MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE COUNCIL held at the Guildhall, Portsmouth on Tuesday 29 January 2008 at 2.00 pm.

Council Members Present

The Deputy Lord Mayor
Councillor Robin Sparshatt (In the Chair until 3.25 pm)

The Lord Mayor
Councillor Mike Blake (In the Chair from 3.25 pm)

Councillors

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<td>Adair, Margaret</td>
<td>Madden, Leo</td>
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<td>Andrewes, Michael</td>
<td>Martin, Anthony</td>
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<td>Bentley, Alex</td>
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<td>Bosher, Simon</td>
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<td>Butler, David Stephen</td>
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<td>Cook, Sarah</td>
<td>Phillips, Darron</td>
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<td>Fazackarley, Jason</td>
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<td>Foster, Margaret</td>
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<td>Fuller, David</td>
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<td>Hall, Terry</td>
<td>Stagg, Lynne</td>
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<td>Hancock, Mike CBE MP</td>
<td>Stevens, Les</td>
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<td>Henderson, Terry</td>
<td>Stubbs, Luke</td>
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<td>Hey, Malcolm</td>
<td>Thompson, Alistair</td>
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<td>Horne, David</td>
<td>Vernon-Jackson, Gerald</td>
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<td>Hunt, Lee</td>
<td>Wemyss, Steve</td>
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<td>Jensen, Richard</td>
<td>Windebank, April</td>
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<td>Jonas, Frank</td>
<td>Wylie, Steven</td>
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<td>Jones, Howard</td>
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7 Declarations of Interest

Councillor Paula Riches declared a personal and prejudicial Code of Conduct interest in agenda item 9 (Tipner Urban Regeneration Project) as the proposed developer was a personal friend.

Councilor Simon Bosher declared a personal and prejudicial Code of Conduct interest in agenda item 11 (Licensing Policy) as a member of his family owned a licensed premises.

Councilor Mike Hancock CBE MP declared a personal Code of Conduct interest in agenda item 6 Question 3 as he knew the occupier of 22 St Helen’s Parade. He said he had asked the Leader of the Council to answer the question on his behalf. However, the Leader declared a similar personal Code of Conduct interest in that he had met the owner of the building, and he said he had in turn asked Councillor Darron Philips to answer the question.
Councillors Hugh Mason, Mike Park, Leo Madden, Frank Jonas, April Windebank, Margaret Adair and Margaret Foster all declared personal, non-prejudicial Code of Conduct interests in agenda item 9 (Concessionary Fares Scheme), as holders of bus passes/tokens, as appropriate.

Councillor Eleanor Scott declared a personal Code of Conduct interest in agenda item 6 Question 1 as her daughter and son attended local authority schools in Portsmouth.

Councillor Robin Sparshatt a declared a potential personal and prejudicial Code of Conduct interest in agenda item 5 in the case of any references during public questions to the John Lewis Partnership, with which his company had business dealings.

Councillor Alex Bentley declared a potential personal and prejudicial Code of Conduct interest in relation to agenda item 5, questions 2 and 8, in the case of any references to the Northern Quarter Development and Commercial Road North, in that his sister owned premises there.

Councillor Darron Phillips declared a personal Code of Conduct interest in relation to agenda item 5, question 3, in that his wife was an employee of Portsmouth City Council and had taken sick leave in the past. This declaration was made during consideration of the question.

8 Minutes

The Deputy Lord Mayor reported that Mr Mark Austin had requested to make a deputation on the minutes. On being put to the Council, this request was granted. Mr Austin then addressed the Council about minute 232.

Proposed by Councillor Gerald Vernon-Jackson
Seconded by Councillor Steve Wemyss

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 18 December 2007 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

9 Communications

Apologies for absence for part of the meeting were reported on behalf of the Lord Mayor, Councillor Mike Blake, who was representing the city along with other civic leaders from Hampshire at a ceremony marking the return of some of the armed services from duties overseas.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Linda Symes and Jezz Baker. In addition Councillors Lee Mason and Jacqui Hancock had submitted apologies for lateness. Neither arrived before the end of the meeting.
The Deputy Lord Mayor referred to the presentation to Honorary Alderman Fred Charlton of a certificate recording his admission to the Roll of Honorary Aldermen. He informed the Council that this presentation would be made by the Lord Mayor upon his arrival.

