

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE COUNCIL held at the Guildhall
Portsmouth on Tuesday, 12 December 2023 at 2.10 pm

Council Members Present

The Right Worshipful The Lord Mayor
Councillor Tom Coles (in the Chair)

Councillors

Yinka Adeniran	Mark Jeffery
Dave Ashmore	Abdul Kadir
Matthew Atkins	Leo Madden
Chris Attwell	Brian Madgwick
Kimberly Barrett	George Madgwick
Simon Boshier	Hugh Mason
Hannah Brent	Kirsty Mellor
Ryan Brent	Leonie Oliver
Stuart Brown	Steve Pitt
Peter Candlish	Darren Sanders
Cal Corkery	Asghar Shah
Raymond Dent	Russell Simpson
Chris Dike	John Smith
Jason Fazackarley	Judith Smyth
George Fielding	Emily Strudwick
Lewis Gosling	Mary Vallely
Graham Heaney	Gerald Vernon-Jackson CBE
Ian Holder	Daniel Wemyss
Suzy Horton	Matthew Winnington
Lee Hunt	

131. Declaration of Members' Interests

Councillor	Minute Number	Nature of Interest
Cllr Cal Corkery	141	Personal, Cllr Corkery was a council tenant.
Cllr Graham Heaney	144	Personal, Cllr Heaney was a member of the RSPB.
Cllr Mark Jeffery	148	Personal, Cllr Jeffery was employed by Portsmouth Water.

132. To approve as a correct record the Minutes of 14 November 2023

It was

Proposed by Councillor Steve Pitt
Seconded by Councillor Simon Boshier

That the minutes of the Council meeting held on 14 November 2023 be confirmed as a correct record.

These were agreed by assent.

133. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillor Charlotte Gerada and Councillor Benedict Swann

Apologies for lateness had been received from Councillor Kimberly Barret.

134. To receive such communications as the Lord Mayor may desire to lay before the Council

The Lord Mayor announced that in consultation with the Leader, he had cancelled the provisional 16 January 2023 Full Council meeting.

135. Deputations from the Public under Standing Order No 24.

The City Solicitor advised that two verbal deputation requests had been made for this meeting.

The first was from Maria Cole in support of minute 141, Housing Revenue Account Residential Stock Portfolio Acquisition.

The second was from Christine Elemer in support of minute 146, Notice of Motion - Ceasefire in Gaza.

At the invitation of the City Solicitor, Maria Cole and Christine Elemer delivered their deputations to Council.

136. Questions from the Public under Standing Order 25.

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

137. Appointments

RESOLVED that the following appointment be AGREED:

Councillor Graham Heaney to replace Councillor Asghar Shah as the Labour Group Standing Deputy on the Employment Committee.

RESOLVED that the following appointment be NOTED:

Councillor George Madgwick as the Portsmouth Independent Party Group Opposition Spokesperson for the Environmental Services Portfolio.

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

The Lord Mayor advised that he had not been made aware of any urgent business for this meeting.

139. Treasury Management Mid-Year Review 2023/24

Council Agenda Item 9 (Cabinet Minute 100) Treasury Management Mid-Year Review 2023/24

The recommendations contained in minute 100 of the Cabinet meeting held on 28 November 2023 were approved unopposed.

RESOLVED:

- i. That the Council's Treasury Management activities have remained within the Treasury Management Policy 2023/24 in the period up to 30 September 2023; and**
- ii. That the actual Treasury Management indicators as at 30 September 2023 set out in Appendix A be NOTED.**

140. Exclusion of Press & Public

The Lord Mayor advised that proceedings would be kept open until such time that members wished to discuss the exempt appendices to the following report:

- Housing Revenue Account Residential Stock Portfolio Acquisition

At the conclusion of the consideration of the non-exempt report and appendices, the resolution to move into exempt session to consider the

exempt appendices was not passed, as members did not have any questions specific to them.

141. Housing Revenue Account Residential Stock Portfolio Acquisition

Council Agenda item 11 (Cabinet Minute 98)

Housing Revenue Account Residential Stock Portfolio Acquisition

The recommendations contained in minute 98 of the Cabinet meeting held on 28 November 2023 were approved unopposed.

