
SOUTHAMPTON CITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON
17 MARCH 2021

Present:

The Mayor, Councillor Mrs Blatchford
The Sheriff, Councillor Houghton
Councillors P Baillie, Barnes-Andrews, J Baillie, Bell, Bogle, Bunday,
Chaloner, Coombs, Cooper, Fielker, Fitzhenry, Fuller, G Galton, S Galton,
Guthrie, Hammond, Hannides, B Harris, L Harris, Harwood, Kataria, Kaur,
Keogh, Laurent, Leggett, Professor Margetts, McEwing, Mintoff, Mitchell,
Noon, Dr Paffey, Payne, Prior, Rayment, Renyard, Savage, Shields, Spicer,
Streets, Taggart, T Thomas, Vaughan, Whitbread, White and Windle

57. APOLOGIES

It was noted that apologies had been received from Councillor Murphy.

58. MINUTES

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the Meetings held on 18th November 2020 and 24th February 2021 be approved and signed as a correct record.

59. ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE MAYOR AND LEADER

(i) Last meeting of the Municipal Year

Members this is the last meeting of the Municipal Year. With the Covid pandemic a Municipal year like no other, as we transferred from meeting face to face, to conducting Council business in the virtual world, not in the atmospheric Council Chamber. No chats over a tea during the afternoon break either. I thank all members of the Council for their hard work and contributions made during this past pandemic year in sometimes difficult circumstances. Can I thank Gavin Muncaster and the IT team for resolving technical issues, and ensuring that the Council meetings were available on this virtual platform. Can I personally thank Judy Cordell, Claire Heather and Richard Ivory for their support in running these virtual Council meetings. Members sadly couldn't see the arm waving to ensure that they weren't missed as speakers.

Some Councillors are not seeking re-election Cllr Sarah Taggart, Cllr Tammy Thomas and Cllr Frances Murphy we thank them for their service to their communities and wish them well. A notable retiree from political life after 27 years is Cllr Stephen Barnes Andrews, having served the communities of both Freemantle and Bevois, and the City as its Mayor in 2007 and 2018. Cllr Barnes-Andrews carried out roles on the Football Stadium Panel, in Scrutiny and as a Cabinet Member for Corporate Services and for Finance and Income Generation. Thank you for your contribution to the City. Cllr Barnes-Andrews, you will at long last be able to spend much more time with Amanda, the family and walking the dog.

(ii) Superintendent Kelly Whiting

The change of leadership at Southampton District Command marks the official well-earned retirement on April 6th of Superintendent Kelly Whiting. Superintendent Kelly Whiting started her police career in December 1991 as a Community Beat Officer in Fareham. In her 30 years within the police, her public service police role included being Control Room Manager, Superintendent for Crime Standards and the Public Order Commander for Football, Festivals and Protests, keeping the public especially safe at certain football matches. During her three occasions as the District Commander for Southampton she has passionately worked to improve the quality of life for our communities and especially worked in partnership with the City Council and organisations including Southampton Connect. On behalf of the City I thank her for her service to the City of Southampton and wish her well in her retirement and future life roles.

60. DEPUTATIONS, PETITIONS AND PUBLIC QUESTIONS

- (i) The Council received the following public question from Mr Alex Williamson which was responded to by Councillor Shields, Cabinet Member for Stronger Communities

Question

Section 40 of the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act places a statutory obligation upon a local authority to create and submit a youth justice plan to lay out how they intend to divert children and young people from committing criminal activity. When was the last time that Southampton City Council undertook such an activity, can he lay out the specifics of that plan and would he say that the plan has been successful?

Answer

The publication of the Youth Justice plan was not required last year due to the pandemic but is a requirement that we review this annually and report on our progress and areas to develop.

The plan is being reviewed this year, with sign off planned for full council in September.

Youth Offending Teams national indicators include reoffending rates, first time entrant rates (first formal police disposal) and custody rates.

In terms of achievements to date:

- Re-offending rates have continued to reduce throughout the year and are below the National Average
- YOS Restorative Practitioners retained the RJC Service Delivery Quality Kite mark for the Service and have rolled out training as part of the SCC Workforce Development Team's "Working with Families" Strategy; linked with the continuing ambition to become a Child Friendly City; this included delivering basic awareness and practitioner level training to hundreds of staff. Our Restorative practitioners aim is

to make contact with all victims of crime that are open to the YOS. In the last quarter we offered RJ to over 85% of victims and continue to strive to improve this and improve the uptake of this service.

