
SOUTHAMPTON CITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 15 JULY 2020

Present:

The Mayor, Councillor P Baillie
The Sheriff, Councillor Mrs Blatchford
Councillors Barnes-Andrews, J Baillie, Bunday, Chaloner, Coombs, Cooper, Fielker, Fitzhenry, Fuller, G Galton, S Galton, Guthrie, Hammond, Hannides, B Harris, L Harris, Harwood, Houghton, Kataria, Kaur, Keogh, Laurent, Leggett, Professor Margetts, McEwing, Mintoff, Mitchell, Noon, Dr Paffey, Payne, Prior, Rayment, Renyard, Savage, Shields, Spicer, Streets, Taggart, T Thomas, Vaughan, Whitbread, White and Windle

14. MINUTES

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 21st May and the Extra-ordinary Meeting held on 24th June 2020 be approved and signed as a correct record.

15. ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE MAYOR AND LEADER

Minute Silence - Baroness Diana Maddock

Members noted with great sadness the passing away of former City Councillor Diana Maddock on June 26th aged 75. Elected to the Council in 1984 for the Portswood Ward and was the Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group. She served until 1993 when she became the MP for Christchurch. She became Baroness Maddock in 1997. In memory Members observed a minute's silence and the flags at the Civic Centre were flown at half-mast.

Congratulations to Cllr Bell on his marriage

Members congratulated Councillor Tom Bell and his wife Jenna who married at Highfield Church on July 11th and noted his apologies for the meeting.

16. DEPUTATIONS, PETITIONS AND PUBLIC QUESTIONS

The Council received and noted a deputation from Giles Sember, Executive Director of "Go Southampton" and Board Member Caroline Osman, of WJ French regarding the impact of Business Crime in Southampton.

The Council received and debated the following Petition which under the Council's Procedure Rules where qualifying petitions must be debated at Council was achieved:

- (i) Nuffield Southampton Theatres containing 1500 signatures.

Note: Councillors P Baillie and Hannides declared a pecuniary interest and left the meeting for this item.

17. EXECUTIVE BUSINESS REPORT

The report of the Leader of the Council was submitted 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

1. Unkempt Cemeteries

Question from Councillor S Galton to Councillor Hammond

Would the Leader commit to making this the last year anyone has to be met with unacceptably unkempt cemeteries; but especially on sensitive days such as Mother's Day or Father's Day when a far higher than normal number of visits will be made to pay respect.

Answer

The Bereavement Services team are acutely aware of the need to support our bereaved communities and families, particularly on significant days, by ensuring that our cemeteries are welcoming and well looked after.

This year, given the unprecedented situation created by the COVID 19 pandemic, the Council took the difficult decision to suspend non-essential work, which included in this case, grass cutting and routine work within our cemeteries, to redirect our resources to excavating additional graves during the pandemic. This was not a decision taken lightly and we understand that for some the reduced level of upkeep will have caused distress, for which we are very sorry.

We have now undertaken a review and are taking actions to address, and bring our cemeteries back into the order that we all wish to maintain going forward. Grass cutting is therefore underway at Hollybrook, South Stoneham, St Mary Extra and Millbrook. As Councillors will understand, land maintenance within our cemeteries is a skilled and labour-intensive task, but one that is now back in train.

2. Emergency Travel Schemes

Question from Councillor S Galton to Councillor Leggett

Could the Cabinet Member explain his thought process for the vast majority of emergency travel schemes being placed on our main arterial routes; rather than

focusing on facilitating and encouraging active travel in our residential areas and implementing other schemes as the priority such as:

- "School streets"
- 20mph speed limits in conjunction with other measures to create "quiet" low traffic residential zones
- Using the emergency modal filter powers made available to tackle long standing "rat run" issues

Answer

The Green transport Recovery Plan presents a range of measures to support the increase in active travel and help stop the spread of C-19 through measures that support social distancing. These have been programmed from the spring through to autumn 2020.

