

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE COUNCIL held at the Guildhall
Portsmouth on Tuesday, 11 November 2014 at 2.00 pm

Council Members Present

The Right Worshipful The Lord Mayor
Councillor Steven Wylie (in the Chair)

Councillors

Margaret Adair	Hugh Mason
Michael Andrewes	Lee Mason
Simon Boshier	Robert New
Alicia Denny	Stuart Potter
Ben Dowling	Will Purvis
Ken Ellcome	Darren Sanders
John Ferrett	Eleanor Scott
Ken Ferrett	Phil Smith
David Fuller	Lynn Stagg
Colin Galloway	Les Stevens
Paul Godier	Sandra Stockdale
Aiden Gray	Luke Stubbs
Terry Hall	Julie Swan
Stephen Hastings	Linda Symes
Hannah Hockaday	Alistair Thompson
David Horne	Gerald Vernon-Jackson
Lee Hunt	Steve Wemyss
Frank Jonas	Matthew Winnington
Donna Jones	Rob Wood
Leo Madden	Neill Young

95. Declarations of Interests under Standing Order 13(2)(b)

Councillor David Fuller declared a pecuniary interest in agenda item 12(a) in that he works in a residential care home. Councillor Fuller said he would leave the chamber for that item.

96. Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting of the Council held on 14 October 2014 and the Ordinary Meeting of the Council held on 14 October 2014

These were

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

RESOLVED that

- (1) the minutes of the extraordinary meeting of the council held on 14 October 2014 be confirmed and signed as a correct record;**

(2) the minutes of the ordinary meeting of the council held on 14 October 2014 be confirmed and signed as a correct record subject to

- (i) amending the last sentence of the declaration made by Councillor Michael Andrewes to read "He left the chamber before the vote on this item." and**
- (ii) amending the last sentence of the declaration made by Councillor Terry Hall to read "She left the chamber before the vote on this item."**

97. Communications including Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Margaret Foster who was unwell.

The Lord Mayor advised that safeguarding training is being arranged with the LGA for all members and that members would be contacted about this. He hoped that all members would attend the training.

The Lord Mayor advised that there had been a slight change to the seating plan that affected UKIP group members only.

The Lord Mayor welcomed in the public gallery a group of second year politics students from the University of Portsmouth.

The Lord Mayor said that he had been pleased to see so many members at the Remembrance events. He also mentioned his recent visit to Duisburg for their commemorations and thanked the Deputy Lord Mayor for officiating at the October Council meeting, thereby enabling him to go to Duisburg. He said that he brought back messages of friendship and solidarity.

The Lord Mayor mentioned the Great South Run and thanked all those who participated in making the event a success and also for the money raised for various charities.

Councillor Donna Jones then provided an update with regard to notice of motion (c) - Tax System from the last council meeting. Councillor Jones said that she had written to David Gauke MP, Financial Secretary to the Treasury about this and her letter was available if anyone wished to see it.

98. Deputations from the Public under Standing Order No 24

The City Solicitor advised that four deputations requests had been received, all from Honorary Alderman Elaine Baker.

Honorary Alderman Elaine Baker then made her deputations on notice of motion 12(a) - Creating a Dementia-Friendly City, notice of motion 12(c) - Minister for Portsmouth, notice of motion 12(d) - Domestic Abuse Awareness and notice of motion 12(f) - Condemning those who deny the Holocaust.

The Lord Mayor thanked Honorary Alderman Elaine Baker for her deputations.

99. Questions from the Public under Standing Order 25

There were no questions from the public.

100. Appointments - Membership and Chairmanship

The Lord Mayor advised that Councillor Godier has stood down from his membership of Langstone Harbour Board and Councillor Hastings has been nominated to replace him.

Upon being put to the vote this was agreed.

101. 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.

102. Cabinet Recommendations

The Lord Mayor advised that items 8, 9, 10, and 11 - Recommendations from the Cabinet meeting held on 6 November 2014 would be taken together.

The recommendations contained in the following minutes were approved unopposed:-

Minute 86 - Treasury Management Mid-Year Review for 2014/15

Minute 87 - Youth Justice Strategic Plan 2015/17

Minute 88 - Joint Business Planning Process across Strategic Partnerships and Approval of Latest Partnership Strategies

Minute 92 - Dunsbury Hill Farm

103. Notices of Motion

Notice of motion (a) - Creating a Dementia-Friendly City

(Councillor David Fuller left the chamber for this item.)

