
SOUTHAMPTON CITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON
14 MARCH 2012

Present:

The Mayor, Councillor Matthews

Councillors Baillie, Ball, Barnes-Andrews, Mrs Blatchford, Bogle, Capozzoli, Claisse, Cunio, Daunt, Fitzgerald, Fitzhenry, Fuller, Furnell, Hannides, B Harris, L Harris, Holmes, Jones, Kaur, Kolker, Letts, Mead, McEwing, Morrell, Moulton, Noon, Osmond, Dr Paffey, Parnell, Payne, Pope, Rayment, Smith, Stevens, Thomas, Thorpe, Turner, Vassiliou, Vinson, Walker, Wells, White, Willacy, P Williams and Dr R Williams

73. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Burke and Drake.

74. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Council meetings held on the 16th November, 2011 and 15th February, 2012 be approved and signed as correct records.

75. ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE MAYOR AND LEADER

Last meeting of Municipal Year

As this was the last meeting of the municipal year and the last meeting before the elections in May, the Mayor took the opportunity to say goodbye to those councillors who would not be standing for re-election and to those who would, but did not retain their seat. On behalf of the Council, the Mayor thanked them for their hard work and the contribution they had made during their period in office.

German Students

The Mayor welcomed to the meeting a number of German Students visiting from the University of Hoff who were studying for a degree in Public Administration and were in attendance to observe the proceedings.

Statement from the Leader

The Leader took the opportunity to explain that he had been informed of the employment transfer of Councillor Fitzgerald, which had resulted in his relocation to Los Angeles, and that he had taken the decision that Councillor Fitzgerald should not resign but should continue to carry out his duties.

He hoped that this would now conclude the matter.

76. DEPUTATIONS, PETITIONS AND PUBLIC QUESTIONS

- (i) The Council received and noted a deputation from Mrs Hersee on behalf of tenants at the Graylings;
- (ii) The Council received and noted a deputation from Steven Galton and Chris Jenkins on Behalf of No Southampton Biomass.

77. 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.

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

1. Blue Badge Parking Bays

Question from Councillor Turner to Councillor Fitzhenry

Could the Cabinet Member comment on the failure to recognise the problems of very disabled people in accessing Gateway due to the absence of Blue Badge parking bays? Could he also comment on why this issue was not resolved when the West Marlands Road scheme came to him for approval?

Answer

The moving of Gateway to new premises in West Marlands Road coincided with the implementation of new traffic restrictions in this area as part of the Guildhall Square project. The pedestrian friendly environment in both West Marlands Road and Guildhall Square are essential to create a safe public space.

The previous limited parking bays in West Marlands Road were replaced with permit bays for essential delivery vehicles only. However, there are no restrictions on motorists setting down or picking up visitors to Gateway. The lack of designated parking for Blue Badge holders immediately outside Gateway was recognised during the project and a series of benches were incorporated in the immediate vicinity to help meet concerns. There are currently nine designated Blue Badge spaces in the Civic forecourt which are approximately 75 metres from the entrance to Gateway.

This matter has been under constant review and, I have recently commissioned an independent study of the situation to see if Blue Badge parking improvements can be made without compromising the Guildhall Square scheme principles.

2. Service Level Agreements

Question from Councillor Bogle to Councillor Moulton

Could the Cabinet Member for Children's Services provide a breakdown (scope and value) of the current Service Level Agreements between Southampton schools and Capita?

Answer

There are no Service Level Agreements (SLA) between Southampton Schools and Capita. All SLAs are between Southampton City Council and Schools directly.

3. Tourist Information Centre

Question from Councillor Vinson to Councillor Hannides

Will the Cabinet Member inform Council as to the number of personal visits made to the Tourist Information Centre and the value of sales since its move, with comparable figures for the previous year?

Answer

The Visitor Information Centre opened in the Central Library on Monday 28th November 2011.