- The YOS continued to work collaboratively to address local Serious Youth Violence and successfully acquired YJB funding to undertake a piece of work with Hampshire Constabulary with the ambition of gathering and sharing data across agencies and the county more effectively. We are in the first phase of this project and are keen to utilise this to contribute to the response to serious youth violence in the city.
- YOS is the only Gold Artsmark awarded YOT in the county, a piece of work that improves engagement with our young people and builds on their strengths through arts and culture. It is also a stepping stone back into education, training and employment which is key to manage risks. YOS is a multi-agency team that continues to work with partners to tackle our priorities, those agencies include police, probation, health, the Office of Police and Crime Commissioner and the Violence Reduction Unit

Whilst YOS has been inspected (in 2019) with a Good outcome it recognises that we continue to have a number of priorities that we need to build and develop on and will form the plan for the forth coming year.

SYOS Priorities include

- Prevention of offending – to work with the local authority and build on a prevention of offending offer.
- Reduction of our First time entrants – Southampton First Time Entrant rates continue to be higher than the National Average

Both the prevention of offending and diversion from Youth Justice are areas SYOS need to build on and develop to intervene with children at the earliest opportunity. A review and redesign of the Local Authorities response to Vulnerable Adolescents in the city aims to build on this area to better meet the needs of the children, potential victims and communities. SYOS is also required to build on their Diversion offer for young people coming to the attention of the police and will be a focus for the coming year. Both of these aspects of our work aims to focus on those prevention of children who present at risk of offending and require intervention to reduce that risk, but also to divert those that are offending into positive, constructive interventions where appropriate challenge is given but where an assessment of needs and risks are made. The ultimate aim is to offer a bespoke and specific service to that child, to reduce any risks to themselves, to others and their communities. Whilst we currently offer this, our goal is to expand this offer and we recognise the part YOS has to play in supporting a prevention agenda with youth offending and violence in the city.

- (ii) The Council received the following public question from Mr Alex Williamson which was responded to by Councillor Paffey, Cabinet Member for Children and Learning

Question

Section 175 of the 2002 Education Act places a statutory obligation upon a local authority to provide an educational environment for children that promotes the safeguarding and wellbeing of children. With this in mind, can I ask him wherever he knows how many children have been found in possession of a knife or other such offensive weaponry whilst attending an educational setting across the timeframe of his administration and wherever he feels that existing policies in this area are strong enough to address this problem?

Answer

Prior to September 2020, there was no way of identifying if an exclusion involved a knife or weapon as the exclusion's codes were not focussed and did not allow for tracking. In addition the police do not specifically collect this data as it was logged as possession of a knife and did not refer to whether the incident occurred in a school or not. The only reason we were knowledgeable of the permanent exclusions and can track these is that as a Local Authority we chose to do so.

In 2020/21, 2019/20 and 2018/19 there were 6 permanent exclusions in which a knife was involved. This is a specifically a knife not a general weapon. We additionally record each type of weapon.

In 2020/21, there have been five fixed term exclusions issued under the new OW (offensive weapon) code although we do not know whether the weapon involved was a knife in each case. Only the schools would know what happened and the type of weapon, as this is not able to be collected via the ONE system

We have asked that schools let us know through a reporting form, but this is sporadic and not used consistently.

Work is taking place on and has involved some of the secondary heads on a proposal that we collectively address incidents regarding knives as a collective city with clear guidelines and consistent approaches for which some funding from the Police and Crime Commissioner to trial this was being sought.

61. EXECUTIVE BUSINESS REPORT

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 submitted in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 11.1:-

1. Additional Restrictions Grant

Question from Councillor Fitzhenry to Councillor Hammond (Councillor Barnes-Andrews to respond).

Please can you explain why Southampton is one of the poorest performing local authorities in the country for the distribution of the Additional restrictions Grant.

Answer

- In December the government provided £5 million through the Additional Restrictions Grant scheme to disperse, on a discretionary basis, before March 31 2022. This remains the case. On the 23 December the Additional Restrictions Grant scheme open to submissions and remains open, as the scheme expands each week.
- On the 25 February a national newspaper reported that Councils were failing to distribute funds and locally reported on the 11 March. These reports were based on data from 17 January 2021. On the 17 Jan we had administered 16 grant payments valued at £21,344 as reported. By the 28 January we had administered 93 grant payments totalling £83,600 and by the 1 March we have administered 266 payments totalling £215,850. At the end of March we will have administered nearly 420 payments totalling £338,100.
- The difference in performance is in part due to some local authorities decided to provide larger one-off payments, in contrast we have chosen to begin by providing ongoing monthly payments, which will continue throughout the spring and summer as businesses reopen in line with the governments 'Roadmap'.
- We are targeting businesses that are most in need and who have been unable to access other support. Today we have launched a scheme for mobile workers through capital grants potentially valued £1.6 million through the Additional Restrictions Grant.
- The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) only issued a revised steer on this scheme on the 9 March 2021, with a request to all Local Authorities to issue this funding as quickly as possible. BEIS also announced that the complex landscape of different grants will be simplified to two schemes, the Restart Grants and the Additional Restrictions Grant. This is very welcome.
- I am confident that we will issue the majority of this funding to those local businesses most in need and strategically in line with the latest 'Roadmap' with the lifting of all restrictions by June.

