
SOUTHAMPTON CITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON
17 JULY 2024

Present:

The Lord Mayor, Councillor Shields
The Sheriff, Councillor J Baillie
Councillors Allen, P Baillie, Blackman, Mrs Blatchford, Barbour, Barnes-Andrews, Beaurain, Bogle, M Bunday, Chapman, Cooper, Cox, Denness, Every, Fielker, Finn, A Frampton, Y Frampton, Galton, Goodfellow, Gravatt, Greenhalgh, Harwood, Houghton, Kenny, Keogh, Kloker, C Lambert, G Lambert, Leggett, Letts, McCreanor, McManus, Moulton, Noon, W Payne, Powell-Vaughan, Rayment, Renyard, Savage, Stead, Webb, Whitbread, Windle and Winning.

Apologies were received from Councillors Kaur, Kataria and Wood.

23. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

The minutes of the Annual General and Extraordinary Council Meetings held on 15th May were signed as a correct record subject to two amendments to the Annual General Meeting Minutes.

Amendment 1 – Minute 5, Vote of Thanks to the Retiring Lord Mayor, should read 801st Mayor and not 802nd Mayor.

Amendment 2 – Minute 5, Vote of Thanks to the Retiring Lord Mayor, would revert to the original recorded wording the same as previous years, as what had been recorded was specific to the 2023 Annual General Meeting only.

Revised minute to read:

RESOLVED: upon the motion of Councillor Beaurain and seconded by Cllr Fielker that the Council places on record its appreciation for the distinguished manner in which Councillor Laurent had discharged the duties of the 801st Mayor and 2nd Lord Mayor of the City during the period of her term of office.

24. ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE LORD MAYOR AND LEADER

(i) Children's Mayor

The Children's Mayor was created to help primary aged children understand our democratic system and tell us issues they care about. The Children's Mayor is an annual competition where year 5 children will have the opportunity to put together a project that aims to improve the lives of children in the city.

The winner is chosen by council officers, Southampton's Youth Council and the Lord Mayor. The Children's Mayor attends high profile events with the current Lord Mayor and is an ambassador for primary aged children.

The project aims to actively engage and raise awareness for children of our local Council democracy and to promote an understanding of children's rights and responsibilities, as well as being an active citizen and role model. It is an opportunity for schools to encourage and support pupils to be aspirational and to help children recognise that their voices will be heard and can influence change.

We would like to thank our outgoing Children's Mayor Riya. She has carried out a fantastic role of being Southampton's Children's Mayor. We hope she has enjoyed attending the various events and activities throughout the year.

Our new Children's Mayor cares deeply about the environment and wants to implement upcycling – a project designed to reuse objects and 'rubbish'. We're delighted that her headteacher from Fairisle Junior School has also been able to attend today.

Without schools engaging in the process, we wouldn't have a Children's Mayor and we appreciate all the hard work they put it to make this a success. Without further ado, I would like to introduce our new Children's Mayor: Freya Orendeki and present this memento of her appointment.

(ii) Filming

Members, today's meeting is open to being filmed. I remind those filming that the right to film is limited to the duration of the meeting and recording must cease when I close the meeting.

Filming or recording is not permitted if the effect would be to interrupt or disturb the proceedings or if it is intrusive of a specific individual or individuals. If in my opinion this is occurring, it will not be permitted and I will ask you to stop.

Similarly, some members of the public attending the meeting may object to being filmed, photographed or recorded. I will be making those attending the meeting today aware and will ask those filming, to respect their wishes, and will expect that these are complied with.

As is the case with Council meetings the meeting is being live streamed.

(iii) Behaviours in the Chamber

Members, may I take the opportunity to remind you of behaviours within the Chamber:-

- that Council business is conducted in public
- Members are asked to consider the language used in debate/ discourse so as not to cause any (unintended) offence

(iv) General Election

- thanks to SCC and other staff on election day -- at very short notice
- congratulations to the victorious candidates and commiserations to those who were unsuccessful
- our appreciation to the outgoing/ retiring MPs for their service

(v) D-Day Commemoration

- thanks to events team etc. for organisation
- remarked on poignancy of event

(vi) Saints Promotion to Premier League

- Congratulations to team, manager and club

(vii) Announcement by the Leader

The Leader made an announcement following the recent General Election Results.

25. DEPUTATIONS, PETITIONS AND PUBLIC QUESTIONS

The Council received the following Public Question from Ms Clearkin which was responded to by Councillor Savage, Cabinet Member for Green City and Net Zero.

Electromagnetic Emission Levels

QUESTION: What is the present electromagnetic emission level in the vicinity of 5G masts that have been erected around Southampton, and on what grounds does the Council place its confidence that this level is safe both for humans and wildlife within the emission zone?

