
SOUTHAMPTON CITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 16 JULY 2014

Present:

The Mayor, Councillor Mrs Blatchford
The Sheriff, Councillor Norris
Councillors Baillie, Barnes-Andrews, Bogle, Burke, Chaloner, Chamberlain, Coombs, Daunt, Denness, Fitzhenry, Galton, Hammond, Hannides, B Harris (minute 28 onwards), L Harris, Hecks, Inglis, Jeffery, Kaur, Keogh, Letts, Lewzey, Lloyd, McEwing, Mintoff, Morrell, Noon, O'Neill, Dr Paffey, Painton, Parnell, Payne, Rayment, Shields, Smith, Spicer, Stevens (minute 31 onwards), Thomas, Thorpe, Tucker, Vassiliou, Whitbread and White

23. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Claisse, Moulton and Pope.

24. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Council meeting and the Extraordinary Council meeting held on the 4th June 2014 be approved and signed as correct records.

Arising from the minutes, it was noted that there was a need for a slight change to the financial procedure rules referred to in the minutes.

The change was in relation to Financial Procedure Rules in relation to both Revenue Virement Rules (A.11) and Capital Programme Management (B.37) where the formulation of the wording was currently as follows:

- Up to £200K, approved by Chief Officer in consultation with CFO
- £200K - £500K – approved by Cabinet member in consultation with CFO
- £500K-£2m – approved by cabinet
- £2m+ approved by Council

The intention had been that for approvals between £200-£500K, Cabinet Members were aware and involved. However, the wording meant that a formal decision would be required for each of these decisions. It was therefore proposed to vary the wording of the £200-£500K bracket.

RESOLVED that approval be given to vary the wording of the £200K-£500K bracket to:

- -approved by the Chief Officer in consultation with CFO and Cabinet Member.

25. ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE MAYOR AND LEADER

The Mayor paid tribute to the work of Alan Spencer, Town Sergeant, who would be leaving the Council on the 21st July, 2014 to take up a new position in Portsmouth. On

behalf of the Council, the Mayor thanked Alan for his service to the Council and wished him well for the future.

26. DEPUTATIONS, PETITIONS AND PUBLIC QUESTIONS

It was noted that no requests to present deputations, petitions or public questions had been received.

27. EXECUTIVE BUSINESS

The report of the Leader of the Council was submitted 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 then submitted in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 11.1

1. Woodside Lodge – Potential closure

Question from Councillor White to Councillor Shields

Woodside Lodge is being considered for closure therefore what consideration has the Cabinet Member given to the long term use of the other two dementia homes?

Answer:

Woodside Lodge is not being considered for closure. The only decision Cabinet is being asked to consider on 15th July is to authorise consultation on the re-provision of services at Woodside residential care home, Kentish Road respite unit and day services. No decisions about the future of any unit, home or services have been proposed yet nor have any pre-determination been made as to what the likely outcome would be. However, one potential outcome could be a recommendation that Woodside Lodge closes with suitable re-provision of the services.

If Cabinet authorise the consultation process then this will be carried out fully and in line with relevant codes of practice and the outcome will be fully evaluated and taken into account before any further proposals are recommended. The Council would also evaluate all other relevant information, guidance and good practice.

Consideration has been made about seeking Cabinet authorisation to consult on other residential homes but this has not been deemed necessary at the current time. This is for a number of reasons; including the fact that any closure or re-provision of services would need to be very carefully managed and we would wish to make sure that we have sufficient available resource to do this, the other homes are at a higher level of average occupancy and we are also cognisant that whilst there is capacity in the market at present, we would not want to over-use the available capacity all at once and would wish to manage the development of the market in a controlled manner.

2. Woodside Lodge – Occupancy

Question from Councillor White to Councillor Shields

As the occupancy rate of Woodside Lodge is currently considerably lower than the other homes can the Cabinet Member give the comparison of the rates for all three dementia homes over the last 12 months?

