

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE COUNCIL held at the Guildhall
Portsmouth on Tuesday, 7 December 2021 at 2.20 pm

Council Members Present

The Right Worshipful The Lord Mayor
Councillor Frank Jonas BEM (in the Chair)

Councillors

Rob Wood	George Madgwick
Dave Ashmore	Hugh Mason
Matthew Atkins	Lee Mason
Chris Attwell	Kirsty Mellor
Simon Boshier	Terry Norton
Ryan Brent	Gemma New
Stuart Brown	Robert New
Cal Corkery	Scott Payter-Harris
Ben Dowling	Darren Sanders
George Fielding	Jeanette Smith
Charlotte Gerada	John Smith
Lewis Gosling	Lynne Stagg
Graham Heaney	Judith Smyth
Hannah Brent	Luke Stubbs
Ian Holder	Linda Symes
Jo Hooper	Claire Udy
Suzy Horton	Gerald Vernon-Jackson CBE
Leo Madden	Daniel Wemyss

95. Declaration of Members' Interests

Councillor Luke Stubbs declared an interest in minute 107 as he was the Deputy Police & Crime Commissioner. Cllr Stubbs left the room during the debate and voting on this item.

96. To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 9 November 2021

It was

Proposed by Councillor Gerald Vernon-Jackson
Seconded by Councillor Simon Boshier

That the minutes of the Council meeting held on 9 November 2021 be confirmed as a correct record.

These were agreed by assent.

97. To receive such communications as the Lord Mayor may desire to lay before the Council, including apologies for absence

Apologies for absence had been received on behalf of Councillor Kimberly Barrett, Councillor Tom Coles, Councillor Lee Hunt and Councillor Benedict Swann.

The Lord Mayor announced that in consultation with group leaders, he had cancelled the provisional 18 January 2022 Full Council meeting.

98. Deputations from the Public under Standing Order No 24

The City Solicitor advised that three verbal deputation requests had been made for this meeting in respect of minute 105.

In addition, two written deputations had been submitted and circulated in respect of minute 105.

The first from Hampshire Chamber of Commerce and was a dual deputation on behalf of Ross McNally, Chief Executive/Executive Chair of Hampshire Chamber of Commerce, and Mark Miller - Chair of the Planning & Transport Business Strategy Group of Hampshire Chamber of Commerce.

The second was from Leigh-Sara Timberlake on behalf of Business South.

At the invitation of the City Solicitor, Ms Heimedinger, Mr Allwright and Mr Hector delivered their verbal deputations in turn.

99. Questions from the Public under Standing Order 25 (none)

The Lord Mayor advised that no public questions had been received under the provisions of this Standing Order.

100. Appointments

RESOLVED that the following changes to Conservative group seats be AGREED:

Planning Committee

Councillor Terry Norton to replace Cllr Jo Hooper as a committee member.

Scrutiny Management Panel

Councillor Benedict Swann to replace Councillor Jo Hooper as a panel member

Traffic, Environment & Community Safety Scrutiny Panel

Councillor Hannah Hockaday to replace Councillor Jo Hooper as a committee member.

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

The Leader of the Council provided an update on the rise in Covid-19 cases within the city and that the first case of the Omicron variant in the city had been confirmed.

102. Treasury Management Outturn Report 2020/2021

Council Agenda item 8 (Cabinet minute 65)

Treasury Management Outturn Report 2020/21

The recommendation within this report was approved unopposed.

RESOLVED that the actual prudential and treasury management indicators based on the unaudited accounts, as shown in Appendix B of the report, be noted (an explanation of the prudential and treasury management indicators is contained in Appendix C of the report).

103. Treasury Management Mid-Year review 2021/22

Council Agenda Item 9 (Cabinet Minute 107) Treasury Management Mid-Year review 2021/22

The recommendations within this report were approved unopposed.

RESOLVED:

- 1. That the Council's Treasury Management activities have remained within the Treasury Management Policy 2021/22 in the period up to 30 September 2021; and**
- 2. That the actual Treasury Management indicators as at 30 September 2021 set out in Appendix A be noted.**

104. Decision to Opt into the National Scheme for Auditor Appointments Managed by Public Sector Audit Appointments (PSAA) as the Appointing Person

Council Agenda Item 10 (Cabinet Minute 106)

National Scheme for Auditor Appointments Managed By PSAA

The recommendation within this report was approved unopposed.

RESOLVED that the Council accepts Public Sector Audit Appointments' (PSAA) invitation to opt into the sector-led option for the appointment of

external auditors to principal local government and police bodies for five financial years from 01 April 2023.

105. Tipner West update

Council Agenda Item 11 (Cabinet minute 111)

Tipner West - Full Council Update

Cllr Simon Boshier objected to Cabinet minute 111.

