
SOUTHAMPTON CITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON
19TH NOVEMBER 2008

Present:

The Mayor, Councillor Parnell (For items 59 – 64b)

The Sheriff, Councillor Mizon

Councillors Baillie, Ball, Barnes–Andrews, Baston, Beckett, Mrs Blatchford, Bogle, Burke, Capozzoli, Cooke, Cunio, Mrs Damani, Daunt, Davis, 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.

59. APOLOGIES

It was noted that no apologies for absence had been received.

60. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Council Meeting held on 17th September 2008 be approved and signed as a correct record.

61. ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE MAYOR

1. Youth MP and Ambassadors

The Mayor welcomed Alice Weaver, Youth MP, and her two Ambassadors to the meeting.

2. 2008 Letsrecycle.com Awards for Excellence in Recycling and Waste Management and Civic Amenities Site of the Year Winner: Recycle at Rubbish Revised, Southampton / Veolia ES

Members were informed that the Waste & Fleet Transport Division had been successful in winning two awards; one for Excellence in Recycling and Waste Management and another for Civic Amenities Site of the Year Winner, Recycle at Rubbish Revised.

3 Councillor Rayment

Members congratulated Councillor Jacqui Rayment in her capacity as Chair of the Police Authority, which had recently won a national award for its work with the disabled community in the county.

The award was received for the work the Authority had undertaken with

disabled people and organisations in Hampshire and on the Isle of Wight as part of the process to develop its Disability Equality Scheme, and for subsequent projects with the disabled community.

62. DEPUTATIONS, PETITIONS AND PUBLIC QUESTIONS

- (i) The Council received a petition from Councillor Thomas, concerning a Gating Order between Chelveston Crescent and Lordshill District Shopping Centre.
- (ii) The Council received a petition from Councillor Cunio, concerning the possible renaming of Mayflower Park.
- (iii) The Council received a deputation from Yvonne Enright, concerning rubbish bins and the layout of paths in Southampton Parks.

63. EXECUTIVE BUSINESS

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

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

It was noted that there had been a change in portfolio responsibility for Children's Services and Young People and Skills. The 14 – 19 Years Strategy had been transferred from Children's Services Portfolio to the Young People and Skills Portfolio.

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

1. Question from Councillor Richard Williams to Councillor Dean.

What is the Council's vision for our waterfront in the face of sea level rise? Raise, Resist or Retreat?

Answer

Henry of Huntingdon, the 12th century chronicler, tells how Canute set his throne by the sea shore by the land now known as Ocean Village in Southampton. He commanded the tide to halt and not wet his feet and robes; but the tide failed to stop. According to Henry, Canute leapt backwards and said 'Let all men know how empty and worthless is the power of kings, for there is none worthy of the name, but He whom heaven, earth, and sea obey by eternal laws'. He then hung his gold crown on a crucifix, and never wore it again. As the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport, I face similar challenges but plan to take a slightly different approach.

It is inevitable, considering Defra estimates 6mm per year sea level rise and the UK Carbon Impact Programme 2002 predicts increased

extreme weather events such as downpours and storm surges that areas of Southampton located along or close to the waterfront will face increased flood and coastal erosion issues.

Under the current Shoreline Management Plan (SMP) covering Southampton City Council frontage (Western Solent and Southampton Water SMP) the recommended strategy is 'hold the existing defence line'.

The SMP is a non-statutory document which offers guidance to planners and developers with regard to flood and coastal defence in the face of natural processes, climate change and sea level rise, but it lacks legislative power to drive long term sustainable objectives.

The first generation SMPs are at present, undergoing revision to incorporate advances in knowledge, new information and future challenges with regard sustainable approaches to sea level rise and predicted climate change. The second generation SMP will hold greater legislative power but is not due for completion until March 2010.

An issue of concern with the recommended strategy of 'hold the existing defence line' is the presence of many private defences along the Southampton waterfront which are not Government funded and therefore the private owner is under no obligation to continue maintenance or upgrade of that defence.

The Council will, in partnership with the Environment Agency and others, be commissioning work to identify how the City can adapt to the impacts of climate change and plan future development of the City to deliver essential housing and economic needs in a safe and sustainable way. As ever, Government underfund this key area of their responsibility.

