
SOUTHAMPTON CITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON
17TH SEPTEMBER 2008

Present:

The Mayor, Councillor Parnell
The Sheriff, Councillor Mizon
Councillors Baillie, Ball, Barnes–Andrews, Baston, Beckett, Mrs Blatchford, Bogle, Burke, Capozzoli, Cooke, Cunio, Mrs Damani, Daunt, Dean, Dick, Drake, Fitzgerald, Fitzhenry, Fuller, Galton, Hannides, Holmes, Jones, Letts, McEwing, Marsh-Jenks, Matthews, Moulton, Norris, Odgers, Osmond, Payne, Rayment, Samuels, Slade, Smith, Sollitt, Stevens, Thomas, Walker, Wells, White, Willacy, P. Williams and Dr R. Williams.

44. APOLOGIES

It was noted that apologies for absence had been received from Councillor Davis.

45. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Council meeting held on 16th July 2008 be approved and signed as a correct record.

46. ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE MAYOR AND THE LEADER

1. Southampton's 'Reading Slam'

The Mayor referred to the 'reading slam' which was an opportunity for the people of Southampton to read and talk about the same book. 600 copies of the book Slam by the author Nick Hornby were available at locations across the City and the Mayor urged Members to pick up a copy, read it and pass it on.

2. Water Fluoridation

The Mayor reminded Members that the procedure for the debate over the Strategic Health Authority's consultation on water fluoridation in the Southampton area would be discussed through the Healthy City Scrutiny Panel inquiry and then on to a Full Council debate, the Full Council debate being on the 19th November 2008.

The Mayor sought Members' agreement that when the matter was debated at Full Council, no deputations, petitions or representations would be received by Full Council on this issue for that meeting.

The Mayor explained that the point of this was that any representations, deputations and evidence should be dealt with during the course of the scrutiny inquiry. Alternatively, Full Council could have to spend a

considerable amount of time re-hearing depositions, representations and evidence. Members agreed to the proposal so that in November they could focus on the political debate in the light of the recommendations from the Scrutiny Panel.

3. HM The Queen

The Mayor announced that a new portrait of HM The Queen had been ordered and that this would be hung in the Council Chamber in the near future.

47. DEPUTATIONS, PETITIONS AND PUBLIC QUESTIONS

- (i) The Council received a deputation from Val Abbott, Donald White and David Abbot, concerning a request for a crossing at Weston Lane.

48. EXECUTIVE BUSINESS

The report of the Leader was submitted setting out the details of the business undertaken by the Executive (copy of report circulated with agenda and appended to the signed minutes).

The Council was advised that Councillor Dean had been appointed as Cabinet Member for the Environment and Transport portfolio.

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

The following questions were then submitted in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 11.1.

1. Question from Councillor Richard Williams to Councillor Samuels.

Does the Conservative Executive support the Sustainable Communities Act which is designed to allow local authorities and their communities to drive the help that central government gives in reversing community decline and promoting thriving, sustainable communities?

Answer

The Executive supports the principles within the Sustainable Communities Act.

2. Question from Councillor Sollitt to Councillor Dean.

In light of the recent budget cut to the free clean up of rubbish from Student Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMO) areas in the City; what action will the Cabinet Member be undertaking to deal with the accumulation of large amounts of rubbish in these areas particularly from house clearance at the end of the academic year?

Answer

Much work was done in order to negate the need for the 'student clear up' in

July 2008, including work with Landlords, Letting Agents, Universities, students groups, residents, PCSOs, Environment Centre, Police and a co-ordinated approach across a number of council services.

Initiatives included;

- A multi-agency door knocking initiative throughout May and June, dealing with all waste related issues (130 properties visited).
- Two community clean ups (Env Centre, students and residents collected 8 tonnes of waste and recyclable materials.)
- Meetings with landlords/letting agents, presentation and radio broadcast supported by publicity materials and information giving guidance on new arrangements.
- Meetings with residents' representatives.
- Meetings with, and attendance at, University and student functions.
- Development of 'student enviro-champions' initiative.
- Establishing mutually beneficial partnerships with all parties, including MSC students undertaking development work to support council initiatives.

These initiatives, which are continuing resulted in;

- Virtually no bulky household waste being presented for collection compared with 35 tonnes (Polygon), 50 tonnes (Newtown/ Nicholstown) in 2007.
- Additional waste presented correctly in secured sacks.
- The problem contained to a 4 day window compared to the usual 4-6 weeks.