It was

Proposed by Councillor Will Purvis

Seconded by Councillor Ben Dowling

That this notice of motion be debated today.

Upon being put to the vote, this was CARRIED.

It was

Proposed by Councillor Will Purvis
Seconded by Councillor Ben Dowling

That notice of motion (a) be adopted.

Upon the notice of motion as set out on the agenda being put to the vote, this was CARRIED.

RESOLVED that

Council notes that:

In Portsmouth there are approximately 2,186 people living with dementia, and it is estimated that 670,000 people in England are living with dementia.

78% percent of those people with dementia in Portsmouth live in the community.

Objective one of the Portsmouth Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy in 13/14 was to enhance the quality of life for people with dementia.

Within the next 30 years the number of people in the UK with dementia is expected to rise to 1.4 million. The cost of care and treatment is currently estimated at £19 billion a year and at the current rate will rise to £50 billion over a 30 year period.

Council welcomes:

The work of Portsmouth City Council and partners, through the local Dementia Action Group, to develop an action plan to raise awareness of dementia and promote improvements to dementia services in the City.

Council resolves to: ask the Cabinet (via the Health and Wellbeing Board) and as appropriate the Employment Committee

To work, with partners, towards making Portsmouth a ‘Dementia Friendly Community’, a status officially endorsed by the Alzheimers’ Society.

Create and appoint an elected member to the position of “Dementia Champion” and appoint a lead officer for dementia.

Work in partnership with Portsmouth Clinical Commissioning Group, the Alzheimer’s Society, Solent NHS Trust and patient representative groups to continue to develop and improve services for people living with dementia in Portsmouth.

Encourage all staff of Portsmouth City Council, and members, to become a ‘Dementia Friend’, through the Dementia Friends Programme run by the Alzheimers’ Society.

Participate in awareness raising activities during Dementia Awareness Week in May 2015.

Ensure that due consideration is given to people living with dementia and their carers by including them explicitly in all Equality Impact Assessments.

Notice of Motion (b) - Public Houses

It was

Proposed by Councillor Stephen Hastings
Seconded by Councillor Colin Galloway

That this notice of motion be debated today.

Upon being put to the vote, this was CARRIED.

It was

Proposed by Councillor Stephen Hastings
Seconded by Councillor Colin Galloway

That notice of motion (b) as set out on the agenda be adopted.

As an amendment it was

Proposed by Councillor Luke Stubbs
Seconded by Councillor Donna Jones

To delete all after "public houses of Portsmouth" in the first paragraph.

Add the following paragraphs:-

"Council notes with sadness that large numbers of pubs have been sold off by the breweries or pub companies and converted into supermarkets or developed into flats, therefore being lost forever. Some of these buildings were historic and were part of our heritage.

Council notes that the government has introduced a Community Right to Bid that gives local residents an opportunity to list facilities they consider important and to buy them at the market rate if that community use is to cease.

It also notes that local planning policy protects the Good Companion pub in Baffins from demolition or conversion on the grounds that it is the only remaining pub in that locality and that it may be possible to extend this to other locations in the future.

Council recognises that there are many calls on available capital resources, including schools, flood defences and transport. It agrees that scarce funds would be better spent on improving infrastructure and on school buildings than on effectively subsidising public houses.

While council would consider buying licensed premises were it viable to do so, it considers it unlikely that this will ever be the case. However recognizing the important role pubs have as community hubs, it calls on all members to promote the Community Right to Bid to the public when concerns are raised about proposed closures."

As an amendment it was

Proposed by Councillor Darren Sanders
Seconded by Councillor Hugh Mason

To insert new paragraph 4

"Council also believes these restrictions should be changed at the earliest opportunity.

On that basis, it supports New Clause 2 of the Small Business Bill, being laid before Parliament by Lib Dem MP Greg Mulholland, who chairs the Save the Pub group, and backed by Conservative MPs such as Adrian Bailey, Chair of the BIS Select Committee, and Labour MPs such as Clive Betts, on 18 November.