2. Question from Councillor Mizon to Councillor Baillie.

What does the Cabinet Member see as the most important duties of councillors in their role of corporate parents of children in care?

Answer

Corporate Parenting is a Statutory responsibility. Elected members have a responsibility to ensure that children and young people in care are:-

- i) healthy
 - ii) safe
 - iii) enjoy and achieve
 - iv) make a positive contribution and
 - v) achieve economic well-being
- (i.e. 5 outcomes of Every Child Matters).

The Corporate Parent role is to ensure that the services that the

Council provides contribute towards achieving these outcomes.

The last Joint Area Review report (2007) identified a number of weaknesses in the Corporate parenting function in Southampton, including the extent to which performance was challenged. We have restructured the Corporate Parenting Group and are currently consulting on that.

The Head of service for Safeguarding gave a Members' briefing on this on 12th October.

The main duties of the elected members as Corporate Parents are therefore :-

- to ensure resources are made available to enable Children in Care to achieve the 5 outcomes,
- to champion the cause of Children in Care,
- to challenge Council Officers on the performance of services in meeting the needs of children in care

3. Question from Councillor Richard Williams to Councillor Dean

What is the current level of understanding of the pressures facing the City from sea level rise in light of the 1 in 200 year flood maps currently published on the Environment Agency website?

Answer

Southampton City faces great pressure of increased flood events from coastal flooding due to sea level rise. In particular, areas of the City which lie along or close to the banks of the River Test and the River Itchen are at significant risk of flooding if a 1 in 200 year flood event were to occur.

Due to these pressures it is essential to work with natural coastal processes to develop more sustainable coastal flood defences, allowing natural rollback of the intertidal area (retreat the line) where possible. Where economically viable, maintenance or upgrade of defences should occur (hold the existing defence line).

Southampton City Council is currently leading a project to develop a 'Coastal Defence Strategy' for the River Itchen, Weston Shore and River Hamble in conjunction with Eastleigh Borough Council and Fareham Borough Council (due for completion early 2009). A study to develop a strategic approach to development in the City is being worked up.

These strategies will assist the second generation Shoreline Management Plan (SMP) development and allow the Council to apply for Government funding for coastal erosion and flood defence objectives in the future. It will also provide the basis for sound

decision making in relation to new development, adaptation to the pressures of climate change and sea level rise in the City.

The Council is adopting a proactive stance through involvement in development of the second generation SMP, Coastal Defence Strategy, Core Strategy (Local Development Framework), and the establishment of the multi sectoral Flood Advisory Board, as well as active participation in a number of external groups concerned with flood and coastal issues.

4. Question from Councillor Mizon to Councillor Phil Williams.

Given it is 6 months since the demise of the Neighbourhood Partnerships what mechanism is now in place to be able to consult residents, especially where consultation is a legal requirement; to bring together residents and agencies to solve localised problems; and to involve residents in influencing decisions affecting their community, especially as this is often part of a service target, or government target?

Answer

Neighbourhoods Partnerships failed. The areas were not similar to that of the Police, Primary Care Trusts or even the Fire Service. Most meetings were over 50% officers. Few people attended them and when we abolished them, even some of the chairs and vice-chairs said it was the right thing to do.

There are many mechanisms in place for residents to have their say.

- Councillor contact
- Action Line
- Events Days
- Patch Chats
- Parks Works:– Groundworks Daisy Dip, Frog Copse, Redbridge Wharf, St. James Park, Portwood Recreation Ground, Riverside Park.
- Neighbourhood Involvement teams contribute to undertake specific consultation exercises on behalf of services within the Council.

We are looking to restructure the Neighbourhood Involvement Team to increase community development work to directly support community / resident groups and develop Neighbourhood Management.

Councillor Mizon had been reviewing Neighbourhoods Partnerships since 2006.

Council would have been further ahead on this process if a talking shop had not been created on this subject. This took many months and a great deal of officer time.

5. Question from Councillor Baston to Councillor Dean.

Will the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport state his policy in respect of the Hampshire Safer Roads Partnership?

