
SOUTHAMPTON CITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON
18 SEPTEMBER 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, Kataria, Kenny, Keogh, Kloker, C Lambert, G Lambert, Laurent, Leggett, Letts, McCreanor, McManus, Noon, W Payne, Powell-Vaughan, Rayment, Savage, Stead, Webb, Whitbread, Windle, Winning and Wood

Apologies were received from Councillors Moulton and Renyard.

34. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 July 2024 were signed as a correct record subject to an amendment to the list of Members present which recorded Cllr Renyard as being in attendance and he was not.

35. ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE LORD MAYOR AND LEADER

(i) 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 open parts of the meeting are being live streamed.

(ii) Death former Councillor Harry Mitchell

Members, it is with sadness that I announce former Councillor Harry Mitchell passed away on 25th August and his funeral takes place this afternoon. Councillor Mitchell was elected as Coxford Ward Councillor in May 2000 and was Sheriff in 2003. Would you all please stand for a minute's silence as a mark of respect.

(iii) Honorary Alderman Cathie McEwing

Members, I'm sure you would like to join me in sending Honorary Alderman Cathie McEwing our best wishes for a speedy recovery as she recovers in hospital from an accident.

(iv) Staff

Members, today we send our best wishes for the future and thanks to two members of staff who are leaving the authority. Claire Edgar, Executive Director of Community Wellbeing and Karen Baker, the Leader's PA. We also welcome Stephen Haynes, Executive Director of Growth and Prosperity.

(v) By-Election, Shirley Ward, 10 October

Members, I am also formally confirming the resignation of Councillor Kaur from her seat in the Shirley Ward as she takes on board her new role as MP for Southampton Test. On behalf of the Council I would like to send best wishes to all candidates standing in the forthcoming By-Election on 10 October as a result of Cllr Kaur's resignation.

(vi) Change in Order of Today's Meeting

Members it is likely that we will need to go into confidential session for item 5 on today's agenda therefore I propose this should be moved to the end of the agenda following motions. Are Group Leaders in agreement ?

(vii) Lord Mayor's Charities

- Ideas and thoughts would be shared in due course but to highlight Cllr Keogh and others would be taking part in a sponsored bike ride at the end of September.

36. DEPUTATIONS, PETITIONS AND PUBLIC QUESTIONS

The Council received and noted the following deputation:

- (i) Housing issues that affect so many of the citizens of Southampton and Mental Health and Wellbeing – Ms Karen Rogers
- (ii) Empty Properties in the City – Honorary Alderman Derek Burke

The Council received four Public Questions on the same theme Proposed Plant Based Treaty for Southampton which was responded to by Councillor Savage, Cabinet Member for Green City and Net Zero.

QUESTION 1 - Laura Hunt

More than 80% of farmland worldwide is used to farm animals yet provides only 18% of calories. The UK is no exception to this fact. In fact, if every country ate and consumed like the UK, we would need another planet the size of Mercury to feed everyone. Globally, it is estimated that a transition towards a plant-based food system would allow

the release of more than three-quarters of farmland back to nature, whilst providing the opportunity to repurpose land to absorb carbon.

Other councils like Edinburgh, Norwich, Haywards Heath, Lambeth and Exmouth have endorsed the Plant Based Treaty and are implementing positive changes that are helping normalise plant-based food and encouraging people to eat more of them.

Exmouth is transitioning catering at climate events to 100% plant-based. Edinburgh is introducing carbon labelling in schools. Haywards Heath are creating test cases for plant-based food at events and all of them have been involved in public education campaigns. Amsterdam has committed to Vegan Fridays in public institutions. Edinburgh's Plant Based Treaty action plan is the most ambitious in the UK. I ask this council - are we serious about climate change and we ready to join these climate leading councils. And if not, what is stopping us?

ANSWER

Southampton City Council's Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan 2023-2030 includes an action to 'Work with partners to make progress on becoming a sustainable food city' (p.57). To progress this, Southampton City Council's Public Health team is facilitating the development of a Food Partnership using the resource of a Public Health Specialty Registrar funded by the NHS.