This cross-party clause would enshrine "a market rent only' option in law, enabling tenants tied to the large pub companies to buy beer on the open market, rather than through their pubco. This will stop the rip-off beer prices and excessive rents that force so many pubs to close.

Council agrees to write to Mr Mulholland outlining its support for this amendment and to both Portsmouth's MPs, asking them to vote for it on 18 November."

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

Councillor Stephen Hastings as mover of the original motion agreed to incorporate the amendment standing in the name of Councillor Darren Sanders into his notice of motion. Upon the substantive motion incorporating the amendment standing in the name of Councillor Darren Sanders being put to the vote, this was CARRIED.

RESOLVED that

Council asks the Cabinet to explore the possibility of protecting the public houses of Portsmouth by this Council purchasing any pubs that are being sold off by the breweries or pub companies rather than them becoming supermarkets or developed into flats, therefore being lost

forever. Some of these buildings are historic and are part of our heritage. We must prevent them from disappearing.

Then this Council will hold the asset of the building and make money from the ongoing rent as landlord.

The tenant as the licensee who would be freed up from the constraints of being tied to a brewery for supplies where they are restricted on brand and price.

Council also believes these restrictions should be changed at the earliest opportunity.

On that basis, it supports New Clause 2 of the Small Business Bill, being laid before Parliament by Lib Dem MP Greg Mulholland, who chairs the Save the Pub group, and backed by Conservative MPs such as Adrian Bailey, Chair of the BIS Select Committee, and Labour MPs such as Clive Betts, on 18 November.

This cross-party clause would enshrine a market rent only option in law, enabling tenants tied to the large pub companies to buy beer on the open market, rather than through their pubco. This will stop the rip-off beer prices and excessive rents that force so many pubs to close.

Council agrees to write to Mr Mulholland outlining its support for this amendment and to both Portsmouth's MPs, asking them to vote for it on 18 November.

Notice of Motion (c) - Minister for Portsmouth

It was

Proposed by Councillor John Ferrett
Seconded by Councillor Aiden Gray

That notice of motion (c) as set out on the agenda be debated today.

Upon being put to the vote, this was CARRIED.

It was

Proposed by Councillor John Ferrett
Seconded by Councillor Aiden Gray

That notice of motion (c) as set out on the agenda be adopted.

As an amendment it was

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

To replace para 1 with

"The city council notes the creation of the role of a Minister for Portsmouth to co-ordinate Government policy and initiate government policy towards the City. It notes the constructive relationship established with the first Minister, Michael Fallon."

In para 3 replace final word with "reviewed".

Councillor John Ferrett as mover of the original motion agreed to incorporate the amendment standing in the name of Councillor Gerald Vernon-Jackson into his notice of motion. Upon the substantive motion incorporating the amendment standing in the name of Councillor Gerald Vernon-Jackson being put to the vote, this was CARRIED.

RESOLVED that

The city council notes the creation of the role of a Minister for Portsmouth to co-ordinate Government policy and initiate government policy towards the City. It notes the constructive relationship established with the first Minister, Michael Fallon.

The current incumbent of the Minister for Portsmouth role, Matthew Hancock MP, has exemplified concerns that the position had merely been created for public relations purposes, rather than bringing tangible benefits to the city. If the role is an exercise in public relations then Mr Hancock's confusion over the difference between Milton ward and Milton Keynes shows that even on that measure he is failing to deliver for Portsmouth.

In view of the failure of the Minister for Portsmouth to defend the interests of the City the Council instructs the Chief Executive to write to the Prime Minister calling for the role to be reviewed.

Notice of Motion (d) - Domestic Abuse Awareness

It was

Proposed by Councillor Julie Swan
Seconded by Councillor Stephen Hastings

That this notice of motion be debated today.

Upon being put to the vote, this was CARRIED.

It was

Proposed by Councillor Julie Swan
Seconded by Councillor Stephen Hastings

That notice of motion (d) as set out on the agenda be adopted.

Upon the notice of motion as set out on the agenda being put to the vote, this was CARRIED.

RESOLVED that this council is concerned that more could be done to raise awareness of the issue of Domestic Violence within Portsmouth.