Further initiatives are being developed for 2009 including dealing with miscreants scavenging sacks presented for collection.

3. Question from Councillor Payne to Councillor Phil Williams.

Could the Cabinet Member outline what powers residents in council-owned properties have to regulate the heating in their homes, including communal systems?

Answer

Tenants in properties with gas central heating (including communal systems) have full control over their heating system as to when it is switched on and how long it is on for. These systems usually have a room thermostat, a time control and individual thermostatic radiator valves (TRV's) to each radiator to control the temperature.

Residents with electric storage heating usually have night storage heating which stores energy at cheap rates overnight and then radiates out during the day. Night storage heating is controlled by the tenant by controlling the level of input and output required. Heating for communal systems is controlled by the Council and is turned on during September and off in April / May, (depending on weather conditions).

Tenants in communal systems with electric under floor heating have control by determining the level of input and output via dials on the heaters, and flats

can control part of their under floor systems via a thermostat, but the availability of the heating is controlled by the Council as above.

Tenants not in communal areas pay for the actual consumption they use via their own meters.

The communal heating system provides background heating to maintain an ambient temperature within the property to prevent cold / damp related illness, combat condensation and mould issues that could lead to an increase in repair work and costs.

Many properties already have additional heating appliances such as convector / fan heaters which can be used and fully controlled by the tenant.

4. Question from Councillor Sollitt to Councillor Dean.

Can the Cabinet Member advise what action he is taking to deal with the upsurge of vandalism to bus shelters and other street furniture throughout the City?

Answer

At present, there are two types of bus shelter in use in the City – advertising and non-advertising. Advertising shelters are provided and maintained by Adshel (part of the Clear Channel Group) and they inspect their shelters on a regular basis and carry out repairs as necessary. Non-advertising shelters (owned by the City Council) are currently maintained by Queensbury under the terms of a maintenance contract, by which all shelters are required to be cleaned and inspected on a monthly basis, and necessary repairs carried out.

However, vandalism can occur at any time and if it happens just after a routine visit, then it may not be picked up immediately unless it is reported either through Actionline or through the Council's own inspection processes.

Cabinet has recently approved the tendering of a new bus shelter contract which, if successful, would result in the whole of the bus shelter stock being provided and maintained by a single private sector supplier, thus further simplifying the reporting process and enabling incidents of vandalism to be dealt with more efficiently.

Reports about damage to other street furniture (such as street name plates, highway benches and illuminated bollards) are generally received by the Street Maintenance Service.

The largest number of enquiries relates to damaged street nameplates - there were over 500 incidents in 2007/08. In the first six months of this year however, there has not been a noticeable increase in the number of complaints. When damage does occur, repairs are prioritised by the Street Maintenance Manager in terms of public safety, and availability of budget.

It should be noted that the issue of vandalism itself is a public order concern and, whilst systems to identify and rectify the damage are in place, it is virtually impossible to make such things as bus shelters and street furniture

vandal-proof; they can only really be made vandal-resistant. All new street furniture designs are chosen with consideration given to its robustness and ability to withstand damage.

5. Question from Councillor Bogle to Councillor Hannides.

How is the new arts quarter going to be progressed and delivered by the planned go live date of 2012 in light of City Lofts' recent demise?

Answer

The cultural quarter concept is the product of a number of cultural venues being in close proximity – from the Mayflower to the Millais, including the parks, the City Art Gallery, the Guildhall and the Library.

There is significant investment from SEEDA to deliver a high quality space in the form of a refurbished Guildhall Square, which will create opportunities for outdoor events and performances. Discussions continue with the partners in the Arts Complex project to deliver an ongoing programme of joint work, with bids to funding partners expected to support this.

6. Question from Councillor Sollitt to Councillor Smith.

Could the Cabinet Member clarify the actual cost of his new office as part of the redesign of the members' area?

Answer

There is a small removal cost involved in relocating furniture to the new room and the expense amounts to a few hundred pounds only.

7. Question from Councillor Letts to Councillor Dean.

What is your policy for reducing traffic speed on non classified residential roads?

Answer

In accordance with the policies set out in the Local Transport Plan, the whole approach to speed reduction in the City is a three-pronged one: that of education, engineering and enforcement.

Education consists of targeted initiatives, (such as Theatre in Education presentations to young drivers or Edge 44 motorcycle training) as well as support for Safer Roads Partnership initiatives such as Driver Awareness Training for those drivers caught speeding just above the posted limit. National speed campaigns are also fully supported.