Cllr Finn, Cabinet Member for Adults and Health, updated the Health & Wellbeing Board on this matter at its meeting of 4 September 2024 (Agenda for Health and Wellbeing Board on Wednesday, 4th September, 2024, 5.30 pm / paper). There were three recommendations made in this paper, as follows, each of which were supported by the Board:

- Health and Wellbeing Board members support the development and growth of the city-wide food partnership, including a bid to become a Sustainable Food Place member
- Health and Wellbeing Board members provide system leadership by promoting food partnership efforts in their own respective organisations and encouraging active contribution to the food partnership.
- The Health and Wellbeing Board provides a degree of governance and oversight by reviewing the progress of the city-wide food partnership in 12 months' time.

The framework offered by Sustainable Food Places identifies 6 key issues that should be addressed together to achieve fundamental food system change - one of which is around tackling the climate and nature emergency through sustainable food and farming and an end to food waste.

It is hoped that through this approach, SCC can work with partners to develop and implement an action plan to make our local food system healthier and more sustainable. Progress will be monitored through the Health and Wellbeing Board; any relevant climate change related recommendations arising from the Food Partnership's work will be incorporated into Southampton City Council's climate change strategy and action plan.

QUESTION 2 - Sarah Abbott

Last December, the UK, signed a COP28 declaration pledging to incorporate food system impacts into Climate Action Plans before COP30.

Many city climate action plans do not address food consumption. Most food consumed in cities is imported which mean their emissions are not included in net zero strategies which look at things produced in the city. The Southampton City Council Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan could be bolder by calculating the city's consumption based greenhouse gas emissions, setting targets to reduce them and implementing a Plant Based Treaty action plan to deliver real reductions in food emissions.

Edinburgh Council looked at their food consumption emissions and found that half came from meat consumption alone. They started their Plant Based Treaty journey by conducting a detailed impact assessment which looked at how endorsing would effect the city. As a result, they endorsed and developed a comprehensive Plant Based Treaty action plan. Would the council look at Edinburgh's impact assessment and action plan and refer it to the relevant scrutiny committee to conduct a similar assessment for Southampton?

ANSWER

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QUESTION 3 - Dom De Vitto

I would like to inquire why Southampton has not moved towards more plant-based foods and what obstacles prevent it from endorsing the Plant Based Treaty? This treaty promotes the benefits of Southampton residents eating more fruits and vegetables, which is beneficial for both our health and the health of our planet.

Currently, only 28% of adults consume the recommended five portions of fruit and vegetables daily, and for children, this figure is a concerning 18%. This trend is likely to lead to poor health choices in the future. A 2023 analysis by the Office of Health Economics found that adopting plant-based diets in England could save the NHS £6.7 billion annually. Even if people merely replaced meat in their weekday lunches, over 11,000 new cases of Type 2 Diabetes could be prevented each year, and 366,000 fewer people would suffer from cardiovascular disease, a major killer and life-limiting illness. Simply put, the closer we get to a plant-based diet, the more benefits we will see, and even small changes will have immediate benefits for the most vulnerable in our community.

Like other cities that support the Plant Based Treaty, Southampton could reduce costs, improve health outcomes, and be seen as a leader in public education by encouraging reduced meat and dairy consumption across the city. This can be achieved by promoting the benefits of plant-based foods.

Councillors and council staff could lead by example by showcasing plant-based food at their meetings and events. Such food is cheaper, more nutritious, and meets the diverse religious needs of our communities, while also being visually appealing. It is contradictory to speak of being “one community” and then segregate groups based on dietary and religious preferences.

This initiative is not about removing choice but about levelling the playing field, helping people make healthier choices, reducing costs (a compelling argument in itself), and bringing the people of Southampton together for a better environment and closer communities.

