
SOUTHAMPTON CITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON
18 NOVEMBER 2020

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, T Thomas, Vaughan, Whitbread, White and Windle

37. APOLOGIES

It was noted that apologies had been received from Councillors Murphy and Taggart.

38. MINUTES

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the Meeting held on 16th September 2020 be approved and signed as a correct record.

39. ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE MAYOR AND LEADER

(i) Solent University Journalist Students

Councillors noted that there were a number of 1st and 2nd Year Journalist Students from Solent University who had joined the meeting via the live link. Councillors noted that students studying this course had been welcomed into the Public Gallery on numerous occasions previously as part of their studies and were welcomed to today's virtual meeting.

(ii) MOD Gold Award Armed Forces Covenant

Councillors, It gives me great pleasure to share with you that Southampton City Council was announced amongst the most supportive organisations for Britain's Armed Forces, by receiving The Employer Recognition Scheme Gold Award, the highest award achievable for an organisation.

To win a Gold Award, organisations must demonstrate that they provide extra paid days leave for Reservists and have supportive HR policies in place for Veterans, Reserves, Cadet Force Adult Volunteers and Spouses and Partners of those serving in the Armed Forces.

They also advocate the benefits of supporting those within the Armed Forces community encouraging others to sign the Armed Forces Covenant and to engage in the Employer Recognition Scheme.

I would like to invite Cllr McEwing to say a few words as our Armed Forces Champion.

(iii) Memorial Commemorations

2020 has seen several anniversaries connected with past conflicts, we have remembered those who have laid down their lives for the freedoms we cherish at our Cenotaph. May the memory of their sacrifice and bravery remain with us always.

Families are also impacted by conflict, this year marked 80 years since the bombing of the Art Gallery where 14 school girls died. The anniversary sadly at the beginning of this lockdown, but a Town Sergeant laid a wreath at the memorial art work.

We also remember all through the year the contribution of surviving veterans from all conflicts and service.

October marked the arrival of the SS Corfu the first of 28 ships to return 22,000 Far East Prisoners of War and Civilian internees.

This morning I laid a wreath at the Repatriation Memorial in Town Quay Park where on this day in 1945 both the Queen Mary and Principessa Giovanna docked in Southampton.

I also laid a wreath on behalf of a surviving veteran Bob Hucklesby who arrived on the Principessa Giovanna 75 years ago today.

These commemorative anniversaries have been marked by myself and the Sheriff and I would like to record our thanks to members of the Communications Team, Craig Lintott, Clare Blay and especially Rachel Griffin, who have recorded the events for social media and other forms of publicity to enable people to feel included.

(iv) Mayors Charities

All charities are finding it difficult to raise funds this year. As we're not in the Council Chamber there's no penalty infringements caused by mobile phones benefitting the Mayoral charity. I am particularly grateful to Councillors Keogh, Payne and Savage who set off on their bicycles for my two charities No Limits and the Southampton Children's Play Association.

Councillor Keogh would you like to update Council?

(v) Last Meeting 2020/Carol Service

Councillors, our next Full Council meeting is the Budget Council Tax setting on 24th February 2021, this is therefore the last Council Meeting of 2020:-

With the situation we find ourselves in I will not be hosting a carol service or mince pie devouring get together this year. Whatever transpires from the impact of the Coronavirus I hope that Members and Officers are able to enjoy the festive period. I thank all those who have been working to keep Southampton safe especially those who have assisted our residents in need this year. We all look forward to a safer 2021.

40. DEPUTATIONS, PETITIONS AND PUBLIC QUESTIONS

The Council received and note the following deputations:-

- (i) Mr S Glyde – Road Safety Measures Sholing Road
- (ii) Debbie Tann, CEO of Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust - Ecological Emergency
- (iii) Mary Wallbank – Humanist Representation on SACRE

41. 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. Reduction in income

Question from Councillor Hannides to Councillor Hammond

In view of the anticipated reduction in income from business rates, council tax and fees, what measures are the Executive taking to mitigate this and what action is being taken to support local businesses, boost the local economy and save local jobs?