Early schemes implemented have been focused on corridors that provide vital links between main residential areas and major areas of employment such as the hospital, schools and leisure. This ensures the interventions are along routes where the propensity for active travel is greatest as identified in the Cycling Strategy (2017) but also crucially along corridors that are high frequency bus corridors where viable and sustainable alternatives to the bus are required for key workers and for the 30% of Southampton residents that don't have access to a car. It is also important to implement these projects early on in the programme whilst traffic levels are lower to allow the road network to adjust and reduce the risk of traffic levels increasing significantly above the pre-Covid normal levels. In addition to the works on some of our key corridors, the Council has also implemented improvements at bus stops to manage socially distanced queues, provided more space for waiting passengers and supporting comms via the RTI screens. Each of the 5 district centres has had dedicated resources to support the retail reopening and queue management systems put in place including the city centre Precinct. 15 pedestrian crossings across the city have also had the timings adjusted and allowed for the automation of the activating of the green man.

The Council has also been working with local schools to support their full reopening from September and identified schools eligible for "School Streets" and is in the process of developing the plans for the residential streets linked to our existing Active Travel Zone plans as identified in our Local Transport Plan (2019).

3. Citizen Energy

Question from Councillor S Galton to Councillor Leggett

Given the uncertainty of the viability of Robin Hood Energy with the latest published accounts showing a £23M loss; additionally the £50M+ of taxpayers money that is reportedly at stake if it can't continue to operate, the fact it is becoming increasingly reliant on exposing taxpayers to additional risk to continue to operate - including a recent additional £12.5M cash facility by Nottingham City Council - do you feel comfortable and ethically justified that Southampton City Council continues to play our part in supporting and

encouraging this loss making, taxpayer funded business, through our own whitelabel Citizen Energy.

Answer

The Council has a contract with RHE for the provision of our local tariff – Citizen Energy.

4. Illegal Traveller Incursions

Question from Councillor S Galton to Councillor Shields

After years of repeated illegal traveller incursions across our City, will you commit to investing more money in to defenses, such as height barriers or posts/bollards to secure and protect our public spaces better?

Answer

Unauthorised travellers encampments are a long-standing issue across Hampshire. Most unauthorised encampments occur between May and September when travellers tend to be on the move and in Southampton we experience between 5 and 10 each year.

Encampments are dealt with through engagement and issuing a direction to leave, with travellers usually departing before Court proceedings are initiated. The police have additional powers to deal with encampments associated with crime or disorder.

Work has been carried out to deter travellers from open spaces, but it is not easy to completely prevent entry to larger green spaces that require gated entry points for grass-cutting machinery and emergency vehicles.

Before austerity a significant capital sum was invested to reduce risk of traveller ingress and 'target-harden' certain Council-owned Leisure sites and 'protected' areas like Weston Shore, Riverside Park, Mansel Park and the Common.

Over the past five years the Council identified a number of other recreation sites and secured a number of these using the Parks capital and revenue programmes including the following: Lordshill Rec., Veracity Ground, Riverside Rec., Millbrook Rec., Green Park Rec., and land to the rear of Chamberlayne Park Leisure Centre.

The most recent traveller incursions have taken place on land managed by Active Nations – with the exception of Summer Street park where the City Council is installing new bunding. Notwithstanding this Council has responded to incursions on land managed by Active Nation and put in additional bund soils and welded custom protection over barrier locks (at an additional cost).

The parks and open areas of green space managed by the City Council are 'target hardened' with a mix of wildflower bunding, large logs that create additional habitats and secure barriers with tamper-proof locks.

5. Waste Disposal Facilities

Question from Councillor S Galton to Councillor Leggett

With the increased use of our parks and public spaces, will the Cabinet Member ensure adequate waste disposal facilities are available either permanently or on a temporary basis.