ANSWER

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QUESTION 4 - Joel Matthews

My fiance, Keira, and I will become parents for the first time in October, and I'm worried about the world my child will inherit. We are not on track with our climate commitments. We are facing climate breakdown with unprecedented killer heat waves, flooding and sea level rise, forest fires, millions of climate refugees, food shortages and civil unrest as areas of the planet become uninhabitable.

There are some very simple solutions which we can easily implement today that will prevent catastrophe. Did you know that even if we stopped all fossil fuel production today, food emissions alone would exceed the 1.5 limit and 2C targets of the Paris Agreement? Therefore there is no climate solution without a shift in our diets. Food accounts for a third of greenhouse emissions, and most of that comes from meat and dairy consumption. In fact, a recent analysis of UK diets found that food emissions could be slashed by 75% with plant-based diets.

Please can Southampton Council join 30 cities worldwide by endorsing the Plant Based Treaty and committing to a Plant Based Action plan?

ANSWER

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37. APPOINTMENT OF RETURNING OFFICER AND ELECTORAL REGISTRATION OFFICER

Report of the Interim Chief Executive detailing a Revision of Appointments of Returning Officer (RO) and Electoral Registration Officer (ERO) and Deputy Returning Officer and Electoral Registration Officer.

Council moved into confidential session to discuss this item 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 debate relating to the Item, in accordance with categories 1 (information relating to an individual) and 3 (information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Authority holding that information) of paragraph 10.4 of Southampton City Council's ("the Council's") Access to Information Procedure Rules, as contained in the Council's Constitution.

The vote would be taken in public therefore would move back into open session at the conclusion of the confidential debate and voted upon.

RESOLVED:

- (i) That the current personal appointment of Mark Heath as the Returning Officer for local elections in the City and the Acting Returning Officer for UK Parliamentary Elections and Electoral Registration Officer (ERO) be terminated with effect from 18th September 2024; and
- (ii) that the Chief Executive be appointed as Returning Officer and Electoral Registration Officer and the Director of Legal and Governance as the Deputy Returning Officer and Deputy ERO with effect from 19th September 2024.

38. HOUSEHOLD SUPPORT FUND SEPTEMBER 2024

Report of the Cabinet Member for Communities and Safer City seeking approval of the Household Support Fund September 2024.

RESOLVED:

- (i) That the Household Support Fund for the period 1 October 2024 to 31 March 2025 be approved and accepted; and
- (ii) That future tranches of the Household Support Fund be approved and accepted.

39. COMMUNITY SAFETY / REFRESH OF CITY SAFETY STRATEGY

Report of the Cabinet Member for Communities and Safer City detailing the Community Safety/Refresh of City Safety Strategy.

RESOLVED:

- (i) That the refreshed Southampton Safe City Partnership Plan as set out in Appendix 1 to this report be approved; and
- (ii) That authority be delegated to the Executive Director for Community Wellbeing, Children and Learning to make minor amendments to the Southampton Safe City Partnership Plan following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Communities and Safer City.

40. 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 1 of this report is not for publication by virtue of categories 3 (commercial sensitivity) and 7A (obligation of confidentiality) of paragraph 10.4 of Southampton City Council's ("the Council's") Access to Information Procedure Rules, as contained in the Council's Constitution.

41. TRANSFORMATION UPDATE (SEPTEMBER)

Report of the Leader of the Council detailing the Transformation Implementation Partner.

RESOLVED: that the release of transformation funding as detailed in 'Resource Implications' from reserves or the Exceptional Financial Support (EFS) facility be approved.

42. 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:-

1. Housing Voids

Councillor Laurent to Councillor A Frampton

QUESTION:

Regarding Council Housing Voids, how long is it taking to turn properties around so available to re-let?

ANSWER:

The total time from when one tenant moves out and another tenant moves in for August 2024 was 157 days.

The time it takes to turn around void properties is a metric that provides a snapshot at a given point in time and is volatile based on the properties that are being prioritised for re-letting. This figure is likely to remain high in the medium term as the transformation work is embedded.

due to the methods being deployed to reduce the number of void properties and the sheer volume of work needed.