10 Deputations from the Public under Standing Order No 17

Deputations were heard from:

Mr Alan Burgess of Portsmouth Climate Action Network on the Tipner Urban Regeneration Project

Honorary Alderman Alan Burnett and Mrs Muriel Deacon on the Concessionary Fares Scheme

Mr Mark Austin on the Tipner Urban Regeneration Project and the Concessionary Fares Scheme

Mr Mark Austin withdrew his request to speak on Parking Standards Waivers.

11 Questions from the Public under Standing Order No 18

Question No 1 and a supplementary question from Mr Les Cummings about why an inquiry was not conducted by the Council in 2001 after the conviction of a former councillor for indecent assault for offences committed in the 1960s/70s were answered by the Leader of the Council. The Leader asked that any new information about alleged offences should be passed to the police, and said that the City Council would co-operate fully in any investigation.

Following interruptions to the proceedings from the public gallery, the meeting was adjourned at 2.40 pm. Upon the public gallery being cleared, the meeting reconvened at 2.50 pm.

Question No 2 and a supplementary question from Mr Mark Austin about how many business interests had negotiated with Portsmouth City Council with reference to the Northern Quarter and alleged involvement of the Leader in them were answered by the Leader of the Council.

Question No 3 and a supplementary question from Mr Mark Austin about the cost of employee sickness over the last 4 years were answered by the Leader of the Council.

Question No 4 from Mr Mark Austin about expenditure on the bus information system was answered by Councillor Alex Bentley, the Executive Member for Traffic & Transportation.

Question No 5 and a supplementary question from Mr Mark Austin about expenditure on legal advice for employees and councillors in relation to defamation were answered by the Leader of the Council.
Question No 6 and a supplementary question from Mr Mark Austin about proportional representation in the light of the declaration of two councillors as independent was answered by the Leader of the Council.

Following the expiry of the time limit for questions under Standing Order 18, the Deputy Lord Mayor said that Question No 7 (about integrity, transparency and adherence to the law, the constitution and standing orders with reference to planning consents for the City Centre North and CPO Inquiry), Question No 8 (about human rights and the planning consents for the Northern Quarter and CPO Inquiry) and Question No 9 (about standing orders and the rights of citizens), all from Mr Mark Austin, would receive written answers.

12 Questions Under Standing Order 19

Question No 1 from Councillor Luke Stubbs and supplementary questions about shared facilities on school sites as part of Building Schools for the Future (BSF) were answered by the Executive Member for Education, Children and Young People, Councillor Eleanor Scott. Councillor Scott said that she would be considering proposals at a future ECYP decision meeting on the allocation of additional funds to individual secondary schools to prepare for BSF.

Question No. 2 from Councillor Alistair Thompson about the storage of files relating to looked after children was withdrawn by him after he had received assurances from the Executive Member for Education, Children and Young People, Councillor Eleanor Scott, that she would look into the matter and give him a written answer.

Question No. 3 from Councillor Luke Stubbs about granting local important building status to 22 St Helen's Parade was withdrawn by him. Councillor Stubbs said he would contact the Head of Planning Services direct.

Emergency Question No. 4 from Councillor Alistair Thompson and supplementary questions about the disposal of Christmas trees and green waste were answered by the Executive Member, Environment, Councillor Jason Fazackarley

Emergency Question No. 5 from Councillor Alistair Thompson and supplementary questions about the rules for visiting amenity and recycling sites were answered by the Executive Member, Environment, Councillor Jason Fazackarley. Councillor Fazackarley undertook to write to all recognised political parties in Portsmouth and the MP for Portsmouth North to inform them of the rules for visits to amenity and recycling sites.

At 3.25 pm the Lord Mayor joined the meeting and took the Chair.

(THE LORD MAYOR, COUNCILLOR MIKE BLAKE, IN THE CHAIR)
13 Presentation to Honorary Alderman Fred Charlton

The Lord Mayor presented Honorary Alderman Fred Charlton with a certificate recording his admission to the Roll of Honorary Aldermen, after which Honorary Alderman Charlton addressed the Council.

