replies had been received to the consultation on the issue. Feedback would be incorporated into any plans, ensuring that leisure facilities remained accessible and sustainable.

The Executive Leader concluded that challenges to the Council were many and varied and that, despite the unprecedented scale of the cuts faced by local government, it was vital to protect vulnerable residents and take every opportunity to invest in Tameside, its people and businesses.

In accordance with the Constitution, the Chair of Council Business then afforded the Opposition Group the opportunity to present to the Council alternative budgets.

In response, Councillor Buckley proposed an amendment, which was seconded by Councillor Beeley as follows:

That Tameside Council had adequate reserves and balances to negate the need for anything higher than a 2% rise in Council Tax, and therefore proposed a freeze in Council Tax in Tameside for the 2016/17 financial year.

Councillor Buckley stated that he agreed with the precept of 2% to assist the Authority in meeting expenditure on adult social care, however expressed concern with regard to health outcomes in

the Borough, the closure of swimming pools and schools' Ofsted ratings. He concluded by stating that he was totally opposed the increase in Council Tax for 2016/17.

For the Amendment, as set out below:

Councillors Beeley, Buckley and Patrick.

Against the Amendment, as set out below:

Councillors Affleck, Bailey, Ballagher, Bowerman, Cartey, Cooney, Cooper, Downs, Drennan, Fairfoull, J Fitzpatrick, P Fitzpatrick, Fowler, Glover, Gwynne, A Holland, B Holland, Jackson, Kinsey, Kitchen, D Lane, J Lane, McNally, R Miah, Pearce, Peet, Piddington, K Quinn, S Quinn, Reid, Reynolds, Ricci, Robinson, Ryan, Sidebottom, M Smith, T Smith, Sweeton, Taylor, F. Travis, L. Travis, Ward, Warrington, K Welsh, White, Whitehead and Wild.

Upon being put to a named vote the amendment was declared lost.

General discussion then ensued in relation to the proposed budget as outlined and responses made accordingly. The budget for 2016/17 set out in the previously circulated report, as amended by the tabled report and addendum was moved by Councillor K Quinn, seconded by Councillor Taylor and, in accordance with The Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations, a named vote was taken on the Council Tax Motion as follows:

For the Motion, as set out below:

Councillors Affleck, Bailey, Ballagher, Bowerman, Cartey, Cooney, Cooper, Drennan, Fairfoull, J Fitzpatrick, P Fitzpatrick, Fowler, Glover, Gwynne, A Holland, B Holland, Jackson, Kinsey, Kitchen, D Lane, McNally, R Miah, Pearce, Peet, Piddington, K Quinn, S Quinn, Reid, Reynolds, Ricci, Robinson, Ryan, Sidebottom, M Smith, T Smith, Sweeton, Taylor, F. Travis, L. Travis, Ward, Warrington, K Welsh, White, Whitehead and Wild.

Against the Motion, as set out below:

Councillors Beeley, Buckley and Patrick.

RESOLVED

- 1. An overall Council Net Revenue Budget of £168.565m for 2016-17 (excluding any Council Tax increases), budget savings/efficiencies of £13.075m as set out in Table 3 (and Appendices A & B) of the report and the actions required to deliver the proposed savings.**
- 2. Note the comments of the Section 151 Officer, at paragraph 2.7b, on the financial impact of increases in Council Tax, The options of increasing the Council Tax as set out in the report at Table 2 & Appendix C are considered and confirmed, or otherwise. The options include a Council Tax increase for firstly, the 'Social Care Precept' and secondly, the 'referendum' Council Tax and are set out at Table 2 & Appendix C and the revised Net Revenue Budgets..**
- 3. The decision to take the option of agreeing the Government's four year 'efficiency' settlement, which will give certainty to funding to 2020 is made.**
- 4. The budget proposals set out for 2017-20, including authorising Chief Officers to take the action required to deliver budget savings for those years as appropriate are approved.**
- 5. With regard to the future years 2017-20, further plans to meet the budget shortfall for those years are urgently developed and brought back to Members before June 2016.**
- 6. That the Pay Policy for 2016-17, included at Appendix D, is approved.**
- 7. That the addendum to the Budget Report be noted;**