2. School Attendance

Question from Councillor James Baillie to Councillor Paffey.

What are the Council doing to ensure the no child is left behind through not attending school for the last 2 months?

Answer

All children have now been welcomed back onto school sites across the city and have received well-planned and delivered virtual lessons or provision within the school throughout the most recent lockdown. As a council we have supported education leaders since the first lockdown last year to ensure good coordination and consistency of schooling in very difficult circumstances. In particular:

- Our School Improvement officers have been actively monitoring the quality of the virtual provision by remotely visiting schools and observing lessons. They have written reports on their observations so that best practice can be shared and improvements made.
- As a council we are ensuring there is a city-wide approach to ensure a successful transition for children who will be starting secondary school in September 2021. We have engaged with senior leaders from both primary and secondary sectors to achieve this.
- In addition, further work will take place to ensure good transition between early years settings and primary schools, and between secondary schools and colleges.
- Schools have been seeking feedback from parents on the quality of the remote provision which has been very positive.
- Schools have taken advantage of government funding for IT equipment to enable disadvantaged students to access on-line lessons and resources.
- We are now planning the next phase of the Holiday Activities Fund which will offer a range of physical and academic activities over the Easter, Summer and Christmas holidays. We will once again be working with a range of schools and local voluntary organisations to run these schemes. This is supported by funding from the Department for Education.
- Schools are in the process of carrying out a crucial assessment of the educational and emotional needs of their pupils now that they are all physically back in school, and we will be supporting them so that the appropriate help can be provided to pupils.

62. MOTIONS

- (a) Councillor Bunday moved a slightly amended motion and Councillor Savage seconded.

Amended Motion to read:

This Council supports opportunities for our young people and urges the Secretary of State for Education to lobby the Treasury to restore the per student FE funding back to the 2010 level and to ensure the current apprenticeship system is fit for purpose and offers our young people the greatest number of apprenticeships and of the highest quality. This Council will send a letter and would encourage all Elected Members and the City's three MPs to sign to demonstrate their support for this Motion.

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

RESOLVED: that the motion be approved.

(b) Councillor Shields moved and Councillor Keogh seconded.

This Council notes with alarm how the number of people in Southampton claiming Universal Credit has more than doubled over the past year. The prospect of further increases in the number of people in the City forced to claim out of work benefits when temporary measures introduced by Government to mitigate against coronavirus come to an end in the autumn are truly frightening.

This Council applauds the invaluable role played by local civic society in responding to challenges presented by the pandemic not least with respect to the mushrooming of mutual aid organisations to co-ordinate action at a local neighbourhood level in tackling poverty.

This Council therefore commits to:

1. developing a whole City approach to tackling poverty and deprivation at a local neighbourhood level taking as a key start point the recommendations of the City's Fairness Commission
2. maintaining financial and other support for local voluntary, community and social enterprise sector organisations in campaigning against and taking practical measures to mitigate the impact of poverty
3. lobbying Government via the LGA and others to ensure that temporary measures taken to uplift Universal Credit levels during the coronavirus pandemic are made permanent until such time as the welfare system is reviewed.

UPON BEING PUT TO THE VOTE THE MOTION WAS DECALARED CARRIED.

RESOLVED: that the motion be approved.

(c) Councillor Guthrie moved and Councillor Prior seconded.

Southampton is a city with a rich maritime past, one that is marked by grand, striking events involving a range of historical figures. Around Southampton, monuments, memorials and statues tell the story of a city that has become woven into the fabric of world history, and it is a story that continues to be written.

This Council recognises that it has a responsibility to be true and proper custodians of the city's past, to allow all Southampton residents and more to enjoy and discover the city's roots and the journey it has undertaken throughout history.

Therefore, this Council commits to never arbitrarily extract or displace any monument, memorial or statue and to subject the decision for the permanent

removal of any historical item categorised as such to the residents of Southampton through local referenda. By involving residents in these decisions, this Council will ensure protection for Southampton's legacy is strengthened by direct democratic consent and consolidated under the rule of law.

Amendment moved by Councillor Kaur and Councillor Bogle seconded.

First Paragraph, first line after “maritime” delete “past” and replace with “and community past.