In Portsmouth, domestic violence accounts for 25% of assaults. After major sporting events and over Public Holidays this number is significantly increased.

This council is resolved to ask the Cabinet that for a period of no less than 3 years a quarter page 'Advert' notifying the readers within Portsmouth of where they can seek assistance in the event of a domestic abuse incident be published in the council run "Flagship" magazine.

Council adjourned at 6.25 pm.

Council resumed at 6.55 pm.

Notice of Motion (e) - Business Rates

It was

Proposed by Councillor Darren Sanders
Seconded by Councillor Gerald Vernon-Jackson

That this notice of motion be debated today.

Upon being put to the vote, this was CARRIED.

It was

Proposed by Councillor Darren Sanders
Seconded by Councillor Gerald Vernon-Jackson

That notice of motion (e) as set out on the agenda be adopted.

As an amendment it was

Proposed by Councillor Luke Stubbs
Seconded by Councillor Donna Jones

That the notice of motion be amended as follows:-

"To add after "Ed Miliband" in the first paragraph

"and welcomes the decision by the government to defer the revaluation originally planned for 2015. "

To delete points 2 and 3 and add new point 2

2. The building of a cross party consensus on how the rates could be reformed to enable bricks and mortar retailers to remain competitive with online traders over the long run while at the same time protecting council income from further erosion.

To delete final sentence in the last paragraph and replace with

It notes that the support the council gives to retail centres is more extensive than that provided by most other local authorities but that rapid reductions in council income means no part of the budget can be increased. Within that constraint however the council asks the PRED portfolio holder to consider ways of making best use of existing resources."

As an amendment it was

Proposed by Councillor Julie Swan
Seconded by Councillor Stephen Hastings

To insert after bullet point 3

"In addition we would ask all Group Leaders to write separately to the offices of both Nick Clegg and David Cameron to ask why neither member of the coalition government considered that Business Rates would be worthy of a review until 2017."

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

Councillor Darren Sanders as mover of the original motion agreed to incorporate the amendment standing in the name of Councillor Julie Swan into his notice of motion. Upon the substantive motion incorporating the amendment standing in the name of Councillor Julie Swan being put to the vote, this was CARRIED.

RESOLVED that

Council welcomes and supports the News' campaign for fairer business rates. It also welcomes the backing for it from Nick Clegg and Ed Miliband.

Council welcomes the Government's strides in this area, allowing councils to keep a share of business rates, extending small business rate relief and providing money for apprenticeships.

Although occupancy rates across Portsmouth are high, Council recognises more should be done. It therefore asks all group leaders to write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Chief Secretary to the Treasury calling for:

- 1. All local councils, not just those in the North of England, to have the power to set and keep all their business rates.**

2. **Forcing councils to publish how they will protect large shopping centres, such as Commercial Road and Cosham, and smaller ones, such as Tangier Road and Highland Road.**
3. **Changes to how business rates are valued so they are based on turnover or the value of land. Both of these are fairer than the current system.**

In addition we would ask all Group Leaders to write separately to the offices of both Nick Clegg and David Cameron to ask why neither member of the coalition government considered that Business Rates would be worthy of a review until 2017.

Council also welcomes the scrutiny review into high streets. It also asks that the PRED portfolio holder looks at ways to help groups like Love Albert Road and Love Baffins, and others that may be set up, develop strategies to attract people to local shops.

Notice of Motion (f) - Condemning those who deny the Holocaust

It was

Proposed by Councillor John Ferrett
Seconded by Councillor Colin Galloway

That this notice of motion be debated today.

Upon being put to the vote, this was CARRIED.

It was

Proposed by Councillor John Ferrett
Seconded by Councillor Colin Galloway

That notice of motion (f) as set out on the agenda be adopted.

As an amendment it was

Proposed by Councillor Julie Swan
Seconded by Councillor Stephen Hastings

"To strike the third paragraph in its entirety and to amend the motion to read:

Portsmouth City Council and the citizens of Portsmouth are committed to remembering the victims of the holocaust. Indeed as part of Holocaust Memorial Day on 27 January 2014, the city held a service to remember the millions of people who lost their lives or suffered in the Holocaust under Nazi persecution, and also in subsequent genocides'.