Answer

There is evidence that the work of the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Safer Roads Partnership has proved effective in reducing road accident casualties over a period of time, and I remain committed, if possible, to the principle of the City Council continuing to be a member of that Partnership.

However, faced as the Council is with severe pressures on its future budgets, I have indicated to the Partnership that the level of financial contribution that the City has made in the past cannot continue to be sustained, and I have asked that they examine their activities to establish what scope there might be for obtaining efficiencies in their operations.

I believe this is a reasonable request to make, as the local authority funding partners are increasingly expected by central government to find efficiencies within their own operations, and the same disciplines should apply to organisations that receive their funding from those local authorities.

6. Question from Councillor Mizon to Councillor Phil Williams.

If there were to be a company ready to build a bio-fuelled Combined Heat Power plant in Southampton, using the planning permission and permits that are already approved, which would provide free heating for many of our Council-owned homes as well as green electricity; would the Executive support this project?

Answer

Environmental Schemes are led by the Environment Directorate, but I will of course take more of a lead where Council tenants are involved.

I think it's fair to say that the Executive does acknowledge that Labour and Liberals did waste a considerable amount of money on this project, we all want to improve our City but we do not want to make the same mistakes. To my mind that means taking a realistic appraisal of the situation.

The Liberal / Labour scheme was not going to be free. The cost of getting the heat to our properties had a cost and there was also going to be a charge to tenants for the infrastructure to be put in place. There was a SEEDA (South East England Development Agency) grant which would have helped replace the existing heat exchanges and new radiators.

Any proposals that come forward should be judged on their merits and if they involve Council tenants, will be in consultation with them.

7. Question from Councillor Baston to Councillor Dean

What are the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport's views on new licensing controls being considered by the Government, which would place lap dancing clubs in the same licensing category as sex shops?

Answer

There are currently no new licensing controls being considered by Government which would place lap dancing clubs in the same licensing category as sex shops.

8. Question from Councillor Drake to Councillor Phil Williams.

Can the Cabinet Member please inform me what progress has been made if any, following the letter from Southampton Amateur Rowing Club to the three Group Leaders dated 11th August 2008 relating to the Itchen Ferry slipway, hard and surrounding area?

Answer

I met with Cllr Drake and the stakeholders. In recognition of the importance of this area to local people, officers agreed with the Community Payback team that they will undertake regular cleaning of the foreshore to augment the scheduled work already undertaken by the Area Team. The slipway is pressure cleaned bi-monthly at high temperature, following consultation with the Royal Yachting Association over the most effective and environmentally-friendly techniques. The slipway is inspected annually by Property Services to ensure it remains in a structurally safe condition for its current public use, should future structural surveys suggest further action essential to maintain a safe facility, we would of course, act on that professional advice.

Unfortunately, a commemorative bronze plaque honouring those from Itchen Ferry Village who lost their lives in the war has regrettably been recently stolen. I have proposed that officers consult within the next two weeks with the Southampton Amateur Rowing Club and other interested parties over a new and sustainable interpretative signage that will inform visitors about the unique history of the area, and the valued contribution of the Village's residents to local and national life.

It is important to highlight that at the last Council meeting, the parties opposite refused to back further capital expenditure saying times are tough and there are not the resources available.

64. MOTIONS

- (a) Councillor Barnes-Andrews moved and Councillor Richard Williams seconded:-

“Council calls on the Executive to clarify their seating arrangements in the light of the recent comments in the public domain made by the Executive and Chief Executive on policy directions”.

UPON BEING PUT TO THE VOTE THE MOTION WAS DECLARED LOST

RESOLVED that the motion be not approved.

- (b) Councillor Letts moved and Councillor McEwing seconded:-

“Council believes for non ideological reasons that the waste collection service should remain in house.

Furthermore Council calls on the Executive to investigate alternate weekly collections from business premises to boost the City’s recycling rate and report their findings to the next available meeting of Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee”.

Amendment moved by Councillor Letts and seconded by Councillor McEwing:

After word “investigate” in line 3, add “methods including”

AMENDED MOTION TO READ

“Council believes for non ideological reasons that the waste collection service should remain in house.