Answer

We have a huge number of litter bins in parks already and have recently installed a number of 1100 litre bins as a temporary measure in Southampton Common and Mayflower park to encourage residents to responsibly dispose of waste. We are awaiting delivery of some attractive timber surrounds for these.

As an example we have over 80 bins in central park yet a minority of users leave litter and glass bottles on the ground and do not make the effort to use the bins that are in situ. We have already launched an anti-litter campaign on digital advertising boards, social media and on the new solar compactor bins and are extending these messages to be on our compact sweeper fleet. We have erected a number of correx signs in key locations to deter people from littering with a clear £75 fine deterrent.

The Litter Enforcement officers are now patrolling and we hope this will have a positive impact on our environment through engagement, education and enforcement.

More solar compactor bins will be rolled out across the city but have been delayed due to COVID -19 restrictions on manufacturing and supply chain. We are also going to be installing recycling bins in key locations so we capture more recyclable items from the waste people deposit in public bins and will empty these using our existing RCV fleet.

We need to all encourage our residents and visitors to take personal responsibility for the litter and waste they generate and if a bin is full, take it home.

6. Covid 19 – Help for those with Disabilities

Question from Councillor S Galton to Councillor Fielker

What specific measures are the Council taking to help those with disabilities adjust to the Covid-19 restrictions and lead as normal life as possible, whilst staying as safe as possible?

Answer

People in Southampton, whether disabled, older or in need of support have been encouraged and supported to follow the advice and guidance provided by government during the covid-19 pandemic.

A range of support, depending on individual need, has been and continues to be offered by Southampton City Council and partners to people who receive or need assistance during this time. This support has included access to a help-line 7 days a week, regular contact with people depending on need and increased use of technology to help people adjust to government guidance on social distancing.

The support provided is being adjusted as the guidance changes to help people adapt depending on their personal needs. It will include additional support via a range of organisations including SO;Linked to assist in reducing social isolation,

support to access food via supermarket delivery slots and volunteers, access to medication and social contact.

7. Marhill Copse

Question from Councillor Fitzhenry to Councillor Hammond

Will the Leader of the Council support an investigation into the mishandling of the Marhill Copse situation?

Verbal Answer

There had been over 200 responses before Planning and Rights of Way Committee ratified the decision taken under delegated decision unanimously. The delegated decision had been taken to prioritise the safety of residents as there was no ability to have virtual meetings at the time due to Covid-19. Since the decision, there had been opportunity for the public to openly discuss this issue at the earliest opportunity at the Planning and Rights of Way Committee virtually.

8. Studio 144

Question from Councillor Fitzhenry to Councillor Kaur

Who is to blame for the absence of a clear and decisive strategy to attract a new operator for the performing arts space in Studio 144?

Verbal Answer

This question is not a helpful one given the process has been discussed and a way forward agreed by a Citywide Steering Group, which Cllr Hannides is a member of but has never attended. It is my understanding that the opposition member was also briefed but clearly did not share this with his group. Decisions were not being made in isolation as this is not solely a Council decision and it would be naïve to think this; decisions are being made in partnership with Arts Council England and the University of Southampton. There are two phases of the process which are clear, open and transparent. We worked with the administrators who had different priorities, however now other operators are being reviewed against the same agreed criteria in the process to provide a long-term sustainable solution. The Council remains confident that a suitable operator will be identified.

9. Responsibility for Decisions

Question from Councillor Fitzhenry to Councillor Hammond

Do you and your Labour Group take full responsibility for all decisions made by SCC?

Verbal Response

This is a broad question. The role of Cabinet and Labour Group is to set the policy and direction of the organisation, the Chief Executive and Executive Directors are then accountable for the implementation. There are a number of other decision making bodies which affect the operations of the Council.

18. MOTIONS

(a) Councillor Fitzhenry moved Councillor Guthrie seconded

We would like to thank all our council staff, NHS staff, wider public sector colleagues and all those who have helped us as a city across the public, private and charity/third sector keep our city safe and protect lives during this pandemic.