This years' service included a speech by the then Lord Mayor of Portsmouth, Cllr Lynne Stagg, followed by readings and prayers from Portsmouth representatives of groups who have suffered in the Holocaust or in subsequent genocides - including the Jewish, African, disabled and gay communities.

This council unreservedly condemns those who seek to deny the holocaust and those that seek to condone holocaust denial. The council will also redouble its efforts to ensure the public are made aware of the forthcoming civic service for Holocaust Memorial Day on 27 January 2015."

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

Upon notice of motion (f) as set out on the agenda being put to the vote, this was CARRIED unanimously.

RESOLVED that

Portsmouth City Council and the citizens of Portsmouth are committed to remembering the victims of the holocaust. Indeed, as part of Holocaust Memorial Day on 27 January 2014, the city held a service to remember the millions of people who lost their lives or suffered in the Holocaust under Nazi persecution, and also in subsequent genocides.

This years' service included a speech by the then Lord Mayor of Portsmouth, Cllr Lynne Stagg, followed by readings and prayers from Portsmouth representatives of groups who have suffered in the Holocaust or in subsequent genocides - including the Jewish, African, disabled and gay communities.

In view of the long-standing commitment this council has to remembering victims of the holocaust it notes with extreme concern the decision of the UKIP leader Nigel Farage to form an alliance in the European Parliament with a Polish political party whose leader, Janusz Korwin-Mikke has sought to deny the holocaust by claiming Adolf Hitler was 'probably not aware that Jews were being exterminated'. Korwin-Mikke has also caused controversy and offence by calling for the vote to be taken away from women, and claiming that the difference between rape and consensual sex is "very subtle".

This council unreservedly condemns those who seek to deny the holocaust and those that seek to condone holocaust denial. The council will also redouble its efforts to ensure the public are made aware of the forthcoming civic service for Holocaust Memorial Day on 27 January 2015.

Council adjourned at 8.35 pm.

Council resumed at 8.40 pm.

Notice of Motion (g) - Asylum Seeker Support

It was

Proposed by Councillor Aiden Gray
Seconded by Councillor Ken Ferrett

That this notice of motion be debated today.

Upon being put to the vote, this was CARRIED.

It was

Proposed by Councillor Aiden Gray
Seconded by Councillor Ken Ferrett

That notice of motion (g) as set out on the agenda be adopted.

As an amendment it was

Proposed by Councillor Julie Swan
Seconded by Councillor Paul Godier

To amend the third paragraph to include the following additional sentence:

Portsmouth City Council recognises the role that the British Red Cross, with assistance of the £494,793 grant from the Big Lottery Fund, has played in providing assistance and support to refugees and asylum seekers.

As an amendment it was

Proposed by Councillor Matthew Winnington
Seconded by Councillor Lee Hunt

To

"Delete the words "street homeless" in paragraph two and insert instead "and unable to work to support themselves until such time as their appeal is successful or they are deported to their country of origin. This situation may last for many months."

In action 1. Delete 'and to support a change in current laws regarding asylum applications by removing restrictions on local authorities in the support they can provide to destitute asylum seekers.'

Insert new actions 2. and 3.

New 2. That asylum claimants deserve to have their cases decided quickly. These should be resolved within 6 months by the Government instead of the many years it can now take. This would also reduce pressure on UK taxpayers.

New 3. Portsmouth is a welcoming city, but should not have to provide services for a disproportionate number of asylum seekers. It condemns the

actions of the Home Office and its agencies in housing an entirely excessive proportion of asylum seekers housed within the South East of England in Portsmouth. It supports the work of the City Council in getting a fairer distribution of housing.

Existing subsequent Actions would be re-numbered 4. 5. 6. and 7.

In renumbered Action 4. delete the word 'such' before asylum seekers and replace the words 'if they have been waiting for more than six months for their cases to be resolved' with 'thereby relieving the financial burden on taxpayers.' Delete the words 'and demanding that local authorities should be permitted to provide emergency provision to refused asylum seekers as to other homeless people.'

The motion as amended would then read:

Portsmouth City Council recognises the plight of asylum seekers forced to flee their home countries due to conflict and persecution. Many arrive in the UK after having been threatened, detained, beaten or tortured.