Answer:

The figures quoted are for the period April 2013 to March 2014. As you will appreciate, there is monthly variation but the average figures are as follows:

- Woodside Lodge 87%
- Glen Lee 95%
- Holcroft House 98%

3. Woodside Lodge – Value and possible use

Question from Councillor White to Councillor Barnes-Andrews

Can the Cabinet Member indicate the value of the Woodside Lodge site and possible use should the decision be made to close the home?

Answer:

The Council has not assessed an open market value of the premises recently, however the asset value stated in the council's accounts is £652,000 as at 1st April 2012 based on the existing use value to the Council as required by Accounting Regulations. This is not the likely amount that might be realised on a sale which may be completely different. This would require investigation into potential alternative uses from a planning point of view, together with more detailed legal and technical assessment of the site. The site is not allocated for any particular use within the Council's adopted Development Plan, and so any planning application for alternative use would be assessed against general policies. The principle of an alternative residential use would be acceptable.

4. Consultations

Question from Councillor Galton to Councillor Letts

Would the Leader agree with me in the importance of ensuring all consultations are as inclusive as possible?

Answer:

Yes

5. Primary School Provision

Question from Councillor Galton to Councillor Jeffery

Are you still confident in the Local Authority's ability to meet the need in primary school provision and any school expansions to facilitate the various expansion processes?

Answer:

Yes, I am confident that we will meet our responsibilities in delivering the requirements for primary expansion.

The authority has been planning to meet the increase in pupil numbers in primary schools for a number of years. Based upon current planning, the numbers reach a peak in Reception age in 2015 although we are, obviously closely monitoring birth-rates and other factors that affect numbers.

We have expanded schools to meet this need with further expansions planned for September 2015. These are all on target to meet the required deadlines.

6. Regents Park Road

Question from Councillor Galton to Councillor Rayment

Has the Cabinet Member visited the bottom end of Regents Park Road since its recent repairs and is she satisfied with the end of the road now?

Answer:

I have not yet visited the length of road in question, however I am advised by our engineers that the recent repair to the road surface was carried out to remove several large potholes and to improve ride quality.

There are some outstanding remedial works to these repairs which will be carried out by the contractor at no cost to the Council and with minimal disruption to local residents

7. Home Condition Standards

Question from Councillor Baillie to Councillor Payne

When are you going to adopt a new improved standard for the condition of homes owned by SCC?

Answer:

The Council adopted its own standard for the quality of Council Homes in 2012 as part of the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan. This determines the level of investment and replacement timeframes for our Capital Programme.

Details are included as an appendix with the annual Business Plan report agreed by Council each February.

8. Affordable Homes

Question from Councillor Baillie to Councillor Payne

What is the requirement for new Affordable Homes in Southampton over the next 10 years, and what is your target?

Answer:

The Administration's target is to provide one new affordable home a day (365 a year).

The 2014 PUSH South Hampshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment has suggested that over the period 2013-2036 the estimated level of housing need for affordable housing is 16,251 homes, or 707 per annum for Southampton.

9. City's Housing Estates

Question from Councillor Baillie to Councillor Payne

Why have you allowed many of the estates to look so unkempt?

Answer:

The Council is currently investing more in its homes and estates through the Housing Revenue Account Capital programme than at any other time including significant investment in Decent Neighbourhoods in many areas including Shirley, Holyrood, Maybush and Bassett. We are also completing the largest external painting programme for our walk up blocks across the city helping dramatically improve the appearance of many of our estates. Customer satisfaction with our capital programme is consistently over 95%.

28. MOTIONS

Spitfire Tribute

Councillor Hannides moved and Councillor Letts seconded:

"The Council welcomes the Executive's clear leadership in supporting the National Spitfire Project (NSP), and notes the unanimous backing it has received from all political groups on the Council.

The Council resolves to:

- Endorse the NSP's objective of building a lasting tribute to the Spitfire as a memorial to the men and women who designed, built, maintained and flew the aircraft.