Furthermore Council calls on the Executive to investigate methods including alternate weekly collections from business premises to boost the City’s recycling rate and report their findings to the next available meeting of Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee”.

UPON PUT TO THE VOTE THE AMENDMENT WAS DECLARED LOST

UPON PUT TO THE VOTE THE MOTION AS SUBMITTED WAS DECLARED LOST

RESOLVED that the motion as submitted be not approved.

COUNCILLOR MIZON IN THE CHAIR

- (c) With the consent of the meeting, Councillor Stevens altered and moved his motion and Councillor Williams seconded:

“This Council believes that every child in Southampton matters and asks the Executive to continue to implement policy that upholds the principles set out in the statement "every child matters".

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

RESOLVED that the motion as amended be approved.

(d) Councillor Galton moved and Councillor Davis seconded:-

“Many blocks of flats in Southampton are now very difficult to access unless you are a resident. Doors are frequently locked all day. The result is that people are not sufficiently well informed about the democratic process, as not only party leaflets but electoral information and potentially useful Council information, cannot reach these residents.

Council therefore requests the Executive to investigate ways and means which may help to remedy this situation, followed by a report back to the three Group Leaders”.

UPON BEING PUT TO THE VOTE THE MOTION WAS DECLARED LOST

RESOLVED that the motion be not approved.

(e) Councillor Baston moved and Councillor Beckett seconded:-

“This Council objects to the proposal in the Policing Green Paper (July 2008) to reform the membership of police authorities by replacing councillors with directly elected crime and policing representatives. Council believes that this proposal will neither increase police accountability nor strengthen police authorities.

Council therefore requests the Leader of the Council to write to Minister of State for Policing and the three local MPs this week to state our opposition and request that the proposal be dropped”.

UPON BEING PUT TO THE VOTE THE MOTION WAS DECLARED LOST

RESOLVED that the motion be not approved.

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

1. Question from Councillor Slade to Councillor Holmes

In view of David Cameron’s green credential claims would it not be

better if all developers had a green travel plan for its construction workers like most businesses have to have in place when planning permission is granted and can you please say what actions you will take?

Answer

Travel Plans are sought in circumstances where the development is considered to warrant their provision, normally schemes of more than 12 or more residential units, commercial proposals over 2500sqm, and retail schemes of 1000sqm or more gross floor area.

Seeking Travel Plans for smaller schemes may be considered on a one-off basis if there is a clearly identified need to be addressed or where such a scheme would exacerbate an identified transport problem area. However, in general terms smaller schemes do not have the threshold to make the consideration and preparation of a Travel Plan a viable consideration.

In terms of the actual construction phase of a development, there will usually be a condition covering construction traffic routeing, but it is more difficult to set out a travel plan for construction employees. Many of them are likely to be sub-contractors who are only on site for short periods of time and who need to visit a number of sites, usually carrying tools and equipment.

It may be more practical to work with the various trade employers to find out if a viable travel plan model can be established that would provide a more generic approach to site travel.

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

It was noted that no changes to the appointments had been made.

67. SOUTH CENTRAL STRATEGIC HEALTH AUTHORITY CONSULTATION ON PROPOSALS FOR WATER FLUORIDATION IN SOUTHAMPTON AND PARTS OF SOUTH WEST HAMPSHIRE

The report of the Chair of the Healthy City Scrutiny Panel was submitted concerning the report of the Scrutiny Panel to determine the Authority's response to the Strategic Health Authority on the proposals for water fluoridation affecting significant parts of Southampton and south west Hampshire (copy of report circulated with agenda and appended to signed minutes).

RESOLVED

- (i) that the findings of the Healthy City Scrutiny Panel inquiry set out in the appendix attached to the report be noted; and

- (ii) that the three recommendations set out in paragraph 8 of the report be agreed as the Council's response to the Strategic Health Authority on proposals to introduce water fluoridation in Southampton as well as other parts of south west Hampshire.

N.B. NOTE: Councillor Sollitt declared a personal interest in the above matter, as an employee of the Health Service and left the meeting during the consideration of the matter. Councillor Damani declared a personal interest in the above matter, as an employee of the Health Service and remained in the meeting for the consideration of the matter.

68. LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK CORE STRATEGY SUBMISSION DOCUMENT

The report of the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport was submitted seeking approval to publish the revised submission version of the Core Strategy (approved at Council on 19th September, 2007 now incorporating the comments of the Government Office for the South East (GOSE)) for public consultation and submission to the Secretary of State (copy of report circulated with agenda and appended to signed minutes).

RESOLVED

- (i) that the Sustainability Appraisal and the Schedule of Representations on the Core Strategy received at the Preferred Options stage be endorsed;
- (ii) that the publication of the revised Core Strategy for public consultation and submission with the supporting documents to the Secretary of State in accordance with the Statement of Community Involvement be approved;
- (iii) that delegated authority be granted to the Head of Planning and Sustainability, following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport, to make minor editing changes to the Core Strategy approved by the Council prior to publication for public consultation and subsequent submission to the Secretary of State; provided these do not change the overall direction, shape or emphasis of the document and do not raise any significant new issues;
- (iv) that the emerging Core Strategy as interim guidance to be afforded due weight in the development control process be endorsed; and
- (v) that delegated authority be granted to the Head of Planning and Sustainability, following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport, to prepare "proofs of evidence" presented on behalf of the Council to the Core Strategy Examination which suggest minor changes to that strategy

provided these do not change its overall direction and emphasis, or raise significant new issues.

69. INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL

The report of the Solicitor to the Council was submitted requesting that the Independent Remuneration Panel undertake a review of the Special Responsibility Allowances for the Chairs of Audit Committee and Standards and Governance Committee, and also review the carer and telephone allowances (copy of report circulated with agenda and appended to signed minutes).

RESOLVED

- (i) that the appointment of the new Independent Remuneration Panel be noted;
- (ii) that the Independent Remuneration Panel be not requested to consider whether the Chairs of Audit Committee and Standards and Governance Committee should be entitled to Special Responsibility Allowances; and
- (iii) that the Independent Remuneration Panel be not requested to consider a review of the carer and telephone allowances.

70. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC – CONFIDENTIAL ITEM 71

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 Item 71 by virtue of Category 3 (Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person including the Council) of Paragraph 10.4 of the above Rules. It is not considered to be in the public interest to disclose this information because the report contains confidential and commercially sensitive information relating to both the Council and the terms of legal agreements with third parties. Given the particular commercial sensitivity of the information in that its disclosure could prejudice and/or adversely impact the Council and the third parties' position in respect of their legal relationships, property arrangements and financial positions, it is considered that the public interest in withholding this information at this time is greater than the public interest in disclosing it.

71. GUILDHALL SQUARE IMPROVEMENTS

The confidential report of the Cabinet Member for Resources and Workforce Planning was submitted concerning a commitment to funding the undertaking of improvements to Guildhall Square in line with its obligations under the development agreement for the Regional Business Centre (copy of report circulated with agenda and appended to signed minutes).

Amendment moved by Councillor Marsh-Jenks and seconded by Councillor Richard Williams:

Remove figure referred to in recommendation (ii) and replace with “to meet the commitment in recommendation (i) above”.

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

- (i) That the funding of the undertaking of improvements to Guildhall Square in line with the Council’s obligations under the development agreement for the Regional Business Centre, be confirmed;
- (ii) That funding for the Guildhall Square improvements to meet the commitment in resolution (i) above be approved either from capital receipts released from the sale of the old Tyrrell and Green building, should the proposed Southampton New Arts Centre scheme not proceed, or from unsupported borrowing; and
- (iii) That delegated authority be granted to the Executive Director of Resources, following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Resources and Workforce Planning, to take any necessary actions to implement the above resolutions.

72. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BUSINESS

SCRUTINY INQUIRY INTO FUEL POVERTY

The report of the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee was submitted concerning the proposals from the Fuel Poverty Inquiry, seeking any further comments or views upon the recommendations, which the Executive will formally consider within the timeframe expressed within the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules (copy of report circulated with agenda and appended to signed minutes).

RESOLVED that the Fuel Poverty Inquiry report on the review’s findings, be submitted to the Executive to enable it to formulate an appropriate response to the inquiry recommendations.