The following data summarises usage for December – February inclusive for 2010/11 and 2011/12

measure	2010/11	2011/12
Sales (including Ticket sales)	£48,647	£37,912
Personal enquiries	8,743	6,227
Unique Web hits	82,871	87,059

Footfall into the Visitor Information area in the library is not measured separately to library visits.

The figures demonstrate a continued 'channel shift' to the Internet, which we hope to continue as the web interface is developed over the next year.

4. St Denys Water Treatment Works

Question from Councillor Vinson to Councillor Fitzhenry

Will the Cabinet Member liaise with Southern Water to achieve a permanent solution to the periodic release of foul odours from the Kent Road water treatment plant?

Answer

The Regulatory Services will continue to liaise with Southern Water as necessary and monitor the complaint and odour levels to ensure that nearby residents do not suffer a statutory nuisance.

5. Westridge Road Car Park

Question from Councillor Vinson to Councillor Hannides

Can the Cabinet Member give an assurance, in the light of Lidl's declaration that this site is unsuitable for their needs, that the Executive no longer has any intention of selling the car park, and that it will remain in Council ownership?

Answer

We recognise the importance of the car park to shoppers in Portswood. There are no plans to dispose of the car park or put it to alternative use.

78. MOTIONS

(a) Campaign to end 'legal loan sharking'.

Councillor Pope moved and Councillor McEwing seconded:-

"Full Council notes and welcomes the UK-wide campaign to end 'legal loan sharking'.

Full Council believes that the lack of access to affordable credit is socially and economically damaging. Unaffordable credit is causing a myriad of unwanted effects such as poorer diets, colder homes, rent, council tax and utility arrears, depression (which impacts on job seeking behaviour) and poor health.

Full Council further notes that unaffordable credit is extracting wealth from the most deprived communities.

Full Council believes it is the responsibility of all levels of government to try to ensure affordable credit for all, and therefore pledges to use best practice to promote financial literacy and affordable lending. This will help to ensure that wealth stays in the local economy. Full Council also pledges to promote credit unions in Southampton, community based organisations offering access to affordable credit and promoting saving.

Full Council calls on the Government to introduce caps on the total lending rates that can be charged for providing credit.

Full Council further calls on the Government to give local authorities the power to veto licences for high street credit agencies where they could have negative economic or social impacts on communities."

UPON BEING PUT TO THE VOTE THE MOTION WAS DECLARED CARRIED

RESOLVED that the motion as submitted be approved.

(b) Cultural Quarter and SeaCity Museum

Councillor Hannides moved and Councillor Smith seconded:-

“This Council welcomes the huge progress made towards the development of the Cultural Quarter in Northern Above Bar and in particular notes the success and popularity of the new Guildhall Square. Council welcomes and supports the SeaCity Museum which is due to open on 10th April and is committed to delivering the New Arts Complex on the former Tyrell and Green site.”

UPON BEING PUT TO THE VOTE THE MOTION WAS DECLARED CARRIED
RESOLVED that the motion as submitted be approved.

(c) Trade Union Facilities

Councillor Smith moved and Councillor Moulton seconded:-

“This Council recognises that in these tough financial times, local authorities need to make difficult decisions about spending priorities and therefore supports the Executive in reviewing the merits of fulltime union officials funded by the taxpayer and the provision of office facilities to trade unions.”

UPON BEING PUT TO THE VOTE THE MOTION WAS DECLARED CARRIED
RESOLVED that the motion as submitted be approved.

(d) Electoral Register

Councillor Dr R Williams moved and Councillor Thorpe seconded:-

“Council resolves to maximise its efforts to ensure all Southampton residents are registered to vote.”

UPON BEING PUT TO THE VOTE THE MOTION WAS DECLARED CARRIED
RESOLVED that the motion as submitted be approved.

(e) NHS and Social Care Bill

With the consent of the meeting, Councillor Rayment altered and moved her motion and Councillor Thorpe seconded:-

“Southampton City Council urges the Government to listen to the overwhelming majority of the City's doctors, nurses and patients and to remove those controversial parts of the NHS and Social Care Bill which promote a bigger role for the private sector in Southampton.”