- Facilitate the provision and transfer of Council-owned land for the Spitfire monument on the designated waterfront site at Mayflower Park.
- Note the lasting benefits to the City of erecting an international landmark at Mayflower Park to be seen and enjoyed by Southampton residents and millions of visitors.
- Recognise the high importance of the project to the City and continue to positively and constructively engage with the National Spitfire Project team”.

UPON BEING PUT TO THE VOTE THE MOTION WAS DECLARED CARRIED

RESOLVED that the motion be unanimously approved.

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

It was noted that no questions to the Chairs of Committees or the Mayor had been received.

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

It was noted that the following changes to the appointments to Committees, Sub-Committees and other bodies had been made:

- (i) Councillor Les Harris had replaced Councillor Hecks on the Planning and Rights of Way Panel (West) and Councillor Hecks would now serve on the Planning and Rights of Way Panel (East);
- (ii) Councillor Claisse had replaced Councillor Fitzhenry on Planning and Rights of Way Panel (West) and Councillor Fitzhenry would now serve on Planning and Rights of Way Panel (East);
- (iii) Councillors Coombs, Galton, Hammond, McEwing, Parnell, Thorpe and O’Neill had been appointed to the first Scrutiny Inquiry on Air Quality;
- (iv) Councillor Keogh had replaced Councillor Jeffery on the Governance Committee;
- (v) Councillor Keogh had replaced Councillor Denness on the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee; and
- (vi) Councillor Les Harris had replaced Councillor Vassilliou on Employment and Appeals Panel.

31. FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR 2013/14

The Council agreed to debate the business under minutes 31 – 37 together and therefore agreed to suspend Council procedure Rules 14.2, 14.5, 14.6, 14.7, 14.8, 14.9 and 16.2 to allow all amendments to be debated together and to allow maximum procedural flexibility within the debate for items 31 – 37.

The report of the Chief Financial Officer was submitted detailing the Financial Statements for 2013/14 (copy of report circulated with agenda and appended to signed minutes).

RESOLVED :

- (i) That it be noted that the Financial Statements 2013/14 had been signed by the Chief Financial Officer;
- (ii) That it be noted that the approval of the Financial Statements 2013/14 by the Governance Committee would take place on 15 September 2014, subject to any changes required after the completion of the Audit. Any such changes would be presented to the Governance Committee; and
- (iii) That the revised statement on the Minimum Revenue Provision Policy as set out in paragraphs 7-13 of the report be noted.

32. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC - CONFIDENTIAL PAPERS INCLUDED IN THE FOLLOWING MATTER

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 matter.

Confidential appendix 4 contains information deemed to be exempt from general publication based on Category 3 of paragraph 10.4 of the Council's Access to Information Procedure Rules. In applying the public interest test, the appendix includes details of a litigation settlement which is currently subject to legal privilege and therefore cannot be publicly disclosed at this time.

33. GENERAL FUND REVENUE OUTTURN 2013/14

The report of the Chief Financial Officer was submitted seeking approval of the General Fund Revenue Outturn 2013/14 (copy of report circulated with the agenda and appended to the signed minutes).

RESOLVED :

- (i) That the final outturn for 2013/14 as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report, which is an underspend of £11.8M, be noted;
- (ii) That it be noted that included within the overall underspend of £11.8M, is a significant one-off adjustment of £4.5M in relation to a change in how the Council accounts for its Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP);
- (iii) That the performance of individual Portfolios in managing their budgets as set out in paragraph 8 of the report be noted, together with the major variances in Appendix 2 to the report;
- (iv) That the carry forward requests totalling £2.1M as outlined in paragraph 15 of the report and set out in Appendix 3 to the report be approved;

- (v) That the use of £3M of the 2013/14 underspend to fund the Council's Transformation programme, as set out in paragraph 17 of the report be approved;
- (vi) That the use of part of the 2013/14 underspend to fund the Council's settlement requirement in respect of Litigation as set out in confidential appendix 4 to the report be approved; and
- (vii) That it be noted that the level of General Fund balances at 31 March 2014 was £53.4M, reducing to £9M by 2017/18.