Answer

Verbal

2. Southampton Airport Expansion

Question from Councillor Fitzhenry to Councillor Hammond

Can the Leader outline the Cabinets political position on the Southampton Airport Expansion proposal?

Answer

Verbal

3. Bedford Place

Councillor Fitzhenry to Councillor Leggett

Will the Cabinet member outline his criteria for the re-opening of Bedford Place?

Answer

Any decision made by the Council on the future of the temporary Bedford Place road closure will need to take into account the general approach set out in the Green Transport Recovery Plan Monitoring & Evaluation Framework and in partnership with Go!Southampton.

All schemes will need to consider the changes in the Covid-19 pandemic restrictions and the need to maintain social distancing and the support needed to safely reopen the economy. The Bedford Place scheme in particular will need to support the hospitality and other businesses once this current lockdown is eased and we continue to work in partnership with Go!Southampton to ensure we consider the views of all business and hope for some good trading over the festive period.

The monitoring and evaluation of the Bedford Place scheme will consider qualitative data from representations made on the scheme through the Temporary TRO consultation, online platforms (e.g. CommonPlace), pre-scheme and forthcoming business surveys conducted by Go!Southampton, take up of additional space for outdoors dining, views of partners and stakeholders including Go! Southampton, Councillors, emergency services, Schools, residents and transport operators (e.g. taxi and deliveries).

A range of quantitative data will also be used, including traffic movements & speeds, cycle & pedestrian movements, parking/loading and disabled access etc.

The above criteria will be analysed carefully and objectively and reported back to the Head of Service the Cabinet Member for consideration and in line with the Monitoring and Evaluation framework. As has already occurred with the Bedford Place scheme, adjustments and enhancements will be made and decided in the context of the data and wider context of the Covid-19 pandemic.

4. Cost of Bassett Avenue temporary road measures

Councillor S Galton to Councillor Leggett

It has now been 2 months since I asked for the breakdown of costs related to the Bassett Avenue road measures in September's meeting. I have yet to receive an answer from yourself or officers. Can you provide this information yet:

The total cost of the Bassett Avenue temporary road measures (related to cycle lane re-provision) between the Winchester Road roundabout and the Chilworth Roundabout.

The breakdown of this total cost to include a breakdown of the costs of:

- The initial cone only scheme
- The removal of the cones and the painting of lines
- The cost of removing the lines and restoring the road to its original condition

Answer

Balfour Beatty Living Places carried out the works to install the temporary pop up cycle lanes along Bassett Avenue and The Avenue as one complete scheme, so it is not possible to provide a breakdown of costs as per the question.

What can be provided is as follows for the entire length of Bassett Avenue and The Avenue:

Balfour Beatty have advised a cost to install temporary pop up cycle lanes on Bassett Avenue and The Avenue as £115,429.68

Since the initial installation costs have been £7,919.13 which include maintenance and alterations to the scheme including the linemarking of the remaining section of Bassett Avenue.

The cost of removal for the section of Bassett Avenue has been £26,936.48.

5. Blue Badge Parking Charges

Councillor S Galton to Councillor Leggett

The Executive have chosen now to introduce new blue badge parking charges, using the justification of ensuring a turnover of vehicles and citing the Government's decision to expand the blue badge scheme.

Officers have confirmed to me that this decision was progressed before the decision of the new national restrictions and it was made and justified prior to Covid-19 pandemic.

As such, will the Leader agree to postpone any of these new charges or trials, until we can fully assess the impact of Covid-19 on our City and District centres.