8. That the formal Council Tax Resolution set out at Appendix One to the report be adopted.
 9. That the calculation of aggregate amounts as set out at Appendix Two to the report noted.
 10. That all fees and charges of the Council are raised by 2% (this reflects increases in staffing costs, including pay rises, pension costs and national insurance changes as well as reflecting inflationary increases in goods and services charged to the Council) unless where otherwise a higher increase is agreed by the Council.
 11. That it be noted that a Key Decision was taken on 28 January 2016 by the First Deputy (Performance and Finance) that the relevant Council Tax bases for 2016/17 be as follows:
 - (a) 57,969.5 for the whole Council area (including the Mossley Parish area) [item T in the formula in Section 31B(1) of “the Act”].
 - (b) 3,156.3 for the Mossley Parish area to which a local precept relates.
5. That the Council approves the Council Tax Requirement for the Council’s own purposes for 2016/17 (excluding the Mossley Parish precept) as being £74,333,000.
 6. That the following amounts be calculated by the Council for the year 2016/17:
 - (a) £412,734,740 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) of “the Act” taking into account the precept issued for the year by Mossley Parish Council (Appendix 2).
 - (b) £338,401,740 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) of “the Act” (Appendix 2).
 - (c) £74,333,000 being the amount by which the aggregate at 3(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 3(b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31A(4) of “the Act”, as its Council Tax Requirement for the year [item R in the formula in Section 31B(1) of the “the Act”].
 - (d) £1,282.28 being the amount at 3(c) above, divided by item T (1(a) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B(1) of “the Act”, as the basic amount of Council Tax for the year (including the Mossley Parish precept).
 - (e) £26,234 being the aggregate amount of all special items referred to in Section 34(1) of “the Act”, being the Mossley Parish precept.
 - (f) £1,281.83 being the amount at 3(d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 3(e) above by item T (1(a) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(2) of “the Act”, as the basic amount of tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no special items relate.
 - (g) £1,290.14 being the amounts given by adding to the amount at 3(f) above the amount of the special item or items relating to dwellings in those parts of the Council's area mentioned at 3(e) above divided by the amount at 1(b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(3) of “the Act”, as

the basic amount of Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which one or more special items relate.

7. That it be noted that for the year 2016/17 the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Greater Manchester and the Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Authority have issued precepts to the Council in accordance with Section 40 of “the Act”, for each category of dwelling in the Council's area as indicated in the tables below.
8. That the Council, in accordance with “the Act”, hereby sets the aggregate amounts shown in the tables below as the amounts of Council Tax for 2016/17 for each part of its area and for each of the categories of dwellings.

VALUATION BANDS - TAMESIDE METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL (EXCLUDING MOSSLEY PARISH COUNCIL)								
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council	838.12	977.81	1,117.49	1,257.18	1,536.55	1,815.92	2,095.30	2,514.36
Precepts								
Adult and Social Care Precept	16.43	19.17	21.91	24.65	30.13	35.61	41.08	49.30
Police & Crime Commissioner for Greater Manchester (calculated figures)	104.87	122.34	139.82	157.30	192.26	227.21	262.17	314.60
Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Authority (calculated figures)	39.18	45.71	52.24	58.78	71.84	84.90	97.96	117.56
Aggregate of the Council Tax requirement (including Precepts)								
Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council (excluding Mossley)	998.60	1,165.03	1,331.46	1,497.91	1,830.78	2,163.64	2,496.51	2,995.82

VALUATION BANDS - TAMESIDE METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL (INCLUDING MOSSLEY PARISH COUNCIL)								
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council	838.12	977.81	1,117.49	1,257.18	1,536.55	1,815.92	2,095.30	2,514.36
Precepts								
Adult and Social Care Precept	16.43	19.17	21.91	24.65	30.13	35.61	41.08	49.30
Mossley Parish Council	6.55	7.64	8.73	9.82	12.00	14.18	16.37	19.64
Police & Crime Commissioner for Greater Manchester (calculated figures)	104.87	122.34	139.82	157.30	192.26	227.21	262.17	314.60
Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Authority (calculated figures)	39.18	45.71	52.24	58.78	71.84	84.90	97.96	117.56
Aggregate of the Council Tax requirement (including Precepts)								
Mossley Parish Council Boundary	1,005.15	1,172.67	1,340.19	1,507.73	1,842.78	2,177.82	2,512.88	3,015.46

49. CAPITAL STRATEGY AND PROGRAMME

Consideration was given to a report of the First Deputy (Performance and Finance) and the Assistant Executive Director (Finance) setting out the Council's Capital Strategy for 2016/17 and the three year Capital Programme.

