
SOUTHAMPTON CITY COUNCIL
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 22 AUGUST 2024

Present: Councillors Blackman (Chair), Y Frampton, Leggett, McManus, Greenhalgh, Laurent, Windle and Barnes-Andrews
Appointed Members: Rob Sanders

Apologies: Councillor Stead
Appointed Members: Catherine Hobbs

10. **APOLOGIES AND CHANGES IN PANEL MEMBERSHIP (IF ANY)**

It was noted that following receipt of the temporary resignation of Councillors Every, Kloker, Powell-Vaughan and Renyard from the Committee, Monitoring Officer, acting under delegated powers, had appointed Councillors Windall, Greenhalgh, Barnes-Andrews and Laurent to replace them for the purposes of this meeting and in addition noted the apologies of Councillor Stead.

11. **ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR**

It was noted that in the absence of several committee members this item be deferred to next meeting.

12. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (INCLUDING MATTERS ARISING)**

RESOLVED that the minutes for the Scrutiny Inquiry Panel – How do we get a better deal for private renters in Southampton held on 18 April 2024 and the minutes of the Committee meeting held on 11 July 2024 be approved and signed as a correct record.

13. **EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC - CONFIDENTIAL 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 confidential appendix to the following Item.

Appendix 1 of this report is not for publication by virtue of category 7A (obligation of confidentiality) of paragraph 10.4 of Southampton City Council's ("the Council's") Access to Information Procedure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.

It was not in the public interest to disclose this information as the report contains confidential and commercially sensitive information in relation to one of the Council's suppliers. It would prejudice the Council's ability to operate in a commercial environment and obtain best value in contract negotiations and would prejudice the Council's commercial relationships with third parties if they believed the Council would not honour obligations of confidentiality.

14. **FORWARD PLAN**

The Committee received and noted the report of the Scrutiny Manager which enabled the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee to examine the content of the Forward Plan and to discuss issues of interest or concern with the Executive.

i) Budget Matters – Interim Transformation Partner

Councillor Fielker, Leader of the Council and James Fleming-Wills, Director of Transformation were present and with the consent of the Chair addressed the meeting setting out the background, scope, and current progress in relation to the appointment by the Council of a transformation partner.

The Committee noted that the full scope of the forthcoming decision would be presented to Cabinet and Council in September. However, the Committee questioned the Leader and officer on the scope and timescales of potential savings, associated costings and sought to better understand the nature of the forthcoming decision and its potential to reduce expenditure.

Members were concerned over potential accountability and governance issues of any future relationship and concluded that the Chairs of the Council's Governance, Audit and Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee should meet to review matters.

RESOLVED

That, the Chairs of the Governance, Audit and Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee meet to discuss details once published.

15. **PROTECTING, PRESERVING AND PROMOTING THE RIVER ITCHEN IN SOUTHAMPTON INQUIRY - PROGRESS UPDATE**

The Committee considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Green City and Net Zero providing the Committee with a requested update on progress implementing agreed recommendations from the River Itchen Scrutiny Inquiry.

Councillor Savage - Cabinet Member for Green City and Net Zero, Ian Collins – Environment Director, and Lindsay McCulloch - Service Manager for Environment and Sustainability were present and with the consent of the Chair addressed the meeting.

The Committee raised and discussed the following points:

- The progress made implementing the approved recommendations to date, including referencing the limited responses within the report to a number of the recommendations and the lack of action against others.
- The importance of the River Itchen Flood Alleviation Scheme (RIFAS) to the growth and prosperity of the city and concerns relating to the funds available to deliver the project in full.
- The continued challenges relating to water quality and the importance of SuDS (Sustainable Drainage Systems).
- Community engagement and future full membership of the Solent Forum.
- Ongoing issues with regards negative impacts to wildlife, recreational and commercial activities on and around the river.

RESOLVED that,

- i) To enable the Committee to hold the Executive to account for the implementation of the approved recommendations within the scrutiny inquiry report, the Chair and Scrutiny Manager arrange for the item to return to the Committee in 2024/25 with a further update on progress across the full range of issues raised by the inquiry.
- ii) In recognition of the importance of the scheme, the Committee requested that an update report on The River Itchen Flood Alleviation Scheme (RIFAS) was considered by the Committee at a future date.

16. **SCRUTINY INQUIRY 2024/25 - SHORTLIST**

The Committee considered the report of the Scrutiny Manager recommending that the Committee considers the shortlist of subjects for the 2024/25 scrutiny inquiry and identifies a preferred topic for which terms of reference can be developed for consideration at the October 2024 meeting of the Committee.

The Committee discussed the two options at length. In recognition that problem gambling has a considerable impact on the city and that the scope for the proposed housing inquiry requires further clarification and definition, it was agreed that problem gambling should be the subject of the 2024/25 scrutiny inquiry.

RESOLVED that the scrutiny inquiry for 2024/25 will be on problem gambling and that terms of reference are developed for consideration at the October 2024 meeting of the Committee.

17. **MONITORING SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE EXECUTIVE**

The Committee considered and discussed the responses from the Executive to recommendations from previous meetings.