34. GENERAL FUND CAPITAL OUTTURN 2013/14

The report of the Chief Financial Officer was submitted seeking approval of the General Fund Capital Outturn 2013/14 (copy of report circulated with agenda and appended to signed minutes).

RESOLVED :

- (i) That the actual capital spending in 2013/14 as shown in paragraphs 4 and 5 be noted together with the major variances detailed in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 to the report;
- (ii) That the revised estimates for 2014/15, adjusted for slippage and re-phasing as shown in Appendix 3 to the report, be noted;
- (iii) That the proposed capital financing in 2013/14 as shown in paragraph 12 of the report be approved;
- (iv) That it be noted that the capital programme remained fully funded up to 2016/17 based on the latest forecast of capital receipts although the forecast could be subject to change; most notably with regard to the value and timing of anticipated capital receipts;
- (v) That it be noted that a part repayment of £5,750,000 against outstanding prior years' temporary borrowing, which stood at £9,400,000, had been made in 2013/14;
- (vi) That it be noted that it is currently anticipated that the remaining temporary borrowing of £3,650,000 would be repaid by the end 2014/15 when anticipated capital receipts were finally forecast to be received, following the planned sale of a number of property assets; and
- (vii) That the addition of £152,000 to the Education and Change portfolio capital programme (£107,000 in 2013/14 and £45,000 in 2014/15) to fund the overspend on the refurbishment of 315 Coxford Road scheme to be funded by council resources (capital receipts) be approved.

35. REVIEW OF PRUDENTIAL LIMITS AND TREASURY MANAGEMENT OUTTURN 2013/14

The report of the Chief Financial Officer was submitted concerning the treasury management activities for 2013/14 (copy of report circulated with the agenda and appended to signed minutes).

RESOLVED :

- (i) That the Treasury Management (TM) activities for 2013/14 and the outturn on the Prudential Indicators be noted;
- (ii) That it be noted that the continued proactive approach to TM had led to reductions in borrowing costs and safeguarded investment income during the year;
- (iii) That the immediate action taken in response to down rating of the Authority's current Bankers (the Co-operative Bank), be noted; and
- (iv) That the extended scope of the Interest Equalisation Reserve to include the risk associated with 'bail-in' following the banking regulation reform which in future would force losses on investors before taxpayers are asked to support failing banks, and the subsequent change of name of this reserve to the Treasury Risk Reserve be approved.

36. COLLECTION FUND OUTTURN 2013/14

The report of the Chief Financial Officer was submitted concerning the actual payments made to and from the collection fund during the 2013/14 financial year (copy of report circulated with agenda and appended to signed minutes).

RESOLVED that the accounts for the Collection Fund in 2013/14 as shown in Appendix 1 to the report be noted.

37. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT REVENUE AND CAPITAL OUTTURN 2013/14

The report of the Cabinet Member for Housing and Sustainability was submitted detailing the level of spend on the Housing Revenue Account for the financial year 2013/14 (copy of report circulated with agenda and appended to signed minutes).

RESOLVED :

- (i) That the HRA revenue outturn for the financial year 2013/14, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report, and the working balance at the end of the year of £2,278,000; be noted;
- (ii) That the carry forward requests, totalling £278,000, for the specific revenue items set out in paragraph 11 of the report, which can be funded from the working balance; be approved;
- (iii) That the HRA capital outturn for the financial year 2013/14, as summarised in paragraph 13 of the report; be noted;

(iv) That the amendments to schemes in the HRA Capital Programme for 2014/15, as set out in Appendix 3 to the report, to take account of the slippage and re-phasing in 2013/14 be approved; and

(v) That the 2013/14 capital financing, as set out in paragraph 18 of the report, be noted and that the use of available resources would be reviewed as part of the next full update of the HRA Business Plan later in 2014.

38. BETTING SHOPS, PAYDAY LOAN PREMISES, FAST FOOD OUTLETS AND PUBLIC HOUSES

The report of the Leader of the Council was submitted concerning the prevention of the spread of betting shops, pay-day-loan premises, cheap off-licences, and fast food off-licences (copy of report circulated with agenda and appended to signed minutes).