An adult seeking protection in this country who has no other source of support will receive just over £5 a day to pay for food, clothing, toiletries and travel (accommodation and utilities are paid for separately for those who have nowhere to live). They are not allowed to work to support themselves. If their claims are refused by the Home Office, they lose all support and are left destitute and unable to work to support themselves until such time as their appeal is successful or they are deported to their country of origin. This situation may last for many months

Portsmouth Refugee and Asylum Seeker Orientation and Support Project is helping 400 refugees and asylum seekers annually to survive destitution, access essential services and feel less isolated. Portsmouth City Council is concerned about such destitution and its impact on local communities.

Portsmouth is a welcoming and inclusive city and wants to join those local authorities (Liverpool, Bristol, Sheffield, Oxford, Glasgow, Leeds and Bradford) who have petitioned the Home Secretary to relieve the suffering of people seeking sanctuary and especially those people who have yet to be granted leave to remain in the UK.

Portsmouth City Council approves the following actions:

1. Ask both Portsmouth MPs to support the spirit of this motion, to raise the matter in the House of Commons.
2. That asylum claimants deserve to have their cases decided quickly. These should be resolved within 6 months by the Government instead of the many years it can now take. This would also reduce pressure on UK taxpayers.
3. Portsmouth is a welcoming city, but should not have to provide services for a disproportionate number of asylum seekers. It condemns the actions of the Home Office and its agencies in housing an entirely excessive proportion of asylum seekers housed within the South East of England in Portsmouth. It supports the work of the City Council in getting a fairer distribution of housing.

4. Write on behalf of the City Council to the Minister of State for Immigration questioning Government policies that force asylum seekers into destitution; expressing concern over the low level of support available to asylum seekers; seeking a change of policy to allow local authorities to assist refused asylum seekers who are in danger of falling into destitution; asking that asylum seekers should be able to work to support themselves thereby relieving the financial burden on taxpayers.
5. Portsmouth City Council to join the national campaign 'Still Human, Still Here' (a coalition of 60 organisations, including several city councils, the Church of England and Catholic Archbishop Conferences, Crisis, Oxfam, and the Red Cross, who are proposing practical solutions to ending the destitution of refused asylum seekers in the UK.)
6. Portsmouth City Council requests Cabinet to produce a report summarising existing support for asylum seekers available in Portsmouth including housing, training, education, and legal advice open to vulnerable asylum applicants and that the report be subsequently circulated to all members for information.-
7. Portsmouth City Council to seek further support for this motion and action via the Local Government Association and by encouraging other Councils in the UK to join us on this issue.

Councillor Aiden Gray as mover of the original motion agreed to incorporate both the amendments.

Upon the substantive motion incorporating both amendments being put to the vote, this was CARRIED.

RESOLVED that

Portsmouth City Council recognises the plight of asylum seekers forced to flee their home countries due to conflict and persecution. Many arrive in the UK after having been threatened, detained, beaten or tortured.

An adult seeking protection in this country who has no other source of support will receive just over £5 a day to pay for food, clothing, toiletries and travel (accommodation and utilities are paid for separately for those who have nowhere to live). They are not allowed to work to support themselves. If their claims are refused by the Home Office, they lose all support and are left destitute and unable to work to support themselves until such time as their appeal is successful or they are deported to their country of origin. This situation may last for many months.

Portsmouth Refugee and Asylum Seeker Orientation and Support Project is helping 400 refugees and asylum seekers annually to survive destitution, access essential services and feel less isolated. Portsmouth City Council is concerned about such destitution and its impact on local communities. Portsmouth City Council recognises the role that the British Red Cross, with the assistance of the £494,793 grant from the Big

Lottery Fund, has played in providing assistance and support to refugees and asylum seekers.

Portsmouth is a welcoming and inclusive city and wants to join those local authorities (Liverpool, Bristol, Sheffield, Oxford, Glasgow, Leeds and Bradford) who have petitioned the Home Secretary to relieve the suffering of people seeking sanctuary and especially those people who have yet to be granted leave to remain in the UK.