Your efforts have saved lives and kept so many of us safe and we are eternally grateful for your efforts and your commitment.

Whilst we as politicians frequently disagree with one another, we are united in our wish to thank you and protect our residents and businesses.

Our city is a great city, its spirit is strong and whilst the impacts of this disease will affect us in difficult ways, we will move forward and create a better Southampton for the future.

UPON BEING PUT TO THE VOTE THE MOTION WAS DECLARED
CARRIED

RESOLVED: that the motion be approved.

(b) Councillor Fuller moved and Councillor S Galton seconded

This Council pledges to suspend all parking charges within the City until January 2021 at the earliest, to help protect jobs, to support local businesses and reduce the financial burden on our residents.

UPON BEING PUT TO THE VOTE THE MOTION WAS DECLARED LOST

RESOLVED: that the motion be rejected.

(c) Councillor S Galton moved and Councillor G Galton seconded

This Council notes the overwhelming public desire for at least some unrestricted access to the former Civil Service Sports Ground.

Council recognises the recent deputation from the Friends of the Field group asking for the same.

Council takes on board the majority of public comments to the pre-consultation and formal planning application process, asking for unrestrictive access.

Council acknowledges the supportive comments made during the planning meeting itself by a number of cross party Councillors and that the Chair made it

clear they were only there to decide on the application before them, not create policy.

Council recognises the previous legal advice that has been provided to members. The main concern being any additional activities like dog walking or infrastructure such as bins and benches; do not interfere with the primary use of pitches for team games and recreational play.

As such Council resolves to,

Request the administration ensure the Council's development plans for the site are altered to include a legally accessible pocket park, or other area of public accessible land, within the wider contained school development site, but separate from the main school site.

Amendment moved by Councillor Shields and seconded by Councillor Paffey.

Add new paragraph six:

"Council further recognises the current legal restrictions on the former Civil Service Sports Ground site resulting from:

- a. the conditions of the compulsory planning order (CPO) made by the Council in 2009 which designates the entirety of the site acquired for the purposes of a school playing field
- b. the change in planning use designation of the site in 2010 from private open space to school playing field."

Final paragraph, second line, delete 'altered' and replace with 'reviewed'

Third line, delete 'within the' and replace with 'adjacent to'

Add at the end of the paragraph 'e.g. through lawful acquisition of any neighbouring vacant land.'

Amended Motion to read:

This Council notes the overwhelming public desire for at least some unrestricted access to the former Civil Service Sports Ground.

Council recognises the recent deputation from the Friends of the Field group asking for the same.

Council takes on board the majority of public comments to the pre-consultation and formal planning application process, asking for unrestrictive access.

Council acknowledges the supportive comments made during the planning meeting itself by a number of cross party Councillors and that the Chair made it clear they were only there to decide on the application before them, not create policy.

Council recognises the previous legal advice that has been provided to members. The main concern being any additional activities like dog walking or infrastructure such as bins and benches; do not interfere with the primary use of pitches for team games and recreational play.

Council further recognises the current legal restrictions on the former Civil Service Sports Ground site resulting from:

- a. the conditions of the compulsory planning order (CPO) made by the Council in 2009 which designates the entirety of the site acquired for the purposes of a school playing field
- b. the change in planning use designation of the site in 2010 from private open space to school playing field.

As such Council resolves to,

Request the administration ensure the Council's development plans for the site are reviewed to include a legally accessible pocket park, or other area of public accessible land, adjacent to wider contained school development site, but separate from the main school site e.g. through lawful acquisition of any neighbouring vacant land.

UPON BEING PUT TO THE VOTE THE AMENDMENT IN THE NAME OF COUNCILLOR SHIELDS WAS DECLARED CARRIED.

UPON BEING PUT TO THE VOTE THE AMENDED MOTION MOVED BY COUNCILLOR SHIELDS WAS DECLARED CARRIED.