ANSWER: The City Council follows current best practice, and government guidance, in respect of dealing with planning applications for telecommunications. At the current time the Government guidance is that such masts are safe for roll out across the country: [Mobile phone base stations: radio waves and health - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

Whilst health concerns, such as those raised, are a material consideration in the determination of planning applications the Government has established a planning system whereby the International Commission for Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP) Certification deals with these concerns meaning that SCC Planning doesn't need to go into more detail on a case by case basis.

26. EXECUTIVE BUSINESS

A verbal report of the Leader of the Council was given setting out the details of the business undertaken by the Executive.

The Leader and the Cabinet made statements and responded to questions.

The following questions were submitted in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 11.1:-

The following questions were submitted in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 11.1:-

1. Parking Provision for Council Tenants

Councillor Moulton to Councillor A Frampton

QUESTION: Will you take action to ensure that where car parks are provided for council tenants, that non tenants are not able to park there?

ANSWER: In recognition of the continuing increase in the number of vehicles that are filling our streets on our housing estates, we are currently reviewing the use of our car parks across the city, which have been created for the use of council tenants, to ascertain where we may need to implement alternative delivery models that would prohibit non-council tenants parking in designated spaces. We will always consult with residents to ensure that additional parking models are implemented with full knowledge of the residents so that decisions are made for the benefit of the tenants and residents.

2. One Guildhall Square Costs

Councillor Powell-Vaughan to Councillor Letts

Verbal response given at the meeting:

These matters are subject to confidentiality, and I know that Councillor Powell-Vaughan has had a briefing on this matter and of course if she requires further details on how exactly we negotiated on this contract and what factors were taken into account, either by ourselves or the prospective purchaser, of course we can provide that. But I am not prepared to discuss our negotiating strategy in Council. Simply because this will be the first of a number of such negotiations that will be taking place over the next year to year and a half as we attempt to take advantage of our capitalisation directive and raise the significant sums we need to minimise the revenue support we will need to provide on taking out loans to cover our budget gap.

3. Waste Services Additional Costs

Councillor Chapman to Councillor Fielker

QUESTION: Further to our Full Council Meeting in May 2024 we were briefed by the Leader of the Council that the additional costs of the bin disruption amounted to an extra £56k. By chance, a simultaneous FOI request submitted by the Lib Dem Group was responded to by council officers stating that there were additional agency costs of £440k for the same period, no published savings made from the changes and no net increase in the contracted hours of staff. Can the Labour administration help account for the difference and how much it cost?

ANSWER: The FOI request referred to in this question asked for the total spend on agency refuse collectors since 1 January 2024. The waste service employs a proportion of its workforce through an employment agency as part of its business-as-usual operations. This is to ensure the waste service can be delivered when establishment staff are absent (e.g. annual leave, vacant posts prior to recruitment etc).

The £440k figure referred to in the FOI response set out the total spend on agency workers for the period in question, as requested, which included the normal amount the service would normally spend on agency staff in this period, £384k, plus the additional spend £56k referred to in May's meeting.

The information regarding the cost of agency staff, and context of expenditure, could have been provided to the Lib Dem Group by requesting a briefing from officers, as they are entitled to do. This would have incurred less cost to the council to provide the information.

4. Additional Government Funding

Councillor P Baillie to Councillor Fielker

QUESTION: Have you contacted Rachel Reeves since the election to ask for more money for SCC?

Verbal response given at the meeting:

Thank you for your Question Councillor Baillie. I haven't written to Rachel Reeves at this particular moment in time because I feel it is unlikely that as Chancellor of the Exchequer she will respond to individual questions from particular councils requesting support. What I have done, working with other councils leaders through the Local Government Association and the Key Cities Network of which I am deputy chair, is to look at how we work with Government on making sure that local government interests are properly represented and they understand our needs and I am also working with those councils who have an exceptional financial support request. It's about how we do that separately. I have also made contact with Angela Rayners office, as the Secretary of State for Housing Communities and Local Government this is really the place we need to be speaking to and asking for what it is we need here in Southampton. That's the work that has been taking place over this very short period of time and I will keep flying the flag and advocating Southampton and what we need and ensuring very clearly that the Government understands that while we are in the South-East we are not the same as many other local authorities. We have high levels of deprivation, our council tax income is low, it isn't the Band D that we get judged by so it's about making sure I make the case and I am in the right place to do that.

5. Bitterne Leisure Centre

Councillor P Baillie to Councillor Kataria (Councillor Fielker responded on behalf of Councillor Kataria who had given his apologies for this meeting)

QUESTION: What plans do you have to improve the facilities at Bitterne Leisure Centre?