Although the key-to-key time performance is below target, good progress is being made to reduce the number of void properties.

We have made great progress in bring void homes back in to use for our residents. Although we may well still have some challenges to bring our Homes to the standard, we all want. This administration will scrutinise this process and make sure our voids are back in use in a reasonable time fame.

2. Damage to Residents Properties

Councillor Laurent to Councillor A Frampton

QUESTION:

Why when Council damages a resident's property does the Council immediately put right the damage?

ANSWER:

Southampton City Council seeks to put right any damage it has accidentally caused with immediate effect. On those occasions where this is not be an appointment is arranged within the quickest possible timeframe.

3. Parking Issues on Highways

Councillor Wood to Councillor Keogh

QUESTION:

A resident contacted me about dangerous parking on the corner of his road. Cars could squeeze through but risked minor scrapes but the bin lorry couldn't get through. The car was parked there for nearly 24 hours and when I visited could have been pulled forward a few metres to a sensible place. I contacted the Police on 101 and was told they would help remove vehicles that, for example, blocked a junction after being involved in an accident but not inconsiderate parking.

If life were in danger fire brigade would push through and damage the car. I contacted traffic enforcement and was told "With regards to cars parking on corners and making it awkward for other vehicles to get past, unless there is a restriction in place (such as double/single yellow lines) then we (as Civil Enforcement Officers for SCC) do not have any powers to do anything about those vehicles. If there are restrictions in place, then we could potentially issue a Penalty Charge Notice. If it is a regular occurrence, and causing issues in the road, then you could request the traffic regulation order be amended and Yellow Lines put in, to stop this from happening – but this is a lengthy process and not a quick fix."

Inconsiderate parking is a criminal offence under the Highway Code and becoming a concern to a lot of residents as pressure on parking increase. Police are not interested. SCC have no powers. What can residents do?

ANSWER:

Officers from Highways and Parking Services will be happy to review Councillor Wood's query and examine the specific location to see if restrictions should be introduced. As has been noted, the Council are not able to carry out enforcement action in the absence of parking restrictions.

4. Dementia Friendly City

Councillor Barbour to Councillor Finn

QUESTION:

In 2016 Southampton City Council pledged to become a dementia friendly city following the scrutiny inquiry in 2015/16. What actions has SCC taken over the past year? As a councillor I have been in role for 16 months and not been offered dementia awareness training. This was one of the recommendations from the inquiry and there were many others, can you update on progress against these.

ANSWER:

The focus from the 2016 Scrutiny Enquiry has been subsumed within the city's Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy with specific work in regards to dementia being taken forward in partnership with HIOW ICS through the OPMH & Dementia Transformation Delivery Group. Individual and partnership actions are being developed at a number of sub-groups, including acute and crisis and post diagnosis support.

One positive recent development at place is the grant that has been received by the Council to purchase more technology that will enable people with dementia to stay at home for longer.

The Dementia Friendly Southampton group has facilitated dementia friendly training which was available to all to access. Dementia Friendly Southampton was paused in March, but has been re-established as of September and we are thankful to Southampton Voluntary Services for enabling this. I will remind member services that they should be offering dementia awareness training to public facing staff and to members and ask for this to be provided.

It is some time since the 2016 inquiry and, as we are now consulting on the local plan, I am meeting with the labour group mental health champion who is Cllr Kenny. She has worked extensively as an older persons mental health nurse so is very aware of the issues. The aim of meeting is to re look at the recommendations to see if there are aspects that we want to recommend for inclusion in the local plan. Cllr Barbour is welcome to join us, as is any other member who may have an interest in this subject.

5. October By-Election

Councillor P Baillie to Councillor Fielker

QUESTION:

The council has been in a financial crisis for a year. Is it not a disgraceful use of public money to be funding a by-election in October when the incumbent could have resigned before the last May elections?

ANSWER:

Verbal response to be provided at the meeting.