It was reported that the proposed programme consisted of schemes funded through borrowing, capital receipts or grants and other anticipated contributions from third parties. The size of the capital programme reflected capital grant settlements that had been announced by central government, forecast capital receipts, other external and internal funding sources and proposed borrowing as set out in **Appendix 1** to the report and detailed in **Appendix 5** to the report. The Council's ability to prudentially borrow to fund future schemes was limited by budgetary pressures which the Council continued to face. Information regarding the revenue implications of prudential borrowing was also provided in **Appendix 1** to the report. It also summarised the development of the proposed capital programme as well as details of the following:

- New capital grant allocations;
- New schemes approved since the quarter two Capital Monitoring report;
- Capital receipts and potential property sales;
- Revenue implications of prudential borrowing.

In terms of the Capital Strategy, this had been developed as a key document that determined the Council's approach to capital. It was integral to the Council's medium term service and financial planning process as reflected in the Medium Term Financial Strategy and provided a framework for the allocation of resources to support the Council's objectives. The Strategy, at **Appendix 2** to the report, was reviewed on an annual basis to ensure it continued to reflect the changing needs and priorities of the Council and its partners throughout Tameside and the region.

RESOLVED

- (i) That the Capital Programme report as set out in **Appendix 1** to the report and detailed in **Appendix 5** to the report be approved and action taken to achieve additional sources of funding for capital development.
- (ii) That the Disposals schedule and estimated Capital receipts position in section 3 of **Appendix 1** to the report be noted.
- (iii) That the additional revenue budget required as a result of the proposed take up of unsupported borrowing detailed in section 4.9 of **Appendix 1** to the report be noted.
- (iv) That the Capital Strategy set out in **Appendix 2** to the report be noted.
- (v) That the Prudential Limits and indicators set out in **Appendix 3** to the report be approved and that the Council receive monitoring reports during the coming year to demonstrate compliance.
- (vi) That the borrowing limits for 2016/17 for Tameside and for the Greater Manchester Metropolitan Debt Administration Fund as set out in **Appendix 3** to the report be authorised.
- (vii) That the Minimum Revenue Provision statement as set out in **Appendix 4** to the report be approved.
- (viii) That the inclusion within the proposed capital programme of the estimated investment in Active Tameside and note future potential be noted.

50. TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

Consideration was given to a report of the First Deputy (Performance and Finance) and the Assistant Executive Director (Finance) detailing the Council's borrowing strategy for 2016/17 and the Annual Investment Strategy, which was required under the Local Government Act 2003.

The Annual Investment Strategy was detailed at **Appendix A** to the report and details were given with regard to the estimated borrowing requirement for both Tameside and the Greater Manchester

Metropolitan Debt Administration Fund and the strategy to be employed in managing the debt position.

It was reported that as at 31 March 2015, the Council had £151m of investments which needed to be safeguarded, and £131m of debt. Members were reminded that the Council was also the lead authority responsible for the administration of the debt of the Greater Manchester County Council on behalf of all ten Greater Manchester Metropolitan Authorities. As at 31 March 2015, this was a further £125m of debt. The significant size of these amounts required careful management to ensure that the Council met its balanced budget requirement under the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

The report included details of the following:-

- Code of Practice;
- Need to Borrow;
- Types and Duration of Loans;
- Sources of Borrowing;
- Rescheduling;
- Current Position 2015/16;
- Tameside's estimated position at 31 March 2016;
- 2016/2017 Borrowing Requirement;
- Greater Manchester Metropolitan Debt Administration Fund Requirement;
- Borrowing Strategy;
- Interest Rates;
- Investments; and
- Treasury Management Advisors.

RESOLVED

- (i) That the report be noted and the proposed borrowing strategy be supported; and**
- (ii) That the Annual Investment Strategy be recommended for approval by Council.**

51. MAYORALTY

Nominations were sought for the position of Civic Mayor for 2016/17 and it was moved by Councillor K Quinn, seconded by Councillor Taylor and:

RESOLVED

That Councillor Philip Fitzpatrick be nominated for election as Civic Mayor for the Municipal Year 2016/17 at the Annual Meeting of the Council on Tuesday 24 May 2016.