Portsmouth City Council approves the following actions:

- 1. Ask both Portsmouth MPs to support the spirit of this motion, to raise the matter in the House of Commons.**
- 2. That Asylum claimants deserve to have their cases decided quickly. These should be resolved within 6 months by the Government instead of the many years it can now take. This would also reduce pressure on UK taxpayers.**
- 3. Portsmouth is a welcoming city, but should not have to provide services for a disproportionate number of asylum seekers. It condemns the actions of the Home Office and its agencies in housing an entirely excessive proportion of asylum seekers housed within the South East of England in Portsmouth. It supports the work of the City Council in getting a fairer distribution of housing.**
- 4. Write on behalf of the City Council to the Minister of State for Immigration questioning Government policies that force asylum seekers into destitution; expressing concern over the low level of support available to asylum seekers; seeking a change of policy to allow local authorities to assist refused asylum seekers who are in danger of falling into destitution; asking that asylum seekers should be able to work to support themselves thereby relieving the financial burden on taxpayers.**
- 5. Portsmouth City Council to join the national campaign "Still Human, Still Here" (a coalition of 60 organisations, including several city councils, the Church of England and Catholic Archbishop Conferences, Crisis, Oxfam, and the Red Cross, who are proposing practical solutions to ending the destitution of refused asylum seekers in the UK.)**

6. **Portsmouth City Council requests Cabinet to produce a report summarising existing support for asylum seekers available in Portsmouth including housing, training, education, and legal advice open to vulnerable asylum applicants and that the report be subsequently circulated to all members for information.**

7. **Portsmouth City Council to seek further support for this motion and action via the Local Government Association and by encouraging other Councils in the UK to join us on this issue.**

104. Questions from Members under Standing Order No 17

There were six questions before council.

Question No 1 was from Councillor Stuart Potter asking

"Can the cabinet member for PRED report on the progress of the councils investigations into the now closed Paulsgrove industrial centre as to its suitability to be purchased by the council and turned into an enterprise centre as put forward by Cllr Stuart Potter. This is a much needed facility for the north of the city and much more important north of Hilsea as there is nothing for start-up, young and small business in the area and would be a boost to the local economy and jobs. This would also fall into the medium term financial plan to reduce the city's dependency on central government grant by providing an income to the council."

This and supplementary questions were answered by the Cabinet Member for Planning, Regeneration & Economic Development, Councillor Luke Stubbs.

Question No 2 was from Councillor Colin Galloway as follows

"Is the Leader satisfied that proper precautions are installed at our International Ferry Port to screen all arrivals for potential carriers of the ebola virus?"

This and supplementary questions were answered by the Leader of the Council, Councillor Donna Jones.

Question No 3 was from Councillor Leo Madden asking

"Will you please confirm that the expansion of your office (i.e. the Leader's Office) was planned as part of the Landlord's Maintenance budget for 2014/2015? Will you also state 1) what consultations took place and with whom; 2) the reason for this expansion and 3) the total costs incurred in the work, furnishings and secretarial work stations."

This and supplementary questions were answered by the Leader of the Council, Councillor Donna Jones.

Question No 4 was from Councillor Ken Ferrett asking

"Can the Cabinet Member inform the council how much parking revenue will be lost through the loss of the 84 Camber Quay pay & display parking spaces that have had to make way for the Ben Ainslie Racing project?"

This and supplementary questions were answered by the Cabinet Member for Traffic & Transportation, Councillor Ken Ellcome.

Question No 5 was from Councillor Stuart Potter asking

"Can the cabinet member for PRED explain what if any action was taken by the council to investigate the use of Kingston prison as a self-funding homeless dwelling as put forward by Cllr Julie Swan and an enterprise centre for local business that could have helped the homeless return to work and regain a purpose in life, This would also fall into the medium term financial plan to reduce the city's dependency on central government grant by providing an income to the council."

This and supplementary questions were answered by the Cabinet Member for Planning, Regeneration & Economic Development, Councillor Luke Stubbs.

Question No 6 was from Councillor Ken Ferrett asking

"The recent 25th Great South Run weekend was a great success for the City. Can the Leader commit her administration to maintaining this Council's support for an event which garners Portsmouth National and International coverage?"

This was answered by the Leader of the Council, Councillor Donna Jones.

The meeting concluded at 10.32 pm.

Lord Mayor