ANSWER: The transformation programme agreed at Cabinet yesterday, and discussed at Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee last week contains the plans for the future of leisure facilities in Southampton, which includes Bitterne Leisure Centre.

6. Minstead Avenue Safety

Councillor P Baillie to Councillor Winning

QUESTION: When will Minstead Avenue be made safer for pupils entering and exiting Woodlands College?

ANSWER: Southampton Council uses Modeshift STARS as a tool for school travel planning, which encourages schools to increase levels of sustainable and active travel by developing effective travel plans to help create Safer Routes to School. Southampton City Council is the number one small local authority with the percentage of accredited schools, sitting at 33% of our schools with an accredited Modeshift STARS travel plan.

In order to increase the number of schools a new Active Travel Ambassador programme is being carried out with secondary schools from September. Woodlands School has been offered the opportunity to become part of the programme, where work can commence on a travel plan for the school if they wish to join. As part of the travel plan work, the school works with Council Officers to identify barriers to active travel and road safety issues on the way to and from school. Behaviour change measures, enforcement and initiatives will first be used to address issues, however if infrastructure measures are identified as potential solutions, these could be added to future funding considerations.

7. Primary and Secondary Education

Councillor P Baillie to Councillor Winning

QUESTION: Is the Primary and Secondary education provided in Southampton good enough?

ANSWER: There is much to be proud of in Southampton when it comes to education. We have a dedicated workforce of excellent teachers, teaching assistants and Heads that all work incredibly hard to get the best for our children and young people.

A few recent examples include:

- Cantell winning 'Best Use of Technology' at the TES National School Awards
- Cedar School winning the SEN Provision Award at the Education Business Awards.
- In the last 12 months, 90% of schools receiving Ofsted Inspection gradings were 'Good' or 'Outstanding'. The remaining 10% are academies.
- 79% of pupils are attending good or outstanding schools.
- 98% of Early Years providers are good and outstanding
- Reading and Maths Expected Standard at KS1 is in line with National average.
- Reading and Maths at KS2 Expected Standard is in line with Statistical Neighbour (SN) performance.
- Southampton's KS4 Attainment 8 performance is above the SN average.

As a Corporate Parent, Cabinet Member for Education and, as a parent myself, there is always improvement to be made and this needs to be continuous. We want the best for all children in Southampton and that is why, next academic year we are putting a particular focus on reducing absence and exclusions. If children aren't in school, it doesn't matter how effective or well-supported teaching and learning is, we will not see better outcomes for young people. There is a strong and vibrant collective working on

driving through these improvements and I am confident that we will see improvement in this area that will lead to wider educational and social benefits.

8. Planning

Councillor P Baillie to Councillor Fielker

QUESTION: Now that the national Labour Government seems determined to introduce the wild west into planning, what type of homes will you be prioritising?

ANSWER: Southampton has a shortage of homes, in every tenure. Our City Vision Local Plan Policies seeks to achieve mixed and balanced communities, and to use brown belt land to deliver new homes seems to be fully supported by the Government's plans.

9. Use of Pesticides

Councillor Barbour to Councillor Savage

QUESTION: The use of pesticides on our streets and in our parks continues to be a major issue for local residents across the city. Pesticides are known to have harmful effects and to be associated with Parkinson's disease and with cancers. For children the impact is even greater. Crawling and playing in areas treated with pesticides, or putting contaminated objects in their mouth, increases their exposure. Children spend more time in areas like parks and playgrounds where pesticides are used. They sit, lie and play on the ground and can readily come into contact with freshly applied pesticide or dust contaminated with pesticides. There are alternatives, can the council commit to cease the use of glyphosates and other pesticides and to replace these with alternatives that are not harmful to humans, pets and wildlife.

ANSWER: SCC safely carries out weed control in accordance with its legal obligations, abiding by the "Code of Practice for Using Plant Protection Products" to reduce the effect of pesticide-use on people, wildlife, plants and the environment to the lowest possible level while ensuring that pests, diseases and weeds are effectively controlled. SCC officers that use pesticide must have an appropriate certificate of competence. Herbicide is not used in Play Areas – which are designed to ensure such treatment is not necessary. Pesticide-use is minimised in our green spaces; eleven Southampton parks have received the Green Flag Award, which includes assessment of chemical use.

SCC cannot currently support a ban on glyphosate because in some circumstances, such as where uncontrolled weeds create safety and economic risks to public amenities, its use is considered necessary to control weeds in an effective and cost-efficient way.

SCC is committed to eliminating the unnecessary use of pesticides. Decisions on chemical use are regularly reviewed and non-chemical alternatives considered. Alternative methods do not currently present a scalable, cost-effective solution for weed control on highways, footways, and paved areas. SCC will switch to non-chemical methods when they can be deployed effectively and at proportionate cost to residents.