In considering your response I would urge you to consider the following points:

- In the cabinet report it states the decision is in the interests of all users. Given the challenges those living with a disability face, and the excess of parking choice and capacity across our City – is it not the right thing to do to support our most vulnerable by not introducing new taxes?
- We have only seen a 20% increase in blue badge holders since the Government rightly expanded the criteria; and many of our car parks are currently operating at between 50-60% capacity; reflecting the significant drop in footfall due to Covid-19.
- Officers have always stated this isn't about raising revenue – at a time we don't have a capacity issue in our car parks why carry on with these proposals, unless you want to raise more revenue from blue badge holders?
- The purple pound may actually prove crucial in reviving and changing how our City and District centres survive and adapt to the post COvid-19 world – if this isn't about revenue raising there can be no argument against re-thinking your plans, in light of the much changed situation we are now in.

Answer

The Council is seeking to ensure that all car park users (which includes other Blue Badge Holders) have a reasonable chance of accessing a parking space in car parks, which by virtue of being close to retail and/or employment areas,

usually experience high demand. This is the underlying reason for the use of Pay and Display which ensures that spaces are not dominated by any one user for a sustained period.

We are providing Blue Badge Holders with one free hour for every paid hour at these sites to allow for additional time needed. Blue Badge Holders will also not be required to pay during the evening period.

The Council consulted widely on the proposal in September 2019 and this included engaging with Spectrum, our disabled access consultee. We also carried out bench marking against 16 other Local Authorities who currently have Blue Badge Holder charging in place to look at the measures they have implemented.

While the circumstances of this year have mitigated some of the demand issues, it is anticipated that the demand for parking spaces in these car parks, will return to high levels of use once patterns of behaviour have returned to normal.

The Council currently has in the region of 9800 Blue Badge Holders and we noted a 20% increase in the number of applications following the introduction of the government changes to the scheme that expanded the criteria. Which I am sure you will agree, would be a substantial additional number of Blue Badge holders that we want to be able to support with access to parking in those areas with high demand, which this proposal will support.

42. MOTIONS

(a) Councillor Fitzhenry moved and Councillor Fuller seconded.

This Council calls on the Labour Executive to suspend all parking charges across our city centre and district centre car parks until spring 2021, to help protect local jobs and to support our cities businesses, key workers and residents.

UPON BEING PUT TO THE VOTE THE MOTION WAS DECLARED LOST.

RESOLVED: that the motion be rejected.

(b) Councillor Fitzhenry moved and Councillor Hannides seconded.

A successful city needs visible and accountable political leadership, as such this Council regrets the lack of political leadership from the current Executive.

Council calls on the current Labour Executive to start taking proper accountability for its decision making and the impacts of its decisions, especially now at a time when people in our City and our staff need strong and accountable political leadership and support.

UPON BEING PUT TO THE VOTE THE MOTION WAS DECLARED LOST.

RESOLVED: that the motion be rejected.

(c) Councillor Margetts moved and Councillor Fielker seconded.

“The Southampton City Council calls on the UK government to join with us to end holiday hunger. We call on the government to commit to fully fund holiday food provision for every child on free school meals in Southampton for the next three years. Further, we call on the government to support the development of a longer-term plan to ensure that every child in Southampton is food secure.

We call on the government to develop and fund a long-term approach so that all children are well fed throughout the year, including during school holidays.

We welcome the recent u-turn by the government to fund holiday food provision. We regret that this decision came after the recent October half term holiday, that put our children at risk of hunger. During the recent half term break in October Southampton City Council, together with local community groups, restaurants and other groups, stepped up to ensure every child on free school meals in the city had access to food during the holiday. The people of Southampton showed that they will not stand by while children go hungry, but this ad hoc approach is not a sustainable way to ensure food security for all our children.

Now is the time to address long term food insecurity in Southampton. Over 9000 children now depend on free school meals, and family use of food banks has been rising sharply over recent years. This will only get worse as the effects of Covid-19 on job losses and loss of family income increase. Food security is a fundamental human right, no child should go to bed hungry. This is bad for them in the short and long term and our children deserve the best possible start in life.