14 Appointments - None.

15 Urgent and Important Business from Members of the Executive in accordance with Standing Order No 25 – None

16 Recommendations of the Executive

The City Council agreed by acclamation to consider agenda items 9 and 10 together.

The recommendations contained in the following minutes from the Executive, to which no objections were raised, were APPROVED or received as appropriate

Minute 1 - 2007/08 Local Transport Capital Programme – Third Quarterly Monitoring Report
Minute 2 - Tipner Urban Regeneration Project – Public Consultation on Master Plan (Information Item)
Minute 4 - Parking Standards Waivers -- Harry Sotnick House

17 Minutes 3 and 5 - Concessionary Fares Scheme

With the consent of the Council, Minutes 3 and 5, dealing with the same subject, were taken together.

It was

Proposed by Councillor Gerald Vernon-Jackson
Seconded by Councillor Alex Bentley

(1) That the option of travel tokens, to the value of £37 per annum, be reinstated as an alternative to the free bus pass, for all city residents aged 60 and over;

(2) that city residents who are registered as blind, or disabled, continue to remain eligible for travel tokens at the higher rate of £40 per annum, as an alternative to the free bus pass;

(3) that city residents eligible for a bus pass in 2008/09 continue to be offered the alternative of sea front car parking vouchers as before;

(4) that the Administration identifies a further £568,000 savings as part of its overall budget proposals to the Council on 12 February 2008;
(5) that the previous decision to establish a system of appeal be rescinded since the reinstatement of the option of travel tokens to all city residents aged 60 or over makes this unnecessary.

As an amendment it was proposed by Councillor Alistair Thompson and seconded by Councillor Steve Wemyss.

“That Portsmouth City Council instructs officers to explore the possibility of a smartcard to replace travel tokens and report back to a future Traffic & Transportation Executive decision meeting; the report should also identify the costs of introducing such a scheme and the usability of a smartcard.”

The Leader of the Council indicated his acceptance of this amendment as part of his proposition.

Upon the proposition with the addition of the amendment standing in the name of Councillor Alistair Thompson being put to the vote, it was declared to be CARRIED unanimously.

RESOLVED (1) that the option of travel tokens, to the value of £37 per annum, be reinstated as an alternative to the free bus pass, for all city residents aged 60 and over;

(2) that city residents who are registered as blind, or disabled, continue to remain eligible for travel tokens at the higher rate of £40 per annum, as an alternative to the free bus pass;

(3) that city residents eligible for a bus pass in 2008/09 continue to be offered the alternative of sea front car parking vouchers as before;

(4) that the Administration identifies a further £568,000 savings as part of its overall budget proposals to the Council on 12 February 2008;

(5) that the previous decision to establish a system of appeal be rescinded since the reinstatement of the option of travel tokens to all city residents aged 60 or over makes this unnecessary;

(6) that the City Council instructs officers to explore the possibility of a smartcard to replace travel tokens and report back to a future Traffic & Transportation decision meeting; the report should also identify the costs of introducing such a scheme and the usability of a smartcard.
18 Licensing Committee - Licensing Policy

Proposed by Councillor Les Stevens
Seconded by Councillor Jason Fazackerley

RESOLVED that the amended Statement of Licensing Policy as recommended by the Licensing Committee, and as set out as an appendix in the Minute Book, be adopted.

19 Notices of Motion

(a) Post Office Closures

Proposed by Councillor Luke Stubbs
Seconded by Councillor Steve Wemyss

RESOLVED that this Council notes Royal Mail's decision to confirm the closure of 6 city Post Offices with dismay. It further notes that no guarantees on the future size of the local network have been offered.

This Council recognises that many of the problems faced by branch offices stem from the government's decision to withdraw business, such as vehicle exercise duty, from smaller outlets. It also recognises the limitations of providing its own over the counter services from just a handful of locations.

This Council therefore resolves to task a scrutiny panel to investigate whether any council services could be delivered more effectively and at lower cost via the post office network and whether this could safeguard any additional Portsmouth branches from eventual closure.

The meeting concluded at 4.15 pm.

Lord Mayor