Before the start of formal procedures, the Lord Mayor advised that the Chief Executive wished to give a presentation to the Council on this issue, which the Chief Executive then duly provided

It was therefore proposed by Councillor Gerald Vernon-Jackson
Seconded by Councillor Hugh Mason

That the recommendation in Cabinet minute 111 be approved

It was proposed by Councillor Simon Boshier
Seconded by Councillor Vernon-Jackson

That Standing Order 28(F) be suspended to allow an amendment to be put.

Upon being put to a vote, the proposal to suspend Standing Order 28(F) was **CARRIED**.

As an amendment it was

Proposed by Councillor Simon Boshier
Seconded by Councillor Scott Payter-Harris

To add the following additional recommendation:

2.3. That Cabinet provides reassurance to Council that it believes in the project and its financial viability.

Upon being put to a vote, the amendment in the name of Councillor Simon Boshier was **CARRIED**.

Upon being put to a vote the substantive notice of motion incorporating the amendment in the name of Councillor Simon Boshier was **CARRIED**

RESOLVED that Council

- (i) NOTED the content of the report including the appendices; and**
- (ii) That Cabinet provide reassurance to Council that it believes in the project and its financial viability.**

106. Notices of Motion**107. Tackling Male Violence Against Women and Girls in Portsmouth**

It was

Proposed by Councillor Kirsty Mellor
Seconded by Councillor Charlotte Gerada

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

As an amendment it was

Proposed by Councillor Claire Udy
Seconded by Councillor Scott Payter-Harris

To delete paragraph four and replace with:

"We acknowledge the collaborative work conducted by Hampshire Police and The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner alongside the night time economy, to spread best practice throughout the city. In particular, we would like to thank all those involved in the "Is This Love?" campaign (which raises the awareness of domestic abuse), and more recently the swift response to drink spiking incidents. However, Full Council notes that there is a lack of mandatory training for elected members surrounding the disclosure of sexual violence and domestic abuse."

After "Therefore, the Council asks", delete the second bullet point and replace with:

"That the Licensing department and Public Health work alongside the Police, to look at developing a training scheme that helps staff and management of licensed venues in dealing with complaints of sexual harassment. Collaboratively this group should consider creating resources for all venues, to be used in yearly training. At the next available Licensing Committee there should be a chance to discuss amongst members the measures local stakeholders are taking to make Portsmouth a safe place for a good night out. Whilst this council is aware that the Licensing Committee cannot mandate conditional training as part of a licence application, it seeks to create an open dialogue with the night time economy about creating such training on a voluntary basis."

Following debate, the proposer of the original motion, Councillor Kirsty Mellor agreed to subsume the amendment put by Councillor Claire Udy into the motion.

Following a vote, the motion was declared **CARRIED**.

RESOLVED that:

Portsmouth City Council notes that male violence against women and girls is a prevalent, persistent and serious issue. One in three women globally have been subjected to physical or sexual violence in their lifetimes. Violence takes many forms and occurs in both public and private spheres.

More than four-fifths of young women in the UK have been subjected to sexual harassment, according to a survey for UN Women UK. Domestic abuse affects 1 in 4 women and 2-3 women are murdered every week at the hands of a partner or ex partner.

Full Council notes existing initiatives to help tackle violence against women and girls, including the work of Safer Portsmouth Partnership, the Health and Wellbeing Board and Community Safety portfolio. A total of £324,851 has been secured from the government to improve lighting and the redesign of secluded areas as part of the Safer Streets scheme.

We acknowledge the collaborative work conducted by Hampshire Police and The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner alongside the night time economy, to spread best practice throughout the city. In particular, we would like to thank all those involved in the “Is This Love?” campaign (which raises the awareness of domestic abuse), and more recently the swift response to drink spiking incidents. However, Full Council notes that there is a lack of mandatory training for elected members surrounding the disclosure of sexual violence and domestic abuse.

Portsmouth City Council believes that dealing with this issue should not require women to behave differently. Instead it is the root cause that needs to be tackled: namely challenging the behaviour of men who perpetrate violence. Male violence in all its forms must be eradicated, so women feel able to live their lives freely, without fear of harm.

Therefore, the Council asks:

- **Cabinet to conduct a “Safety Audit”, allowing residents to share their views about how public lighting and CCTV could be improved to promote safer streets and a safer public domain for women and girls.**
- **That the Licensing department and Public Health work alongside the Police, to look at developing a training scheme that helps staff and management of licensed venues in dealing with complaints of sexual harassment. Collaboratively this group should consider creating resources for all venues, to be used in yearly training. At the next available Licensing Committee there should be a chance to discuss amongst members the measures local stakeholders are taking to make Portsmouth a safe place for a good night out. Whilst**

this council is aware that the Licensing Committee cannot mandate conditional training as part of a licence application, it seeks to create an open dialogue with the night time economy about creating such training on a voluntary basis.