First paragraph, second line after “events” insert and smaller, incremental changes.

First paragraph, second line after “figures” insert “and lesser known people”.

First paragraph, third line after “tell” delete “the story of a” and replace with “some of the stories of our”

Second paragraph, first line after “be” delete “true and proper custodians” and replace with “a custodian of the”

Second paragraph, second line after “past” delete “to allow all” and replace with “as well as a duty to ensure that it is inclusive and representative of our diverse histories. In this way it provides the opportunity for all”

Second paragraph, second line after “residents” delete “and more to enjoy and” insert “and visitors to”.

Third paragraph, second line after “decision” delete “for the permanent removal of any historical item categorised as such to the residents of Southampton through local referenda” and replace with “to appropriate levels of resident consultation”.

Third paragraph, fourth line after “Council” delete “will” and replace with “seeks to”

Third paragraph, fourth line after “ensure” delete “protection for”.

Third paragraph, fifth line after “legacy” delete “is strengthened by direct democratic consent and consolidated under the rule of law” and replace with “continues to flourish and to become better understood.”

Amended Motion to read:

“Southampton is a city with a rich maritime and community past, one that is marked by grand, striking events and smaller, incremental changes involving a range of historical figures and lesser known people. Around Southampton, monuments, memorials and statues tell some of the stories of our city that have become woven into the fabric of world history, and it is a story that continues to be written.

This Council recognises that it has a responsibility to be a custodian of the city's past as well as a duty to ensure that it is inclusive and representative of our diverse histories. In this way it provides the opportunity for all Southampton residents and visitors to discover the city's roots and the journey it has undertaken throughout history.

Therefore, this Council commits to never arbitrarily extract or displace any monument, memorial or statue and to subject the decision to appropriate levels of resident consultation. By involving residents in these decisions, this Council seeks to ensure Southampton's legacy continues to flourish and to become better understood."

UPON BEING PUT TO THE VOTE THE AMENDMENT IN THE NAME OF COUNCILLOR KAUR WAS DECLARED CARRIED.

RESOLVED: that the motion as amended be approved.

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

It was noted that no requests for Questions from Members to the Chairs of Committees or the Mayor had been received.

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

It was noted that there were no appointments to Committee's, Sub Committee's and Other Bodies.

65. PAY POLICY 2021 - 2022

Report of the Leader seeking approval of the Pay Policy 2021-2022.

RESOLVED:

- (i) That the Pay Policy statement for 2021-2022 be approved;
- (ii) That the continued implementation of the Living Wage Foundation increase as the minimum hourly rate for NJC evaluated posts from 1st April 2021 be noted; and
- (iii) That negotiations for a cost of living award for 2021 as part of the pay agreement for NJC evaluated roles and Chief Officer and Chief Executive pay were ongoing be noted and that implementation of this, once agreed, was delegated to the Service Director HR and OD to be applied for 2021-2022. Budget proposals for 2021-2022 included an indicative uplift of 0.5% across all pay points.

66. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC - EXEMPT PAPERS INCLUDED IN THE FOLLOWING ITEM

RESOLVED: that in accordance with the Council's Constitution, specifically the Access to Information Procedure Rules contained within the Constitution, the press and public be excluded from the meeting in respect of any consideration of the confidential appendix to the following report.

The appendix was considered to be exempt from general publication based on Category 3 of Paragraph 10.4 of the Council's Access to Information Procedure Rules. It is not in the public interest to disclose this information as the appendix contains commercially sensitive information in relation to Southampton's UK City of Culture Bid. It would prejudice Southampton 2025 Trust's ability (on behalf of Southampton) to fairly and competitively bid to become UK City of Culture 2025 if this information were to be in the public domain at this time.

67. BID TO BE UK CITY OF CULTURE: FUTURE COUNCIL SUPPORT

Report of the Cabinet Member for Culture and Homes seeking approval of future Council support to the bid to be UK City of Culture.

RESOLVED:

- (i) That a one-off drawdown of reserves for 22/23 financial year and then the inclusion of the UK City of Culture funding into the medium-term financial plan as per appendix 1 of this report, should Southampton be awarded the title of UK City of Culture for 2025 be approved;
- (ii) That the Council acting as guarantor for the UK City of Culture 2025 programme, should Southampton be awarded the title of UK City of Culture for 2025 be approved; and
- (iii) That the Executive Director for Community, Culture & Homes be granted delegated authority to award a grant to Southampton 2025 Trust up to the value of the requested funds in appendix 1, over the period April 2022 – March 2027 (subject to Council Budget process) only if Southampton was successful in its bid to become UK City of Culture 2025 and subject to consultation with the Cabinet Member for Culture and Homes.