Engineering measures generally take the form of traffic calming features of one type or another, and are employed in locations where a proven injury accident record exists. The Council was one of the first authorities in the country to adopt a data-led approach to traffic calming and safety schemes,

and most of the significant problems on residential roads have already been treated. In addition, all new residential roads are designed using Home-Zone principles to ensure that speeds are kept down through the use of design features. 20mph zones are steadily being introduced outside schools and these also cover adjacent residential areas.

Ultimately however, it is also necessary to undertake a level of enforcement and this is the responsibility of the Police. The Hampshire and Isle of Wight Safer Roads Partnership (of which this Council is a member) has taken a lead role in promoting camera enforcement on the principal and classified road network, but enforcement on non-Partnership routes (which represent the majority of roads in the City) remains a matter for Police decision. Their view will be based upon casualty and speed data (often supplied by the Council) and the extent of community concern.

The continuing reduction in the number of road accident casualties resulting from excessive speed indicates that this broad approach is proving effective.

8. Question from Councillor Sollitt to Councillor Hannides.

Can the Cabinet Member justify the plan to spend £200,000 on upgrading the gym facilities at the Quays next year from unsupported borrowing recoverable from increased revenue in the light of his ambition to transfer leisure services to an alternative management structure?

Answer

It is unlikely that a new partner will be in place until 2010, and it is appropriate that customers should continue to enjoy high quality facilities and services. At present we are unable to meet demand for fitness classes and are turning customers away. The scheme will be funded through prudential borrowing and demonstrates a positive financial return. This will ensure that potential partners, as they develop their bids, reflect an increased value over the life of what will be a long term contract with the Council. It demonstrates the Council's commitment to potential partners, so that competitive bids are submitted on that understanding.

It also responds to the needs of the successful diving programme, which sent 3 athletes to the Beijing Olympics, and averts the real potential of this programme relocating to another city, which would deprive local people of world class training opportunities and reduce the chances of 2012 training camps coming to the City.

9. Question from Councillor Letts to Councillor Matthews.

In the light of our recent discussions what are your plans for the Hightown Youth Centre in Tunstall Road?

Answer

I have asked the relevant Head of Service, to progress this. By the end of the month a valuation for the property will have been secured, and further discussion on the usage of the building can take place. Options for future

usage are being developed and these will include all those we discussed at our meeting.

10. Question from Councillor Baston to Councillor Samuels.

Can the Leader of the Council explain why the three places on the Schools Admissions Forum have all been allotted to Members of the Executive?

Answer

The 2007 Admissions Code of Practice does not require Admissions fora to reflect political proportionality within their local authority appointed membership.

Only one of the three places on the Schools Admissions Forum is filled by a member of the Executive in the form of the Cabinet Member for Children's Services. The other two places are held by non-executive members.

11. Question from Councillor Letts to Councillor Smith.

What is your response to the petitions I presented at the last Council meeting on;

- a) Gating order in Hinton Crescent
- b) CCTV overlooking Lydgate Green

Answer

Residents in the areas concerned were written to and given a detailed breakdown of what had already been done to address their concerns about anti-social behaviour. They were also advised that their suggestions in relation to 'Gating Orders' and CCTV were now being examined by the relevant partners.

49. MOTIONS

- a) Southampton City Profile

Councillor Bogle moved and Councillor Mrs Damani seconded:-

“This Council recognises that the City of Southampton needs to address the ongoing concerns over access to the waterfront and the need to raise the City's profile to be the no. 1 city on the south coast. This Council recognises the need for plans that help achieve the aspirations laid out in the 2026 City Vision.

This Council calls on the Executive to allocate resource (officer or Scrutiny) to assess the feasibility of long-term development of the West Itchen Waterfront between the Itchen and Northam Bridges. This Council requests that the relevant policy framework documents (Local Development Framework, the City Centre Action Plan and the Minerals and Waste Strategy) to be updated as a result of any recommendations.”

UPON BEING PUT TO THE VOTE THE MOTION WAS DECLARED LOST

RESOLVED that the motion as submitted be not approved.

(b) Sustainable Communities Act 2007

Councillor Baston moved and Councillor Dr R Williams seconded: -

“The Sustainable Communities Act 2007 will assist local government and local communities to drive central government policy on reversing community decline and promoting sustainable communities. Local authorities can act in unison to put in proposals to government supported by their colleagues elsewhere, making it harder for the Government to refuse to act on their suggestions.