Amendment moved by Councillor J Baillie and Councillor Prior seconded.

First Paragraph, first line after “Council” **delete** “calls on the UK government to join with us to end holiday hunger. We call on the government to commit to fully fund holiday food provision for every child on free school meals in Southampton for the next three years. Further” and **replace with** “joins with the UK government to do all we can to ensure no child need go hungry. We welcome the government’s huge uplift to Universal Credit to support those families in most need during the pandemic along with the unprecedented decision to create a voucher scheme throughout the summer for Free School Meal children”.

Third Paragraph, first line after “recent” **delete** “u-turn by the government to fund holiday food provision. We regret that this decision came after the recent October half term holiday, that put our children at risk of hunger” and **replace with** “decision by the government to increase the funding for holiday food provision. We are pleased that the extra funding for local authorities allows them to get food to those in need without burdening schools already under great pressure.”

Third Paragraph, seventh line after “hungry” **delete** “but this ad hoc approach is not a sustainable way to ensure food security for all our children”.

Fourth Paragraph, second line sentence after “children” **delete** “now depend on” and **replace with** “are eligible for”

Amended Motion to read:

“The Southampton City Council joins with the UK government to do all we can to ensure no child need go hungry. We welcome the government’s huge uplift to Universal Credit to support those families in most need during the pandemic along with the unprecedented decision to create a voucher scheme throughout the summer for Free School Meal children. We call on the government to support the development of a longer-term plan to ensure that every child in Southampton is food secure.

We call on the government to develop and fund a long-term approach so that all families have the support they need to ensure children are well fed throughout the year, including during school holidays.

We welcome the recent decision by the government to increase the funding for holiday food provision. We are pleased that the extra funding for local authorities allows them to get food to those in need without burdening schools already under great pressure. During the recent half term break in October Southampton City Council, together with local community groups, restaurants and other groups, stepped up to ensure every child on free school meals in the city had access to food during the holiday. The people of Southampton showed that they will not stand by while children go hungry.

Now is the time to address long term food insecurity in Southampton. Over 9000 children are eligible for free school meals, and family use of food banks has been rising sharply over recent years. This will only get worse as the effects of Covid-19 on job losses and loss of family income increase. Food security is a fundamental human right, no child should go to bed hungry. This is bad for them in the short and long term and our children deserve the best possible start in life.”

UPON BEING PUT TO THE VOTE THE AMENDMENT IN THE NAME OF COUNCILLOR J BAILLIE WAS DECLARED LOST.

UPON BEING PUT TO THE VOTE THE MOTION IN THE NAME OF COUNCILLOR MARGETTS WAS DECLARED CARRIED.

RESOLVED: that the motion be approved.

(d) Motion in the name of Councillor Keogh was withdrawn.

(e) Councillor Hammond moved and Councillor Rayment seconded.

This Council recognises that the democratic process is sacrosanct, and elections held in Southampton must be free, fair and easy to participate in.

The upcoming local election (May 2021) will be like no other. Set during the worst global pandemic in nearly 100 years, it will require changes to proceed safely. Council believes that our residents must be able to safely participate in our local democracy.

Although we recognise that there are different ways to vote, the most convenient way is to register for a postal vote and vote at home. Whilst we do publicise this option, it is not widely known that Postal Voting is available to anyone who requests it and take-up is currently 15% of the electorate.

Council resolves that it enhances its publicity around postal voting and continues its work with the Electoral Commission on the national campaign to raise awareness.

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

RESOLVED: that the motion be approved.

43. 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.

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

There was a requirement for a Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee to be established to consider the “Modernising our Hospitals and Health Services Programme” being led by Hampshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Partnership of CCGs.

The Joint Committee with Hampshire County Council would be made up of eight members with one representative being appointed from Southampton City Council. This reflected the impact of the decision on Hampshire compared to Southampton and was in line with the feedback from the Southampton City Council Health Overview Scrutiny Panel.

