

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE COUNCIL held at the Guildhall
Portsmouth on Tuesday, 11 June 2013 at 2.00 pm

Council Members Present

The Right Worshipful The Lord Mayor
Councillor Lynne Stagg (in the Chair)

Councillors

Margaret Adair	Lee Mason
Michael Andrewes	Robert New
Simon Boshier	Mike Park
Peter Eddis	Jim Patey
Ken Ellcome	Darron Phillips
Jason Fazackarley	Will Purvis
John Ferrett	Darren Sanders
Ken Ferrett	Caroline Scott
Margaret Foster	Eleanor Scott
David Fuller	Phil Smith
Aiden Gray	Les Stevens
Terry Hall	Sandra Stockdale
Jacqui Hancock	Luke Stubbs
Mike Hancock CBE MP	Alistair Thompson
David Horne	Gerald Vernon-Jackson
Lee Hunt	Steve Wemyss
Frank Jonas	April Windebank
Donna Jones	Matthew Winnington
Leo Madden	Rob Wood
Hugh Mason	Neill Young

55. Declarations of Members' Interests under Standing Order 13(2)(b)

Councillor Alistair Thompson declared a personal, non-prejudicial, non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 4(a) in that his son attends a Surestart centre.

56. Minutes of the Annual Council Meeting and the Adjourned Meeting both held on 20 May 2013

It was

Proposed by Councillor Gerald Vernon-Jackson
Seconded by Councillor Donna Jones

That the minutes of the annual meeting of the council and the adjourned meeting both held on 20 May 2013 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting and adjourned meeting both held on 20 May 2013 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

57. Communications and Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Steven Wylie.

The Lord Mayor expressed condolences on behalf of the council to Councillor Steven Wylie whose mother had recently passed away.

Apologies for lateness were received from Councillor Steve Wemyss and Councillor Michael Andrewes.

The Lord Mayor reminded the public that standing orders currently preclude the use of any photographic, television, sound recording and communications equipment and respectfully requested that the public refrained from using any of these during the meeting.

58. Petitions

The Lord Mayor advised that three petitions had been received by council. She said that as an executive (Cabinet) matter, the full council is precluded from determining the issues raised in petitions although the issues can be debated.

(a) Children's Centres

Nikki Coles, one of the joint lead petition organisers, presented the petition as it appears on the meeting agenda.

It was

Proposed by Councillor Rob Wood
Seconded by Councillor Gerald Vernon-Jackson

That the petition response headed Children's Centres as circulated in the chamber be approved.

Following debate, upon being put to the vote, this was CARRIED unanimously.

RESOLVED that the City Council records its thanks to the organisers of the petition on Children's Centres in Portsmouth. The City Council also wishes to record its thanks to those who responded to the consultation and helped shape the outcome.

The City Council recognises that there are no proposals to close any Children's Centres in Portsmouth. This makes Portsmouth unlike almost any other council in England.

All parents and children within Portsmouth will have access of Children's Centres services and there will be no means testing or charge for these services.

The City Council recognises that the council's budget for Early Years support to families has been increased in this year's budget.

The City Council recognises that the number of Health Visitors will double in Portsmouth over the next two years and the number of free nursery places for the most disadvantaged 2 year olds will increase by 900 places again over the next two years.

The City Council will continue to explore any routes to secure money from outside groups to extend the offer to young children and parents available in the City.

Council expressed thanks to officers for their work on this matter - in particular to Catherine Kickham and Di Mitchell.

Council adjourned at 3.38 pm. Council resumed at 3.50 pm.

(b) Closure of Public Toilets

Councillor Luke Stubbs as the petition organiser presented the petition as it appears on the meeting agenda.

It was

Proposed by Councillor Eleanor Scott
Seconded by Councillor Gerald Vernon-Jackson

That the petition response headed "Public Toilets" as circulated in the chamber be approved.

As an amendment it was

Proposed by Councillor Luke Stubbs
Seconded by Councillor Donna Jones

That the following words be added to the petition response

"Public toilets are a vital public service. They are valued by all sections of our community and are particularly important to families with children, the elderly and the disabled.

Whilst this council has no statutory duty to provide public toilets, it accepts it has a moral one. It deeply regrets the Cabinet's decision to close half the sites in the city. It is concerned that this will hit the local economy and that it may be discriminatory against disabled people.

Whilst it is appreciated Cabinet have already reached their decision Council requests Cabinet reviews the implementation of the decision."

Following debate, upon being put to the vote, the amendment standing in the name of Councillor Luke Stubbs was LOST.

Upon being put to the vote, the petition response proposed by Councillor Eleanor Scott was CARRIED.

RESOLVED that the City Council records its thanks to the organisers of the petition on Public Toilets. Following the consultation, the City Council recognised that the major concern expressed was the closure of the public toilets at Eastney Point and the Cabinet decided to keep that public toilet open.

The City Council has had to face a huge reduction in Government grant to the City Council and this has meant a reduction of £17 million this year in the council's budget. The target for savings next year will be £9 million. The City Council notes that the provision of Public Toilets is not a statutory service.

The advice published and available to all councillors from council officers is that charging for using public toilets will work in some locations, but that evidence from across the UK shows usage falls dramatically when charging is introduced.

The City Council is introducing a charge where there are full time attendants at public toilets, but not at ones without as the advice from council officers is that the money collected is likely to be less than the cost of repairing the equipment when damaged and broken into.