Therefore this Council confirms that it will submit proposals when invited to do so by the Government this autumn.”

Amendment moved by Councillor Samuels and seconded by Councillor Dean:

In line 7, after the word “will”, insert “carefully and constructively and sympathetically consider such proposals as may be made and consider whether or not to”.

AMENDED MOTION TO READ:

The Sustainable Communities Act 2007 will assist local government and local communities to drive central government policy on reversing community decline and promoting sustainable communities. Local authorities can act in unison to put in proposals to government supported by their colleagues elsewhere, making it harder for the Government to refuse to act on their suggestions.

Therefore this Council confirms that it will carefully and constructively and sympathetically consider such proposals as may be made and consider whether or not to submit proposals when invited to do so by the Government this autumn.

UPON BEING PUT TO THE VOTE THE AMENDMENT WAS DECLARED CARRIED

UPON BEING PUT TO THE VOTE THE MOTION AS AMENDED WAS DECLARED CARRIED

RESOLVED that the motion as amended be approved.

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

It was noted that no questions had been received.

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

In light of the recent appointment of Councillor Dean to the Cabinet, the following changes in committee appointments were noted:

Planning & Rights of Way Panel:
Cllr Linda Norris

Employment & Appeals Panel:
Cllr Edward Osmond

Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee:
Cllr Ben Walker

Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny Panel: Conservative Vacancy

Safer Communities Scrutiny Panel: Changed from Councillor Norris to Councillor Odgers

52. WESSEX YOUTH OFFENDING TEAM (YOT) ANNUAL YOUTH JUSTICE PLAN

The report of the Cabinet Member for Young People and Skills was submitted seeking approval to the Wessex Youth Justice Plan 2008/09 as part of the Council's Policy Framework (copy of report circulated with agenda and appended to signed minutes).

RESOLVED that the Wessex Youth Justice Plan 2008/09 as part of the Council's Policy Framework be approved.

53. MODERNISATION OF SOUTHAMPTON DAY SERVICES: PHASE 3

The report of the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health was submitted seeking approval to fund expenditure in the Adult Social Care and Health Capital Programme to refurbish and extend Woolston Community Centre as Phase 3 of the modernisation programme and to extend the scope of the Freemantle Community Centre (Phase 2) (copy of report circulated with agenda and appended to signed minutes).

RESOLVED

- (i) that the sum of £749,000 be added to the Adult Social Care and Health Capital Programme for additional expenditure on Phase 2 of the modernisation of Southampton Day Services at Freemantle Community Centre, to be funded from capital receipts from the sale of Brookside released by accepting the £749,000 LSC grant; and
- (ii) that the sum of £950,000 be added to the Adult Social Care and Health Capital Programme for expenditure on Phase 3 of the Modernisation of Southampton Day Services, to be funded from £950,000 of corporate resources (proposed to be met from the available capital receipts coming from the previous sale of Brookside and the future sale of Prospect House for this scheme).

54. LICENSING ACT 2003 CUMULATIVE IMPACT POLICY

The report of the Assistant Solicitor to the Council was submitted seeking authority for the Solicitor to the Council to undertake formal consultation with regard to the draft Licensing Act 2003 Cumulative Impact Policy (copy of report circulated with agenda and appended to signed minutes).

RESOLVED

- (i) that the evidence submitted by the Police be noted;
- (ii) that the Solicitor to the Council be authorised to undertake formal consultation with regard to the draft Licensing Act 2003 Cumulative Impact Policy; and
- (iii) that a further report be submitted to Council when the formal consultation process is complete.

55. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2008/09 – 2010/11

The report of the Cabinet Member for Housing and Local Services was submitted updating the Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme that was approved by Council in February 2008 to reflect the actual level of spend in 2007/08 (copy of report circulated with agenda and appended to signed minutes).

RESOLVED

- (i) that the revised Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Capital Programme set out in Appendix 1 to the report be approved; and
- (ii) that the use of resources to fund the HRA Capital Programme as shown in Appendix 3 to the report, including the use of unsupported borrowing in total of £2.15M be approved.

56. THE GENERAL FUND CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2007/08 – 2010/11

The report of the Cabinet Member for Resources and Workforce Planning was submitted concerning the General Fund Capital Programme (copy of report circulated with agenda and appended to signed minutes).

