

Portsmouth City Council

A MEETING OF THE COUNCIL will be held at the Council Chamber - The Guildhall on Tuesday, 20 January 2015 at 2.00 pm and all members of the council are hereby summoned to attend to consider and resolve upon the following business:-

Agenda

- 1 **Members' Interests**
- 2 **To approve as a correct record the Minutes of (Pages 1 - 22)**
 - the Meeting of the Council held on 9 December 2014
- 3 **To receive such communications as the Lord Mayor may desire to lay before the Council, including apologies for absence.**
- 4 **Deputations from the Public under Standing Order No 24.**
- 5 **Questions from the Public under Standing Order 25.**
- 6 **Appointments**
- 7 **Urgent Business - To receive and consider any urgent and important business from Members of the Cabinet in accordance with Standing Order No 26. (Pages 23 - 26)**
- 8 **Cabinet Recommendations - To receive and consider the below recommendations of the Cabinet held on 4 December 2014 in respect of the following matter, the report for which is attached: (Pages 27 - 64)**
 - Budget & Performance Monitoring 2014/15 (2nd Quarter) to end September 2014

RECOMMENDED that:

- (i) **The contents of this report be noted, in particular the overall forecast overspend of £1,501,500 representing a variance of 0.9% against the City Council Budget (as adjusted) of £175,030,000.**
- (ii) **To enable the Children's & Education Portfolio to address the deficit against the Council approved cash limit, the Children's Social Care & Safeguarding savings proposals for 2015/16 totalling £1,917,000 outlined in Table 1 be noted.**

- (iii) **To remedy the historic underlying budget deficit relating to Parking within the Traffic & Transportation Portfolio, it be noted that an annual appropriation from the Parking Reserve in the amount of £400,000 per annum has been made.**
- (iv) **That the Council Leader works with the relevant portfolio holder to consider measures necessary to significantly reduce or eliminate the adverse budget position presently being forecast within Children & Education and Health & Social Care Portfolios and any necessary decisions presented to a future meeting of the relevant portfolio.**

9 Licensing Committee Recommendations - To receive and consider the recommendations of the Licensing Committee held on 13 January 2015 (to follow) in respect of the following matter: (Pages 65 - 66)

- **Schedule 5, Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 and sections 115A - 115K Highways Act 1980 - Provision of Highway Amenities - Delegation of Powers to both the Licensing Committee and appropriate Head of Service in respect of Highway Amenity Matters**

10 Notices of Motion

(a) Volunteer Snow Wardens

Proposed by Councillor Michael Andrewes
Seconded by Councillor Lynne Stagg

The council notes:

Many areas such as Lambeth, Waltham Forest, Edinburgh and Telford and Wrekin now operate a scheme for “snow angels” or snow volunteer wardens. This provides basic equipment and training to enable people to clear their pavements and help in times of snow and bad weather

This would give the city added resilience in times of bad weather and harness people’s desire to help out in these times and help reduce deaths during winter months when vulnerable and older people are at risk.

The costs for this are likely to be fairly minimal and mostly capital expenditure in equipment and it would help prevent other costs to the council and public services.

The council therefore resolves:

To ask the Scrutiny Management Panel to undertake a short “task and finish” review of the idea and make a recommendation on whether and how to implement it and report to cabinet as quickly as possible given that there might be bad weather soon.

(b) Abolition of the Planning Inspectorate

Proposed by Councillor Michael Andrewes
Seconded by Councillor Darren Sanders

The council notes:

Nick Herbert, MP has said that he will table amendments to legislation going through Parliament to abolish, or at the very least curtail, the power of the Planning Inspectorate, to prevent it from making didactic interventions in the planning process, ensuring communities have tighter control over development.

The planning appeal process is “one-sided” in that only applicants can appeal a decision made by a local Planning Authority and not objectors

There is widespread cross-party consensus for decisions to be taken as close to local communities as possible.

The coalition Government’s localism agenda to devolve power

The vast majority of planning decisions are taken locally both in Portsmouth and across the country.