RESOLVED: that the amended motion be approved.

- (d) Motion in the name of Councillor P Baillie was withdrawn.
- (e) Motion in the name of Councillor P Baillie was withdrawn.
- (f) Motion in the name of Councillor P Baillie was withdrawn.

19. 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 Mayor had been received.

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

- (a) The Leader proposed and Councillor Rayment seconded the appointment of the Local Outbreak Engagement Board as a sub committee of Cabinet which would be responsible for strategic oversight of health protection regarding Covid-19 in

Southampton. Terms of Reference were shared with Members of Council and detailed below:-

SOUTHAMPTON COVID-19 LOCAL OUTBREAK ENGAGEMENT BOARD

Terms of Reference

Purpose
<p>The Southampton Covid-19 Local Outbreak Engagement Board is responsible for strategic oversight of health protection regarding Covid-19 in Southampton, including prevention, surveillance, planning and response to ensure they meet the needs of the population.</p> <p>The Board will support the local delivery of the primary objectives of the Government's strategy to control the Covid-19 reproduction number (R), reduce the spread of infection and save lives, in doing so help to return life to as normal as possible, for as many people as possible, in a way that is safe, protects our health and care systems and releases our economy.</p> <p>The response will be delivered at various levels and by various partner organisations, but these will need to be brought together at local authority level through the Executive Director of Wellbeing (Health & Adults), supported by the Director of Public Health as lead officer, to ensure a community focus and appropriately tailored response. In addition to the place-based approach overseen by the Board the levels will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National - a National Outbreak Control Plans Advisory Board will be established to draw on expertise from across local government and ensure the NHS Test and Trace programme builds on local capability, and to share best practice and inform future programme development; • Regional - Co-ordination required on a regional level will be provided through the HLOW Local Resilience Forum and Integrated Care System arrangements; • Local – Southampton COVID-19 Health Protection Board, working through Local Engagement Boards to define measures to contain outbreaks and protect health.
Membership
Chair – Leader of the Council
Deputy Chair - Cllr Fielker (Chair of HWB, Cabinet member for health and adults)
Cllr Paffey, Cabinet member for children and learning
Cllr Shields, Cabinet member for stronger communities
Board supported by :-
Director of Public Health SCC
Director – Adult Social Care SCC
Director – Childrens Social Care SCC
CCG Governing Body Chair
Healthwatch and SVS Deputy Chief Executive
<i>TBC - Medical Director University Hospitals Southampton</i>

<i>TBC - CONNECT/Business Lead</i>
<i>TBC - Communications Lead Officer</i>
The Board will invite representation from other organisations or roles specific to the agenda items under consideration.

Objectives

The Southampton Covid-19 Local Outbreak Engagement Board will:

- Be the public face of Southampton City Council’s response in the event of an outbreak of COVID-19
- Provide political oversight of ongoing development and delivery of the Southampton City Local Covid-19 Outbreak Control Plan, including:
 - Approving recommendations from the Health Protection Board for allocation of resources to support the effective delivery of the Plan
 - Lead engagement with local communities, advising on community engagement, including with vulnerable and/or higher risk communities of interest
 - Approve the communications strategy for the Local Outbreak Control Plan
 - Approve implementation measures (or make recommendations to other bodies where appropriate) that will prevent virus transmission.
- Monitor the response to local outbreaks and ensure learning informs future practice
- Make recommendations for the wider policy agenda including the recovery workstreams, NHS Recovery and Restoration programme and the Health and Wellbeing Strategy

Accountability

The group will be accountable to Cabinet in its Statutory role, bringing together key partners in the local health and care system.

It will also have reporting relationships to

- HIOW level governance process for functions delivered at this level
- Southampton’s Health and Wellbeing Board

Frequency of Meetings

The Board will meet as and when considered necessary by the Chairman of the Board.

Meetings are not open to the public. An agenda and papers will be circulated at least 5 working days before the meeting. Conflicts of interest must be declared by any member of the group.