RESOLVED

- (i) that the revised General Fund Capital Programme and use of resources be approved;
- (ii) that £100,000 be added to the Children's Services capital programme in 2008/09 for the Closure of Highcrown Street to be funded from corporate resources;
- (iii) that £43,000 be added to the Children's Services capital programme for the 2008/09 Children's Social Services supported borrowing allocation and £31,000 be added to the Children's Services capital programme for Information Control Technology (ICT) in 2008/09 funded from

government supported borrowing;

- (iv) that a further allocation of up to £500,000 be approved, if required for the Redbridge Primary Rebuild project, to be met from the unallocated Primary Capital Programme;
- (v) that £810,000 be added to the Economic Development capital programme for the Strategic Purchase of Sites for Development to be funded from corporate resources;
- (vi) that £800,000 be added to the Economic Development capital programme for the demolition of the Tyrrell & Green building to be funded from corporate resources;
- (vii) that the Executive Director of Resources be delegated authority, following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Resources and Workforce Planning, to increase the capital budget for the demolition of the Tyrrell & Green building up to a maximum of £1,200,000. Any additional funding over £800,000 would be from unsupported borrowing financed from the existing revenue budget for the running costs of the building which would no longer be required if demolished;
- (viii) that £60,000 be added to the Economic Development capital programme (phased £30,000 in 2008/09 and £30,000 in 2009/10) for Professional Fees for Lower High Street, to be funded from corporate resources;
- (ix) that £1,400,000 be added to the Environment & Transport capital programme in 2009/10 for Millbrook Flyover to be funded from corporate resources;
- (x) that £700,000 be added to the Environment & Transport capital programme in 2008/09 for Millbrook Roundabout (Dock Gate 20) funded from £658,000 unsupported borrowing and £42,000 Section 106 contributions;
- (xi) that £1,426,000 be added to the Environment & Transport capital programme for the Multi-Storey Car Park Maintenance Programme to be funded from unsupported borrowing (the borrowing costs to be paid for from the On Street Parking Surplus Account);
- (xii) that £200,000 be added to the Housing & Local Services capital programme in 2009/10 for Townhill Park Community Centre to be funded from corporate resources;
- (xiii) that £150,000 be added to the Housing & Local Services capital programme (phased £50,000 in 2008/09, £50,000 in 2009/10 and £50,000 in 2010/11) for Prevention of Illegal Encampments to be funded from corporate resources;
- (xiv) that £30,000 be added to the Housing & Local Services capital programme in 2008/09 for Daisy Dip funded from a £30,000 virement from Youth Wardens revenue budget to central Direct Revenue

Financing;

- (xv) that £25,000 be added to the Housing & Local Services capital programme in 2008/09 for Safety in Parks to be funded from corporate resources;
- (xvi) that £15,000 be added to the Housing & Local Services capital programme in 2008/09 for Improvements to Frogs Copse to be funded from corporate resources;
- (xvii) that £10,000 be added to the Housing & Local Services capital programme in 2008/09 for Freemantle Common to be funded from corporate resources;
- (xviii) that £1,500,000 be added to the Leisure, Culture & Heritage capital programme in 2010/11 for Tudor House Museum Phase 2 to be funded from corporate resources;
- (xix) that £900,000 be added to the Leisure, Culture & Heritage capital programme for Southampton's New Arts Centre (SNAC) to be funded from corporate resources;
- (xx) that £420,000 be added to the Leisure, Culture & Heritage capital programme in 2009/10 for Libraries RFID funded from unsupported borrowing;
- (xxi) that £200,000 be added to the Leisure, Culture & Heritage capital programme in 2009/10 for Quays Extension to Gym Facilities funded from unsupported borrowing;
- (xxii) that delegated authority be granted to the Executive Director of Resources, following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Resources and Workforce Planning, to undertake Prudential Borrowing to finance the capital programme in the event that anticipated capital receipts are delayed;
- (xxiii) that the revised Prudential Indicators, reflecting the updated capital programme, as detailed in Appendix 4 to the report be approved; and
- (xxiv) that the approved upper limit for total principal sums invested for periods over 364 days be increased from £40 Million to £50 Million to allow for maximum flexibility in generating investment income.

57. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY – SUMMARY OF CALL IN

It was noted that there had not been any use of the call-in procedure over the last three months.

58. WEEKEND VOTING

The report of the Solicitor of the Council was submitted seeking approval of the draft response to the Government consultation document on weekend voting (copy of report circulated with agenda and appended to signed minutes).

RESOLVED

- (i) that the content of the Government's Consultation document "Election Day: Weekend Voting" be noted; and
- (ii) that the draft response set out in Appendix 1 to the report be approved.