- The Governance and Audit and Standards Committee be asked to strongly encourage and recommend attendance by all elected representatives to complete training sessions on handling disclosures of domestic abuse delivered by Safer Portsmouth Partnership and on handling disclosure of sexual violence through 'Responding to Sexual Violence: A community Approach' Or such similar training provider, with confirmation of attendance being noted by the City Solicitor.
- Through Cabinet for cross-party work with local services and provisions to raise awareness of domestic abuse, such as promoting the “Is this love?” campaign on a yearly basis and work together to actively challenge misogynistic behaviour pledging to call it out when it occurs.
- Cabinet to initiate steps to raise the positive profile of women and girls in Portsmouth to be established, such as installing street art to celebrate them.
- For Portsmouth City Council to write to the Hampshire & IOW Police and Crime Commissioner and the Secretary of State for Justice, to demand more punitive sentencing for male perpetrators of violence, so that more women and girls receive justice.

108. ITEM WITHDRAWN FROM THE AGENDA FOLLOWING RULING BY THE CITY SOLICITOR - Stop The Knock: local authority debt collection practices

The Lord Mayor reminded Council that as previously advised this motion been subsequently ruled out and could not be put to this Council meeting by reason of engagement of Standing Order 41J '(No motion or amendment which would have a financial effect on the Council may be moved unless it specifies the source of funding.)

109. Planning backlog impact on residents

It was

Proposed by Councillor Ryan Brent
Seconded by Councillor Simon Boshier

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

Upon being put to a vote the notice of motion was **CARRIED**.

RESOLVED that the processing time that some residents' of Portsmouth have had to endure for their planning applications to conclude is simply unacceptable, especially for seemingly uncontentious proposals. The council notes and commends the work of local authority planning officers in aiming to reduce the backlog. However, notes that more transparency and Member oversight and engagement is necessary to support council officers in further reducing the backlog.

Council regrets the extensive backlog of incomplete and un-processed planning applications that have continued to build up, recognising that this is partly a result of the Nitrates Directive and ongoing staff vacancies (both exacerbated by the effects of the Covid19 pandemic). Council calls upon the Liberal Democrat administration to do more and do better for residents of the city.

It is of note that council supported the action of bringing in outside support to try and reduce the backlog in November 2020; nevertheless council now regretfully condemns the Liberal Democrat administration's performance and mismanagement noting that there has been substandard progress in reducing the backlog discussed a year ago. It is arguable that upon any objective assessment the current administration has a reputation of wasting taxpayers' money and it is now time to address this and put an end to the unnecessary delays impacting the residents of our city and ensure all applications are dealt with properly and that those undertaking the processing of such applications display the utmost competence and consistency with respect to the applications that are being dealt with. There is a need to review the current transparency as well as providing additional reports to all councillors as and when required. We must be proactive, rather than reactive and focus on solutions.

Therefore, the council calls upon the administration to provide the following reports:

- For the next full council meeting which is assumed as being February 2022, to;
 - o Inform all councillors of the average duration of all planning applications, in addition to the longest and shortest across the city as well as within each ward
- For the Full Council March 2022 meeting that includes:
 - o Quantitative data, with commentary, that tracks the progress made in reducing the planning application backlog over the last 18 months
 - o Set out and articulated options and solutions that will facilitate and augment the aspiration of ensuring that all applications have decisions within the expected timeframe.

110. Defibrillators in Portsmouth

In the absence of the proposer of this motion the Lord Mayor advised that this motion could not be considered at this meeting.

111. Questions from Members under Standing Order No 17.

Four questions from members had been received under Standing Order No 17.

The first question was from Councillor Scott Payter-Harris.

"Can the cabinet member update the council regarding the usage of temporary accommodation?"

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

The second question was from Councillor Ryan Brent.

"Can the cabinet member outline the long-term vision for the climate change and the green recovery portfolio?"

This and supplementary questions were answered by the Leader, Councillor Gerald Vernon-Jackson.

The third question was from Councillor Scott Payter-Harris.

"Can the Leader update the council on his proposal to purchase Southern Water and his discussions with other council leaders within the Hampshire area?"

This and supplementary questions were answered by the Leader, Councillor Gerald Vernon-Jackson.

The fourth question was from Councillor Ryan Brent.

"What is the current expected timeframe for planning applications to be considered?"

In the absence of the Chairman of the Planning Committee, Cllr Hugh Mason, Portfolio Holder for Planning Policy & City Development, assured that a written response would be provided.

The meeting concluded at 6.24 pm.

Lord Mayor