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

39. SOUTHAMPTON CITY STRATEGY 2014-2025

The report of the Leader of the Council was submitted seeking approval of the Council's contribution towards the implementation of the City Strategy 2014-2025 (copy of the report circulated with agenda and appended to signed minutes).

RESOLVED :

(i) That the draft Southampton City Strategy 2014 - 2025 prepared by Southampton Connect be endorsed; and

(ii) That delegated authority be granted to the Chief Executive, as the incoming Chair of Southampton Connect, to agree the Council's contribution to the final City Strategy 2014 – 2025 which would reflect feedback from Southampton Connect partners.

40. COUNCIL STRATEGY 2014 - 2017

The report of the Leader of the Council was submitted seeking approval of the Council Strategy 2014 – 2017 (copy of the report circulated with the agenda and appended to signed minutes).

RESOLVED:

(i) That the recommendations made by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee and Cabinet, be noted and that they be reflected in the final version of the Council Strategy 2014 -2017;

(ii) That the draft Council Strategy 2014-2017, including the Council priorities attached as Appendix 1 to the report, be approved; and

(iii) That delegated authority be granted to the Assistant Chief Executive, following consultation with the Leader of the Council, to finalise the draft Council Strategy 2014 -2017, including incorporating any changes made at the meeting and to make any in year changes and to refresh relevant sections of

the strategy in 2015 and 2016 so that it aligns with any new budgetary or policy developments which would impact on the Council's activities during 2014- 2017.

41. HRA CAPITAL PROGRAMME PROJECT APPROVALS 2014-15/ 2015-16 PHASE 1

The report of the Cabinet Member of Housing was submitted seeking approval for expenditure on various housing projects across the City (copy of report circulated with agenda and appended to signed minutes).

RESOLVED:

- (i) That the previously agreed schemes of "External Cladding (PRC houses)", totalling £3,951,000, "External Cladding (flats)", totalling £2,212,000, and "External Cladding (tower blocks)", totalling £3,215,000, be merged into one scheme headed "External Cladding across the City" with a combined budget of £9,378,000;
- (ii) That in accordance with Financial Procedure Rules capital expenditure of £11,466,000 phased
 £5,240,000 in 2014-15; and
 £6,226,000 in 2015-16

on External Cladding systems and Supported Housing two-storey walkway repairs across the City be approved, for which provision exists within the Warm and Energy Efficient and Safe and Wind and Weather Tight sections of the HRA Capital programme, as detailed in the table below:

	2014-15	2015-16	Total
	£000s	£000s	£000s
Warm and Energy Efficient			
External Cladding across the City	4,739	4,639	9,378
Total for Warm and Energy Efficient	4,739	4,639	9,378
Safe Wind and Weather Tight			
Supported Housing two-storey walkway repairs	501	1,587	2,088
Total Safe Wind and Weather Tight	501	1,587	2,088
Total	5,240	6,226	11,466

42. PAY AND ALLOWANCES

The report of Leader of the Council was submitted seeking approval of the revised changes to the Council's overall Pay Policy and associated allowances (copy of report circulated with agenda and attached to signed minutes).

RESOLVED:

(i) That approval be given as the Council's preferred option to

(a) Implement the proposed changes to terms and conditions of employment (Pay and Allowances) achieved through collective agreement with recognised Trade Unions.

Or, if necessary

(b) Implement the proposed changes to terms and conditions of employment (Pay and Allowances) through the dismissal and re-engagement of affected staff if the union ballot rejects the proposed changes;

(ii) That delegated authority be granted to the Head of Human Resources to negotiate the final details and take any action necessary to implement the report; and

(iii) That delegated authority be granted to the Head of Legal and Democratic Services to amend the Officer Scheme of Delegation so that any decisions to amend or change pay and allowances are only exercised by or with the prior approval of the Head of Human Resources.