Local councils and councillors are best placed to have first hand knowledge of their local communities. Local councils have in planning decisions to make decisions that are both in line with planning law and regulations and local policies and plan and also that are “reasonable”.

Individual decisions by planning inspectors seem sometimes to be contradictory.

The council therefore resolves:

To support the spirit of those amendments that Nick Herbert, MP has outlined he will introduce of abolishing or curtailing the power of the Planning Inspectorate.

That Portsmouth City Council encourages other councils to take a similar position

The Chief Executive writes to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government stating its support for this policy

And the Council requests that a letter is sent from the Leader of the Council and other group leaders and councillors should they so wish to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government outlining the council’s support for such a policy

That the Local Government Association is asked to lobby for such a

policy

That the Chief Executive writes to local MPs asking them to support such a policy and any amendments introduced in Parliament to abolish or curtail the power of the Planning Inspectorate.

(c) Combined Authority

Proposed by Councillor Darren Sanders
Seconded by Councillor Michael Andrewes

The City Council recognises that there are several areas where Portsmouth City Council works with other councils on a voluntary basis. These organisations, such as the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire, the Solent Local Economic Partnership and Solent Transport have helped Portsmouth work with our neighbouring councils, but on a voluntary basis.

The City Council notes the enthusiasm of the Government and the current Administration at Portsmouth City Council for Combined Authorities to include Portsmouth, Southampton and the councils in the surrounding areas.

The City Council welcomes any move from Government to pass down powers, responsibilities and funding from Whitehall down to local councils. The UK has the most centralised system of Government in western Europe and this causes many poor decisions, and much waste of public resource.

The City Council is also aware that the restoration in 1997 of full powers to Portsmouth City Council and the removal of decision making about Portsmouth from Hampshire County Council in Winchester has been welcomed by almost all Portsmouth citizens. It means local people know where decisions about Portsmouth are made.

The City Council recommends to the Cabinet that decision making about services in Portsmouth should be decided within Portsmouth. So Portsmouth decisions are made by Portsmouth people. Any sharing of decision making within a Solent Combined Authority on issues such as transport, planning, housing numbers and economic development should always include an ability for Portsmouth City Council to veto any decision made by any Combined Authority with which it does not agree and that we lobby the Secretary of State to give councils this power. Irrespective of the outcome the City Council also recommends to Cabinet that all decisions relating to Portsmouth and decisions of the combined authority are reported to Full Council.

And finally if the City Council is unable to get an assurance that Portsmouth would be able to obtain a veto over Portsmouth decisions, the City Council takes the view that it is not in favour of

joining a combined authority and would recommend to the Cabinet that that we do not proceed.

(d) Committee System

Proposed by Councillor Darren Sanders
Seconded by Councillor Hugh Mason

The City Council wishes to look at moving towards a committee system of decision making in Portsmouth City Council. Governance and Audit and Standards are asked to work up a cost neutral way of bringing in a committee system in the future, learning from the experience both in Portsmouth and other authorities who have made the transition.

In the event that Council in due course decides to move to a new committee system and to enable this to be done in a timely fashion and to be able to learn from experience, the City Council resolves to move to a system of shadow committees for the municipal year 2015-2016, the shadow system should also be cost neutral.

The shadow committees would shadow each cabinet member and meetings would take place with the same agenda as for cabinet members' individual portfolio meetings but before that meeting. Cabinet members would be invited to attend and can be part of the shadow committees. The formal decision making would take place after the shadow committee has met. Shadow committees be cross party and proportionate, but the cabinet member would retain the formal decision making power during the transitional year. There will also be a shadow committee for full cabinet, which in a full committee system would become a policy and resources committee.

Governance and Audit to report back on a shadow system for 2015-16 at the March 2015 Council Meeting.

11 Questions from Members under Standing Order No 17. (Pages 67 - 70)

David Williams
Chief Executive

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Guildhall Square
PORTSMOUTH
12 January 2015