In many public toilets the current numbers using them would not make charging financially viable and would be likely to lead to an increase in council spending.

(c) Public Toilets in Victoria Park

Mr Mark Lewis as the petition organiser, presented the petition as it appears on the meeting agenda.

It was

Proposed by Councillor Mike Hancock
Seconded by Councillor Eleanor Scott

That the petition response headed "Public Toilets in Victoria Park" as circulated in the chamber be approved.

Following debate, upon being put to the vote, the petition response was CARRIED unanimously.

RESOLVED that the city council records its thanks to the organisers of the petition on public toilets in Victoria Park.

The City Council recognises that there are also public toilets in Guildhall Square less than 100 yards from the park. But it also recognises that the City can do more to signpost publicly

accessible toilets and will therefore look to erect signs to direct users to the toilets in Guildhall Square and at the Lodge. The City Council will also investigate whether there are other providers would want to build a publicly accessible toilet in the park. The City Council will seek to work with the University on plans for the new Blade Building at Victoria Park so that any plans for a new café include publicly accessible toilets including disabled accessibility.

During debate members requested a change to the petitions procedure to ensure that the petitions were heard and determined by the relevant decision making body of the Council. Councillor Hall, Chair of the Governance & Audit & Standards Committee asked that a report be brought to the next meeting of the committee accordingly.

59. Deputations from the Public under Standing Order No 24 (for items on the remainder of the agenda)

The City Solicitor advised that one deputation had been received in respect of agenda item 9 against the contents of the notice of motion.

The deputation was made by Mr Jim Fleming.

60. Questions from the Public under Standing Order 25

There were no questions from the public.

61. Appointments

It was

Proposed by Councillor Donna Jones
Seconded by Councillor Luke Stubbs

That Councillor Frank Jonas becomes a full member of the Planning Committee in place of Councillor April Windebank and that Councillor April Windebank replaced Councillor Frank Jonas as a standing deputy of the Planning Committee.

This was agreed.

RESOLVED that Councillor Frank Jonas becomes a full member of the Planning Committee in place of Councillor April Windebank and that Councillor April Windebank replaced Councillor Frank Jonas as a standing deputy of the Planning Committee.

62. Urgent Business - To receive and consider any urgent and important business from Members of the Cabinet in accordance with Standing Order No 26

There was no urgent business.

63. Councillor Pensions Consultation

It was jointly proposed by the three Group Leaders, Councillor Gerald Vernon-Jackson, Councillor Donna Jones and Councillor John Ferrett that the response to the Councillor Pensions Consultation as previously circulated be approved.

Following debate, upon being put to the vote, the proposal was unanimously CARRIED.

RESOLVED that the Council's response to the Department of Communities and Local Government Consultation Paper on Taxpayer-funded pensions for Councillors and other elected local office holders be as set out in recommendations (1) (2) and (3) of the Chief Executive's report.

Further, it is also the view of the Council that the activity of being a Councillor does constitute "work" and should be considered as such for the purposes of the application of pension policy.

64. Notices of Motion - Proposal concerning the Tendering Process in respect of the Pyramids

It was

Proposed by Councillor Gerald Vernon-Jackson
Seconded by Councillor Hugh Mason

That this motion be debated today.

Upon being put to the vote this was CARRIED.

It was

Proposed by Councillor Gerald Vernon-Jackson
Seconded by Councillor Hugh Mason

That the motion set out on the agenda be adopted by the council.

As an amendment it was

Proposed by Councillor Mike Hancock CBE MP
Seconded by Councillor Leo Madden

That an additional paragraph be added to the original notice of motion as follows

"The City Council endorses the decision of the Cabinet Meeting of the 10th June 2013 to accept the lowest priced tender to run the Pyramids as an essential part of the Seafront Strategy. The City Council notes that 8% of all jobs within Portsmouth are dependent on the visitor economy and does not

wish to see jobs reduced in Portsmouth by closing facilities that encourage visitors."

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Gerald Vernon-Jackson, agreed to the additional paragraph being added to the end of the original notice of motion.

It was

Proposed by Councillor Donna Jones
Seconded by Councillor Luke Stubbs

That the words "Councillor Lee Hunt and" be deleted from the first paragraph of the notice of motion.

Upon being put to the vote, the amendment standing in the name of Councillor Donna Jones was LOST.

Upon being put to the vote, the original motion incorporating Councillor Mike Hancock's amendment was CARRIED.

RESOLVED that council thanks Councillor Lee Hunt and officers for a successful tendering process which they have concluded in respect of the Pyramids.

The City Council endorses the decision of the Cabinet Meeting of the 10th June 2013 to accept the lowest priced tender to run the Pyramids as an essential part of the Seafront Strategy. The City Council notes that 8% of all jobs within Portsmouth are dependent on the visitor economy and does not wish to see jobs reduced in Portsmouth by closing facilities that encourage visitors.

65. Questions from Members under Standing Order No 17

There was one question under Standing Order 17.

Question number 1 was from Councillor John Ferrett.

"Can the Cabinet Member for Housing confirm how many one-bedroomed council properties have been available for rent during the year 2012?"

This and supplementary questions were answered by the Cabinet Member for Housing, Councillor Darren Sanders.

The meeting concluded at 7.20 pm.

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Lord Mayor