Quoracy

A quorum for meetings will be a minimum of 2 people, one of whom will be the Chair or nominated Co-Chair.

Review

Terms of Reference will be reviewed on a bi-monthly basis.

July 2020

- (b) The Leader proposed and Councillor Leggett seconded a change to the Council Constitution under the Scheme of Delegation to Officers at paragraph 14.20 to include delegated authority to the Head of Green City and Infrastructure following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Green City and Environment to grant licences in respect of discretionary conditions to be imposed on pavement licenses.

Council noted that the Business and Planning Bill 2020 requirements which was intended to become law by 24th July 2020 required urgent action relating to pavement licences to permit tables and chairs on the highway outside of premises. In order to comply with strict deadlines under the Bill the delegated authority was approved. It was also agreed that there would be an All Member Briefing on the proposed Bill.

21. CONSTITUTIONAL REVIEW - COUNCIL QUESTIONS

This item was withdrawn from the meeting.

22. BUDGET MATTERS: REVENUE AND CAPITAL OUTTURN 2019-20

Report of the Cabinet Member for Finance and Income Generation seeking approval of the Revenue and Capital Outturn for 2019-20.

RESOLVED:

General Revenue Fund

- (i) That the General Fund outturn for 2019/20 was a balanced position as outlined in paragraph 4 of the report and in paragraph 1 of appendix 1 be noted;
- (ii) That the performance of individual Portfolios in managing their budgets as set out in paragraphs 2 to 4 of appendix 1 and annex 1.1 of the report be noted;
- (iii) That budget carry-forward requests totalling £2.36M as outlined in paragraph 5 of appendix 1 and detailed in annex 1.2 of the report be agreed; and
- (iv) That the performance of the Property Investment Fund (PIF) as detailed in paragraphs 7 to 9 of appendix 1 and annex 1.3 of the report be noted.

Housing Revenue Account

- (i) That the HRA outturn for 2019/20 as outlined in paragraph 6 and paragraphs 18 and 19 of appendix 1 and annex 1.5 of the report be noted.

Capital Programme

- (i) That the actual capital spending in 2019/20 for the General Fund was £56.03M and for the HRA was £41.05M, as outlined in paragraphs 9 and 10 and detailed in paragraphs 2 to 4 of Appendix 2 of the report be noted;
- (ii) That the proposed capital financing in 2019/20 as shown in table 3 of Appendix 2 of the report be approved;
- (iii) That the addition of £0.54M to the Children & Learning programme in 2020/21 as detailed in annex 2.3 of the report be approved; and
- (iv) That the difference to the amended programme, allowing for slippage, re-phasing and amendments as outlined in the report and set out in table 4 of appendix 2 be noted.

23. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC - EXEMPT PAPERS INCLUDED IN THE FOLLOWING ITEM (IF NEEDED)

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 appendices to the following Item

Confidential - Appendices: 2, 3 and 4 contains information deemed to be exempt from general publication based on Category 3 and 7(A) of paragraph 10.4 of the Council's Access to Information Procedure Rules. In applying the public interest test this information has been deemed exempt from publication due to confidential sensitivity and confidentiality. It is not considered to be in the public interest to disclose this information. It would prejudice the Council's ability to operate in a commercial environment and prejudice commercial relations with third parties.

24. 1000 HOMES PROGRAMME

Report of the Cabinet Member for Culture and Homes seeking approval to progress the development and delivery of the Council's Housing Programme.

RESOLVED:

- (i) That a capital programme with a total scheme cost of £144m and expenditure of the programme within the Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme to deliver a programme of affordable council rented and shared ownership properties. To be funded from £83.9 loan finance paid through rental and sales income, £23,2m retained Right-to-Buy and grants plus £36.9m capital receipt from shared ownership sales be approved; and
- (ii) That the appropriation of land from the General Fund to the Housing Revenue Account as required in order to deliver the programme be approved.