Nominations were also sought for the position of Deputy Civic Mayor for 2016/17 and it was moved by Councillor K Quinn, seconded by Councillor Taylor and:

RESOLVED

That Councillor Janet Cooper be nominated for election as Deputy Civic Mayor for the Municipal Year for the 2016/17 at the Annual Meeting of the Council on Tuesday 24 May 2016.

52. ARRANGEMENTS FOR ANNUAL COUNCIL

It was noted that the Annual Meeting of the Council (Civic and Business) would commence at 5.00pm on Tuesday, 24 May 2016 and will be held at Dukinfield Town Hall.

53. CALENDAR OF MEETINGS

Consideration was given to the Calendar of Meetings for 2016/17. It was moved by Councillor K Quinn and seconded by Councillor Taylor and:

RESOLVED

That the Calendar of Meetings for 2016/17 be approved.

54. MEMBERSHIP OF COUNCIL BODIES

It was noted that there were no changes to the membership of Council bodies.

55. NOTICES OF MOTION

Motion A

Consideration was given to the following motion received in accordance with Standing Order 16.1, which was proposed by Councillor J Fitzpatrick and seconded by Councillor Fairfoull:

“That this Council notes the detail of the recently published Local Government Settlement.

We note with concern that the additional transitional grant funding announced has once again failed to address the inherent unfairness of the impact of the massive cuts that have been applied to Tameside Council by this Tory Government.

We agree to continue highlighting the apparent disdain that Local Government is held in by this Government, especially on those living in northern Metropolitan areas.

This Council commits to continue working alongside the Local Government Association, led by the Conservative peer Lord Porter, SIGOMA and other individual campaigners to consistently remind Tameside residents about the impact of Tory cuts to vital local services.”

Following consideration of the Motion it was:

RESOLVED

That this Council notes the detail of the recently published Local Government Settlement.

We note with concern that the additional transitional grant funding announced has once again failed to address the inherent unfairness of the impact of the massive cuts that have been applied to Tameside Council by this Tory Government.

We agree to continue highlighting the apparent disdain that Local Government is held in by this Government, especially on those living in northern Metropolitan areas.

This Council commits to continue working alongside the Local Government Association, led by the Conservative peer Lord Porter, SIGOMA and other individual campaigners to consistently remind Tameside residents about the impact of Tory cuts to vital local services.

Motion B

Consideration was given to the following motion received in accordance with Standing Order 16.1, which was proposed by Councillor Taylor and seconded by Councillor T Smith:

That this Council notes that the Secretary of State for Justice has announced the closure of Tameside County Court.

Access to justice is a fundamental freedom in a civilised society and this decision, as well as reducing this freedom, will affect Tameside in a number of ways including:

- *Increased travel time and costs associated with accessing the Courts and Justice system.*
- *Potential relocation away from Tameside of law firms and other businesses that support the Court system.*
- *The closure of a large service in a key regeneration area adjacent to Ashton Old Baths.*

Council condemns this decision and considers it as the latest in a long list of attacks on Tameside residents at the hands of Conservative led governments.

Council therefore resolves to:

- *Ask the Chief Executive to write to the Secretary of State for Justice setting out our opposition to the closure and requesting details of the plans for the building once the County Court has closed.*
- *Explore how Tameside Council could support the Court buildings to continue to fully occupied given that the presence of workers in the area supports the local economy."*

Following consideration of the Motion it was:

RESOLVED

That this Council notes that the Secretary of State for Justice has announced the closure of Tameside County Court.

Access to justice is a fundamental freedom in a civilised society and this decision, as well as reducing this freedom, will affect Tameside in a number of ways including:

- **Increased travel time and costs associated with accessing the Courts and Justice system.**
- **Potential relocation away from Tameside of law firms and other businesses that support the Court system.**
- **The closure of a large service in a key regeneration area adjacent to Ashton Old Baths.**

Council condemns this decision and considers it as the latest in a long list of attacks on Tameside residents at the hands of Conservative led governments.

Council therefore resolves to:

- **Ask the Chief Executive to write to the Secretary of State for Justice setting out our opposition to the closure and requesting details of the plans for the building once the County Court has closed.**
- **Explore how Tameside Council could support the Court buildings to continue to fully occupied given that the presence of workers in the area supports the local economy.**

56. QUESTIONS

The Chair reported no questions had been received in accordance with Standing Order 17.2.

57. URGENT ITEMS

The Chair reported that there were no urgent items of business for consideration at this meeting.

CHAIR