10. Sustainable Developments

Councillor Chapman to Councillor Fielker

QUESTION: Given the Labour-led Renaissance Board's focus on sustainable development and green growth, how does the administration plan to deal with partners who are taking actions that does not align with these goals?

ANSWER: The establishment of the Southampton Renaissance Board was agreed with the support of the City Council's Cabinet in December 2022, with cross-party support, established from the outset and being endorsed at Full Council in February 2023. It is envisaged that the Board will continue to evolve and has already developed a strategic advisory role. The Board has collectively agreed and adopted terms of reference, to be reviewed annually. Part of the Board's remit is to ensure the alignment of Southampton's public, private sector and major institutions around the growth agenda. Net zero, new investment, skills, people, and sustainable growth are central to the Board's remit, to help navigate the city's collective response to future socio-economic challenges. The Board does not govern the individual actions of its partners. Instead, it aims to provide a collaborative platform for discussing and addressing future challenges facing the city.

27. MOTIONS

(a) Moved by Councillor Powell-Vaughan and seconded by Councillor P Baillie

This Council resolves to extend funding for Mayfield Park Bowling Club (MPBC) for an additional 12 months to allow the club time to seek alternative funding and ensure its continued operation and contributions to community well-being.

UPON BEING PUT TO THE VOTE THE MOTION IN THE NAME OF COUNCILLOR POWELL-VAUGHAN WAS DECLARED CARRIED

RESOLVED: that the motion be approved.

28. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS TO THE CHAIRS OF COMMITTEES OR THE MAYOR

It was noted that no requests for Questions from Members to the Chairs of Committees or the Lord Mayor had been received.

29. APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES, SUB-COMMITTEES AND OTHER BODIES

It was noted that:-

- Councillor P Baillie has been appointed to the PfSH Overview and Scrutiny Committee under Delegated Powers as the appointment was omitted at the AGM appointments.
- Councillors Finn, McMannus and Winning have been appointed to the H&WBB under Delegated Powers as membership had been listed incorrectly in the table of appointments at the AGM.

30. CORPORATE PARENTING ANNUAL REPORT 2022-23

Report of the Cabinet Member for Children and Learning detailing the Annual Corporate Parenting Report 2022/23.

RESOLVED:

- (i) That the September 2022 – August 2023 Annual Corporate Parenting Report be adopted;
- (ii) That all Councillors recommit to their collective responsibility as Corporate Parents, to ensure they would champion children and young people in their care, demonstrate aspiration for them, and provide safer and better opportunities for them;
- (iii) That all Councillors considered opportunities for care leavers to be able to train and work in the city; and
- (iv) That all Councillors promoted fostering within the city in support of the fostering recruitment challenges.

31. **CAPITAL OUTTURN 2023/24**

Report of the Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Services detailing the Capital Outturn 2023/24.

RESOLVED:

- (i) That the actual capital spending in 2023/24 for the General Fund was £61.73M and for the HRA was £36.77M, as detailed in paragraphs 2 to 5 of the report be noted;
- (ii) That the capital financing in 2023/24 as shown in table 3 of the report be noted;
- (iii) That the revised capital programme for 2023/24 to 2028/29 and financing as summarised in paragraph 18 and detailed in Appendix 2 of the report be approved; and
- (iv) That the latest prudential indicators for the revised capital programme as detailed in Appendix 3 of the report be approved.

32. **EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC - EXEMPT PAPERS INCLUDED IN THE FOLLOWING ITEM**

RESOLVED: That in accordance with the Council's Constitution, specifically the Access to Information Procedure Rules contained within the Constitution, the press and public be excluded from the meeting in respect of any consideration of the exempt appendix to the following Item.

Appendix 5 was exempt from publication by virtue of category 3 of rule 10.4 of the Council's Access to Information Procedure Rules i.e. information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person. It is not in the public interest to disclose this information due to commercial sensitivity. If the information was disclosed, then the council's financial position would be available to other parties and prejudice the council's ability to achieve best value.

33. **REVENUE OUTTURN 2023/24**

Report of the Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Services detailing the Revenue Outturn 2023/24.

RESOLVED:

General Fund

- (i) That the General Fund revenue outturn for 2023/24 as a balanced position after a transfer of £1.10M from reserves to meet the year-end deficit, as outlined in paragraph 3 of the report be approved;
- (ii) That the requests to carry forward un-ringfenced grant funding totalling £0.08M as outlined in paragraph 15 of the report be approved; and

Housing Revenue Account

- (iii) That the HRA revenue outturn for 2023/24 as outlined in paragraph 29 and Appendix 3 of the report be approved.