Amendment moved by Councillor White and seconded by Councillor Baillie:-

Delete from 2nd line ‘.....to remove those controversial parts of the...’

Replace with ‘.....ensure that the...’

Delete from 3rd line ‘....and Social Care Bill which promote a bigger role for the private sector.’

Replace with ‘.....becomes more democratically accountable, hands power to patients to make decisions about their care and puts doctors and nurses rather than politicians and bureaucrats in charge.’

Add a new paragraph at the end of the Motion ‘Full Council supports the Coalition government’s commitment to an NHS that delivers quality outcomes, that is free at the point of use and available to everyone based on need, not the ability to pay.’

AMENDED Motion to read:

“Southampton City Council urges the Government to listen to the overwhelming majority of the City’s doctors, nurses and patients and ensure that the NHS becomes more democratically accountable, hands power to patients to make decisions about their care and puts doctors and nurses rather than politicians and bureaucrats in charge.

Full Council supports the Coalition government’s commitment to an NHS that delivers quality outcomes, that is free at the point of use and available to everyone based on need, not the ability to pay.”

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.

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

2011 Remembrance Service

Question from Councillor Mrs Blatchford to Councillor Matthews

Can the Mayor explain to Full Council why the Humanists were not part of the 2011 Remembrance Service at the Cenotaph?

Answer

As you are aware it is customary for the Mayor of Southampton to lead the procession of Councillors, Council Officials and Faith Leaders to the Cenotaph for the Service of Remembrance each November.

As you are also aware, the service of remembrance is held in order that all people of faith in the City can gather together in the one place to pray. Their prayers are for those who have died in war, and collectively, we pray that their souls may rest in peace. The two minutes' silence is held so that this generation can take time to reflect upon the sacrifice that previous generations have made.

I took the decision that the service is, and always has been, an act of collective prayer for people of faith. Humanists by their own definition are not people of faith.

Just as a point of interest, there are words to The Last Post and one of the lines read "As we go. This we know. God is nigh".

Obviously, I did take advice on this, and I am sorry if there have been any misunderstandings over my decision, but I could not see what part a Humanist could play in the City's Christian, Muslim etc., act of prayer.

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

It was noted that Councillor Les Harris had replaced Councillor Fitzgerald on the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee and Councillor Willacy had replaced him on the Health Overview Scrutiny Panel.

81. LOCALISM ACT 2011 – PAY POLICY

The report of the Head of Legal, HR and Democratic Services was submitted regarding the requirement under the Localism Act 2011 for the Council to prepare and publish a pay policy statement for the financial year 2012/13 and then for each subsequent financial year (copy of report circulated with the agenda and appended to signed minutes).

RESOLVED:

- (i) That Council considers and approves the Pay Policy Statement, attached as appendix 1 to the report; and
- (ii) That delegated authority be granted to the Head of Legal, HR and Democratic Services, following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Resources, Leisure and Culture, to make any minor revisions deemed necessary to the Pay Policy should further Guidance be received.

82. DEVELOPMENT OF THE FORMER CIVIL SERVICE SPORTS GROUND

The report of the Cabinet Member for Children's Services and Learning was submitted regarding the development of the former Civil Service Sports Ground (copy of report circulated with agenda and appended to signed minutes).

Amendment moved by Councillor Letts and seconded by Councillor Dr. R. Williams:

Add recommendations (ii) and (iii):

- (ii) Council notes and gives thanks for the contribution made by both council officers and members of the local community to saving this land from development as housing.
- (iii) Council agrees to consult fully with the local community on all aspects of the proposed development and urges the Executive to investigate the setting up of a community trust to own and manage the land in the future.