This is an interesting question that reeks of the double standards and lack of consistency we expect for the Conservatives in this Chamber. Cllr Lambert and Cllr Gravatt were both candidates in the recent general election. Should Cllr Lambert have stood down and Cllr Gravatt not stood in that election at all. If Cllr Baillie felt this was such an issue, why did he not ask the question in our March meeting?

I would also like to point out that in

- 2010 Royston Smith
- 2015 Cllr Moulton
- 2019 Cllr Galton

All stood for Parliament but did not step down prior to the election taking place.

6. Priorities for Southampton

Councillor P Baillie to Councillor Fielker

QUESTION:

What comes first – doing what is best for the people of Southampton or following the national Labour Party policies?

ANSWER:

Verbal response to be provided at the meeting.

My first priority is always to the residents of Southampton I am pleased that we have a government who match that rather than the former one. We all remember Rishi Sunak, son of Southampton telling Conservative party members that he changed the funding formula so that residents in wealthy shires would get more funding at the expense of his deprived hometown of Southampton.

In the place we have a Labour Government with five clear missions to improve people's lives by

- Kickstarting economic growth
- Making Britain a clean energy superpower to cut bills, create jobs and deliver security with cheaper, zero-carbon electricity by 2030, accelerating to net zero.
- Take back our streets by halving serious violent crime and raising confidence in the police and criminal justice system to its highest levels.
- Breaking down the barriers to opportunity by reforming our childcare and education systems, to make sure there is no class ceiling on the ambitions of young people in Britain.
- And building an NHS fit for the future that is there when people need it; with fewer lives lost to the biggest killers; in a fairer Britain, where everyone lives well for longer.

Delivering on these missions will have a big impact on the residents and business of Southampton and they align with the work we are doing, with what has felt like one hand tied behind our back for a long time.

7. Hill Lane Transport Corridor

Councillor Blackman to Councillor Keogh

QUESTION:

Could you provide an update on developments for the Hill Lane transport corridor, notably the introduction of the new planned bus route, the future of the current X11 route, and reverting to a 30mph speed limit on Hill Lane itself?

ANSWER:

The X11 and X12 (Aldermoor, Shirley, Freemantle areas) have been retendered by the authority and will be operated by a different bus operator from Monday 28 October

2024. Both routes and timetables will be similar to now and the procurement team are in the process of awarding the tender. Once this has been completed and bus service registrations have been received from the new operator, we will be able to provide further information. Regarding the proposed Hill Lane bus service, negotiations are underway with the successful tender and a service may be in place for January 2025. A consultation on proposed changes to speed limits in the Shirley / Freemantle area including Hill Lane will be advertised by a Traffic Regulation Order in November 2024

8. Mayfield Bowling Club

Councillor Powell-Vaughan to Councillor Letts

QUESTION:

Can you please advise why after agreeing my motion for Mayfield Bowling Club last Full Council you have not arranged the Greens upkeep and costs?

ANSWER:

The City Services team is working with Mayfield Bowling Club to develop and agree options regarding the upkeep and costs associated with the facility.

43. MOTIONS

(a) Moved by Councillor Windle and seconded by Councillor Evey

Southampton City Council notes the important role local assets play in thriving communities and understands that these venues can take various forms, ranging from community centres and pubs to cinemas and music venues.

Further notes that over recent years the decline of high streets together with the UK's poor economic growth has meant our communities are losing the assets that we all find important, with many vital assets left empty and vacant – ultimately becoming an eyesore.

The Council welcomes the news of the UK Government's plans to strengthen a Community Right to Buy and its commitment to strengthen the powers available to communities, including a first refusal on a wider range of assets of community value, as well as doubling the time period for communities to raise finance to buy Assets of Community Value from six months to twelve.

This Council celebrates the role that local people have played in saving and breathing new life into once forgotten venues through schemes such as Assets of Community Value and commits to supporting further work to ensure these processes are as accessible as possible.