This was a Council appointment and in accordance with agreement from the Leader and Opposition Leader advised that Councillor Professor Margetts would be appointed to represent Southampton City Council.

45. TEMPORARY STAFF CONTRACT

Report of the Cabinet Member for Customer and Organisation seeking approval for the procurement of a new contract for the supply of temporary agency staff.

RESOLVED: that subject to approval of Cabinet recommendations (i) - (iii) in the report, the revised contract arrangements for the supply of temporary staff, based on existing spend had incurred a cost averaging around £9.5m per annum based on current demand and use. This was for a maximum period of four years, three years initially, with an option to extend to a fourth year, be approved.

46. IT INVESTMENT PLAN

Report of the Cabinet Member for Customer and Organisation detailing the proposed IT Strategy and associated Investment Plan.

RESOLVED:

- (i) That the identified IT Investment Plan for inclusion in future budgets be approved. For the capital programme this meant an extra £8.530m as follows:
 - (a) the addition of £7.343M to the Customer and Organisation programme funded by Council Resources and approval to spend this sum in years 2021/22 to 2024/25 as detailed in paragraph 24 and
 - (b) the addition of £1.187M to the HRA programme funded by Council Resources and approval to spend this sum in years 2021/22 to 2023/25 as detailed in paragraph 24.
- (ii) That the IT Investment Plan approval was sought for a General Fund revenue budget allocation of £4.108M as indicated in paragraph 25 over the period 2021/22 to 2024/25 which would be built into the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy be supported;
- (iii) That the themes identified as the basis of an updated IT Strategy, with delivery supported by the identified investment plans be agreed;
- (iv) That subject to contract review, the ongoing contract for support and maintenance of software to support the Revenues and Benefits service. The overall spend of the contract was expected to be in the region of £1.2m over 6 years, 2 years initially with options to extend be approved. Costs were covered in existing budgets; and
- (v) That authority be delegated to the Executive Director Business Services and Head of IT, following consultation with the Executive Director Finance and Commercialisation and the Cabinet Member for Customer and Organisation plus the Cabinet Member for Finance and Income Generation, to vary the programme subject to changing requirements and new technologies in future years, within the existing and agreed resource allocation.

47. STATEMENT OF LICENCING POLICY

Report of the Cabinet Member for Stronger Communities seeking approval of the Statement of Licensing Policy.

RESOLVED:

- (i) That the Southampton Statement of Licencing Policy 2021 – 2026 be approved and adopted; and
- (ii) That that the cessation of the Late Night Levy be approved.

48. SACRE CHANGES TO MEMBERSHIP PROPOSAL AND REVIEW

Report of the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care seeking approval of recommended changes from SACRE to its Constitution.

RESOLVED:

- (i) That the National Union of Teachers (NUT) and the Association of teachers and lecturers (ATL) be removed as members and replaced with an NEU (National Education Union) representative;
- (ii) That The Voice be removed as a member organisation; and
- (iii) That the Council supports the decision of SACRE to not add South Hampshire Humanists as a full member of Group A within the Constitution but supported their membership as it currently stood as a co-opted member until such time as national legislation or guidance permitted their inclusion within Group A.

49. **SOUTHAMPTON COVID SALIVA TESTING PROGRAMME**

Report of the Chief Executive detailing progress of the pilot phases of the saliva testing programme and the planned expansion of the programme.

RESOLVED:

- (i) That the progress of the pilot phases of the saliva testing programme and the planned expansion of the programme to provide increased capacity in early 2021 be noted; and
- (ii) That Southampton City Council should be a 'partner' in this wider programme offering the civic leadership and public service human resources to support its success be approved.

50. **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY: ANNUAL REPORT 2019/20**

The report of the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee detailing the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee Annual Report 2019/20 in accordance with the Council's Constitution was noted.