AMENDED RECOMMENDATIONS TO READ:

- (i) Transfer, in accordance with Financial Procedure Rules, a sum of £550,000 from the Leader's Capital Programme to the Children's Services and Learning Capital programme to carry out works at the former Civil Service sports ground.
- (ii) Council notes and gives thanks for the contribution made by both council officers and members of the local community to saving this land from development as housing.
- (iii) Council agrees to consult fully with the local community on all aspects of the proposed development and urges the Executive to investigate the setting up of a community trust to own and manage the land in the future.

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 in accordance with Financial Procedure Rules, a sum of £550,000 be transferred from the Leader's Capital Programme to the Children's Services and Learning Capital programme to carry out works at the former Civil Service sports ground;
- (ii) that Council notes and gives thanks for the contribution made by both council officers and members of the local community to saving this land from development as housing: and
- (iii) that Council consults fully with the local community on all aspects of the proposed development and urges the Executive to investigate the setting up of a community trust to own and manage the land in the future.

83. APPROVAL TO SPEND CAPITAL FUNDING ON ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT PORTFOLIO SCHEMES 2012/13

The report of the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport was submitted seeking approval to Capital variations and additional funding on schemes within the Environment and Transport Capital Programme for 2012/13 (copy of report circulated with agenda and appended to signed minutes).

RESOLVED:

- (i) that the capital variations totalling £1,230,000 in 2012/13 to the programme agreed at Council on 15th February 2012, as detailed in Appendix 4 to the report be approved;
- (ii) that the addition of £317,000 to the Environment and Transport Capital Programme funded from additional Local Transport Plan Government Grant, as detailed in Appendix 4 to the report be approved;
- (iii) that as part of the above resolutions, it be noted that a major scheme to resurface Redbridge Roundabout is created with a budget of £1,200,000; and
- (iv) that it be noted that the £1,871,000 scheme for City Centre Improvements includes a Local Transport Plan contribution of £412,000 towards the Platform to Prosperity Project.

84. 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 attached to the following item.

Appendix 1 of the report is not for publication by virtue of category 7A of paragraph 10.4 of the Council's Access to Information procedure Rules, as contained in the Council's Constitution. Appendix 1 contains confidential information, which in this context means information provided to the Council by a Government Department on terms which forbid its public disclosure or information which cannot be publicly disclosed by Court Order.

85. "PLATFORM TO PROSPERITY" - PLATFORM ROAD IMPROVEMENT SCHEME

The report of the Senior Manager, Planning, Transport and Sustainability was submitted seeking approval to receive and add to the capital programme £5.595m of capital grant funding from the Department of Business and Skills towards the "Platform to Prosperity" project to deliver a road improvement scheme in Platform Road to improve access to and from the Port of Southampton. The report also sought a commitment from the Council of £1.255m of match funding in 2014/15 (copy of report circulated with the agenda and appended to the signed minutes).

RESOLVED:

- (i) that subject to due diligence, the award of £5.595m of Regional Growth Fund capital grant funding from Department of Business and Skills (BIS) towards the “Platform to Prosperity” project be accepted;
- (ii) that £6.850m be added to the Environment and Transport Capital Programme for the “Platform to Prosperity” capital scheme, funded by £5.595m from the Regional Growth Fund (phased £1.241m in 2012/13 and £4.354m in 2013/14) and £1.255m from the Council (phased £0.412m in 2012/13, £0.411m in 2013/14 and £0.432m in 2014/15) and that it be noted that Council funding would be met from the confirmed 2012/13 Local Transport Plan (LTP) grant funding and the indicative 2013/14 and 2014/15 LTP funding;
- (iii) that any shortfall in the 2013/14 and 2014/15 funding be underwritten from general capital resources, should the confirmed LTP funding be insufficient to meet the total requirement of £0.843m for those two years;
- (iv) that the Associated British Port (ABP) contribution of £1.0m towards the “Platform to Prosperity” scheme be noted; and
- (v) that the contractual obligations on the Council from BIS, including requirements to demonstrate job increases and potential claw back of monies be noted.