Southampton City Council commits to supporting community groups interested in acquiring an asset with connections to local and national funders as well as infrastructure support. This includes working with organisations such as Plunkett UK and Power to Change.

Therefore Southampton City Council resolves to work with Council officers to see how best it can:

1. Promote Assets of Community Value (ACVs)
2. Make it easier for people to apply for an ACV.
3. Celebrate the success stories of ACVs in our community

UPON BEING PUT TO THE VOTE THE MOTION IN THE NAME OF COUNCILLOR WINDLE WAS DECLARED CARRIED.

RESOLVED: that the motion be approved.

NOTE: Councillors Denness and Payne declared personal interests and left the meeting.

44. (b) Moved by Councillor Gravatt and seconded by Councillor Blackman

This Council notes: Children's play parks provide an essential space for young people to engage in physical activity, develop social skills, and foster a sense of community. These parks are not just recreational areas; they are vital for the health, wellbeing, and development of our city's children.

The condition of some of our parks, such as Octavia Rd Play Park and Portswood Rec, is poor due to equipment being removed and not replaced for a prolonged period of time, in some cases over 2 years. These examples show the pressing need for more consistent maintenance and investment.

This Council believes: The safety and upkeep of play parks should be a priority for Southampton City Council. Given their importance, damaged equipment should be replaced within 6 months at maximum to ensure the safety and enjoyment of local children.

As part of the Council's commitment to environmental responsibility, any future investment in play parks should focus on using sustainable and eco-friendly materials. This approach will help ensure that our play parks remain safe, accessible, and environmentally sustainable for future generations.

With the city's current financial challenges, it is more important than ever to carefully prioritise spending to ensure that critical services like children's play parks are protected from potential cuts.

This Council resolves to:

1. Assess play parks across Southampton to identify equipment in poor condition that either needs replacing, or will need replacing in the next year, and keep a clear record of this.
2. Plan for the replacement of equipment in advance so that when it needs to be removed at the end of its life it can be replaced quickly. Commit to replacing equipment within at most 6 months after its removal and faster where possible.
3. Prioritise the protection of children's play parks in future budget discussions, recognising their long-term value for community health and wellbeing.
4. Ensure that all future repairs and equipment replacements across the city's play parks incorporate sustainable, eco-friendly materials wherever possible, reducing environmental impact.
5. Develop a long-term plan to future-proof Southampton's play parks, ensuring

these essential spaces continue to thrive for the benefit of future generations.

Amendment moved by Councillor Savage and seconded by Councillor Webb.

Delete Paragraph 2 and **replace with** This Council notes that the cuts to local authority budgets between 2010 and 2024 have reduced the amount of investment the council has been able to invest in play areas. However, Council have continued to maintain and upgrade play areas as far as possible within reduced budgets.

Paragraph 3, 1st sentence after parks **delete** “should be” and **replace with** “is”. 3rd sentence after “within” **delete** “6 months at maximum” and **replace with** “a reasonable time frame”

Paragraph 5, 2nd sentence after “spending” **delete** “to ensure that critical services” and **replace with** “on services”. 3rd sentence **after** “cuts” **insert** “those services that have a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of Southampton’s residents”.

Paragraph 6, 1st bullet point **before** “Assess” **insert** “Continue to”
2nd bullet point, 1st sentence **before** “Plan” **insert** “Continue to” **after** “equipment”
delete “equipment in advance so that when it needs to be removed at the end of its life it can be replaced quickly”. 2nd sentence **after** “within” **delete** “within at most 6 months after its removal and faster where possible” and **replace with** “a reasonable time frame”.

3rd bullet point, 1st sentence **after** “of” **delete** “children’s play parks in future budget discussions, recognising their long-term value for community” and **replace with** “on those services that have a positive impact on the”. 2nd sentence **after** “wellbeing” **insert** “of Southampton’s residents”.

Amended Motion to read:

Protecting and Improving Southampton’s Children’s Play Parks

This Council notes: Children’s play parks provide an essential space for young people to engage in physical activity, develop social skills, and foster a sense of community. These parks are not just recreational areas; they are vital for the health, wellbeing, and development of our city’s children.

This Council notes that the cuts to local authority budgets between 2010 and 2024 have reduced the amount of investment the council has been able to invest in play areas. However, Council have continued to maintain and upgrade play areas as far as possible within reduced budgets.

This Council believes: The safety and upkeep of play parks is a priority for Southampton City Council. Given their importance, damaged equipment should be replaced within a reasonable time frame to ensure the safety and enjoyment of local children.

As part of the Council’s commitment to environmental responsibility, any future investment in play parks should focus on using sustainable and eco-friendly materials. This approach will help ensure that our play parks remain safe, accessible, and environmentally sustainable for future generations.

With the city's current financial challenges, it is more important than ever to carefully prioritise spending on services like children's play parks are protected from potential cuts those services that have a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of Southampton's residents.

This Council resolves to:

1. Continue to assess play parks across Southampton to identify equipment in poor condition that either needs replacing, or will need replacing in the next year, and keep a clear record of this.
2. Continue to plan for the replacement of equipment and commit to replacing equipment within a reasonable time frame.
3. Prioritise the protection of on those services that have a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of Southampton's residents.
4. Ensure that all future repairs and equipment replacements across the city's play parks incorporate sustainable, eco-friendly materials wherever possible, reducing environmental impact.
5. Develop a long-term plan to future-proof Southampton's play parks, ensuring these essential spaces continue to thrive for the benefit of future generations.

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

UPON BEING TO THE VOTE THE SUBSTANTIVE MOTION IN THE NAME OF COUNCILLOR SAVAGE WAS DECLARED CARRIED.

RESOLVED: that the amended motion be approved.

(c) Moved by Councillor Beaurain and seconded by Councillor Houghton

Age UK has estimated that 2 million pensioners may go without heating this winter because of the Labour government's decision to restrict the Winter Fuel Payment. The Winter Fuel Payment has a significant role in ensuring that older residents across Southampton can afford to heat their homes in the coldest months. By removing this benefit from more than 28,000 residents in Southampton, Labour is risking pensioners' health and fuel security this winter at a time when global energy prices are already high due to the continuing impact of the pandemic and Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Consequently, this council resolves to: - Note the above, and recognise the damaging impact that Labour's policy will have on the fuel security of our older residents this winter, including AgeUK's prediction, which says that 2 million pensioners who need the money to stay warm this winter will not receive it; - Note that the Winter Fuel Payment has been a lifeline for many older people across Southampton, and that in restricting its availability solely to those on pension credits risks leaving many in financial hardship; - Request the Leader of the Council write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer to request a review of the decisions to mean-test Winter Fuel Payments and ask government to ensure that vulnerable pensioners, particularly those who do not claim Pension Credit, are protected from fuel poverty; - Bring forward a Council-led local awareness campaign to alert those who are eligible, but not yet claiming Pension Credit, of how to receive it, which in some respects will help access to the Winter Fuel Payment for those

most in need; and - Encourage local efforts to promote Pension Credit uptake through council services and partnerships with local charities and community organisations to ensure that pensioners in Southampton are supported in claiming their entitlement.

Amendment moved by Councillor Fielker and seconded by Councillor Lambert

1st Paragraph, 1st sentence **after** “pensioners **insert** “, 28,000 in Southampton,” 3rd sentence **delete** The Winter Fuel Payment has a significant role in ensuring that older residents across Southampton can afford to heat their homes in the coldest months. By removing this benefit from more than 28,000 residents in Southampton, Labour is risking pensioners’ health and fuel security this winter at a time when global energy prices are already high due to the continuing impact of the pandemic and Russia’s invasion of Ukraine.” **Replace with** Council notes that only 63% of people claim Pension Credit which is a valuable benefit unlocking other financial help such as full Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support. It opens up eligibility for social tariffs, the Warm Home Discount, cheaper broadband, free TV licenses, lower water bills and the Winter Fuel Payment. Council notes that Pension Credit tops up a person's income to a minimum of £218.15 per week for single pensioners and to £332.95 for couples. Council notes that the Chancellor of the Exchequer has extended the Household Support Fund to ensure local authorities can support vulnerable people, including pensioners, over the winter period.

After “Consequently, this council resolves to” **Delete points 1-3** - Note the above, and recognise the damaging impact that Labour’s policy will have on the fuel security of our older residents this winter, including AgeUK’s prediction, which says that 2 million pensioners who need the money to stay warm this winter will not receive it;

- Note that the Winter Fuel Payment has been a lifeline for many older people across Southampton, and that in restricting its availability solely to those on pension credits risks leaving many in financial hardship;

- Request the Leader of the Council write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer to request a review of the decisions to mean-test Winter Fuel Payments and ask government to ensure that vulnerable pensioners, particularly those who do not claim Pension Credit, are protected from fuel poverty; **replace with** “-Write to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions to ask that the process to apply for pension credit is made easier, to ensure this barrier to apply, which has led to a low take-up, is removed”

Amended Motion to read:

Age UK has estimated that 2 million pensioners, 28,000 in Southampton, may go without heating this winter because of the Labour government’s decision to restrict the Winter Fuel Payment.

Council notes that only 63% of people claim Pension Credit which is a valuable benefit unlocking other financial help such as full Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support. It opens up eligibility for social tariffs, the Warm Home Discount, cheaper broadband, free TV licenses, lower water bills and the Winter Fuel Payment.

Council notes that Pension Credit tops up a person's income to a minimum of £218.15 per week for single pensioners and to £332.95 for couples.

Council notes that the Chancellor of the Exchequer has extended the Household Support Fund to ensure local authorities can support vulnerable people, including pensioners, over the winter period.

Consequently, this council resolves to:

–Write to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions to ask that the process to apply for pension credit is made easier, to ensure this barrier to apply, which has led to a low take-up, is removed.

- Bring forward a Council-led local awareness campaign to alert those who are eligible, but not yet claiming Pension Credit, of how to receive it, which in some respects will help access to the Winter Fuel Payment for those most in need; and

- Encourage local efforts to promote Pension Credit uptake through council services and partnerships with local charities and community organisations to ensure that pensioners in Southampton are supported in claiming their entitlement

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

UPON BEING TO THE VOTE THE SUBSTANTIVE MOTION IN THE NAME OF COUNCILLOR FIELKER WAS DECLARED CARRIED.

RESOLVED: that the amended motion be approved.

(d) Moved by Councillor P Baillie and seconded by Councillor Powell Vaughan

This council is dismayed that Labour are likely to remove the single person council tax discount. This may affect over 40,000 Southampton residents, many of whom are in financial difficulty. Council asks that the Leader of the Council writes to the three local M.P.s asking them to oppose this measure which will only worsen the financial situation of many thousands of Southampton residents, many of whom will also be hit with the loss of the winter fuel allowance.

UPON BEING PUT TO THE VOTE THE MOTION IN THE NAME OF COUNCILLOR P BAILLIE WAS LOST.

RESOLVED: that the motion be rejected.

NOTE: Council noted that whilst the single person discount was a financial benefit that some Members may hold it was one that was held in common with thousands of residents coupled with the fact it was a discount given under national legislation over which local authorities have no control. That situation is catered for in the Code and the Monitoring Officer advised on that basis that no pecuniary interest needed to be declared. However, if Members felt more comfortable they could declare a personal interest which meant they could remain, speak to the Motion if they wished and vote.

Councillor Noon declared a personal interest and remained in the meeting and took part in the vote.

44. 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.

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

It was noted that:-

Following the resignation of Councillor Kaur, Councillor Yvonne Frampton would replace her on the Children and Families Scrutiny Panel.

Councillors Cooper, Greenhalgh and Webb had been appointed to the Scrutiny Inquiry Panel with Councillor Cooper being appointed as Chair.