RESOLVED that Full Council:

- (i) Subject to the approval of the recommendations below, delegated authority to the Director for Housing, Neighbourhood and Building Services; Director of Finance & Resources and Section 151 Officer, taking advice from the Council's externally appointed legal advisors, and in consultation with the Leader of the City Council and Cabinet Member for Housing and Tackling Homelessness, to acquire Lot 1a;**
- (ii) APPROVED that the 'Residential Stock Portfolio Acquisition' scheme be added to the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) section of the Council's Capital Programme with a budget set out in Appendix One to cover the purchase of the housing portfolio, associated fees and planned refurbishment works, and financed by borrowing, subject to the satisfactory completion of:**
 - i. The outstanding due diligence; and**
 - ii. A financial appraisal, approved by the Director of Finance & Resources and S.151 Officer that demonstrates (based on the completed due diligence) that the financial impact and risks are affordable and manageable by the Council; and**
- (iii) APPROVED the following amendments to the Treasury Management Limits, to facilitate the additional capital expenditure for this acquisition:**
 - i. To increase the authorised limit for external borrowing to £1,176m; and**
 - ii. To increase the operational boundary to £1,143m; and**
- (iv) That in order that advance treasury management preparations can be made for the transaction should the acquisition proceed:**
 - i. The sector limit for investments in money market funds be temporarily increased to £105m.**

- (v) **NOTED that in approving the temporary changes to the treasury management limits, no obligation to acquire the housing portfolio Lot 1a had been entered into and no long-term financial liabilities had been incurred. The changes simply enabled the Council to accumulate the necessary funding in a risk managed and cost-efficient manner and have funds available should the transaction be completed; the risks are considered negligible; and**
- (vi) **NOTED that the acquisition was subject to Clarion completing a successful formal stock transfer consultation of Clarion residents and Clarion Housing Group Board approval.**

142. Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan: Partial Update –Proposed Submission Plan

Council Agenda item 12 (Cabinet Minute 94)

Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan: Partial Update – Proposed Submission Plan.

The recommendations contained in minute 94 of the Cabinet meeting held on 28 November 2023 were approved unopposed.

RESOLVED that Full Council

- (i) **APPROVED the Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan: Partial Update – Proposed Submission Plan as set out in the report and will be subject to public consultation; and**
- (ii) **delegated authority to the Director of Hampshire 2050 to agree minor amendments to the Proposed Submission Plan prior to consultation.**

143. Unauthorised Encampments

Council Agenda item 13 (Cabinet Minute 96)

Unauthorised Encampments

Councillor Ryan Brent objected under Standing Order 28 in order to allow the minute to be debated.

It was

Proposed by Councillor Steve Pitt
Seconded by Councillor Darren Sanders

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That the recommendations in Cabinet minute 96 be approved

Following a vote, the recommendation contained in minute 96 of the Cabinet meeting held on 28 November 2023 was approved.

RESOLVED that Full Council NOTED the update report.

144. Tipner West & Horsea Island East Regeneration

Council Agenda item 14 (Cabinet Minute 106)

Tipner West & Horsea Island East Regeneration

The recommendation contained in minute 106 of the Cabinet meeting held on 4 December 2023 were approved unopposed.

RESOLVED that Full Council NOTED the content of the report and the decisions taken by Cabinet.

145. Notices of Motion

146. Ceasefire in Gaza

It was

Proposed by Councillor Gerald Vernon-Jackson
Seconded by Councillor Abdul Kadir

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

As an amendment it was

Proposed by Councillor Cal Corkery
Seconded by Councillor Kirsty Mellor

To add the below three paragraphs to the end of the motion:

"Full Council expresses its solidarity with the people of Gaza who in recent weeks and months have been subjected to horrific bombardment resulting in widespread death and destruction. As a practical way of displaying that solidarity Full Council asks the Cabinet and the Twinning Advisory Group to explore, and report back on, Twinning Portsmouth with a Palestinian city.

Full Council believes that a permanent ceasefire is the only way to move towards a lasting peace in the region.

Full Council therefore asks the Leader of the Council to write to the Foreign Secretary and our two city MPs outlining this position and requesting their support in lobbying for this necessary resolution to the conflict."

As an amendment it was

Proposed by Councillor Graham Heaney
Seconded by Councillor George Fielding

To add after the sentence ending "with a particular role to be played by Arab neighbours" insert the following:

"Breaches to international law

Allegations of breaches of international humanitarian law should always be treated with utmost seriousness. Assessing specific allegations is the proper task of lawyers and competent international courts.

Council reaffirms its support for the UK's commitment to the rules-based international order, international humanitarian law and the jurisdiction of the ICC to address the conduct of all parties in Gaza and Hama's attacks on Israel.

Wider violence in the West Bank

We totally condemn acts of violence and extremism by Israeli settlers in the West Bank and call on the Israeli authorities to prevent settler violence, ensure accountability for perpetrators and condemn extremist rhetoric.

Council calls on the UK Government to do all it can to work with the international community to avoid further escalation in the West Bank and the wider region.

Towards a two-state nation

We want a return to the truce we saw last week to protect civilians, prevent displacement, ensure humanitarian access and release hostages. The international community can and must use the next cessation to make political progress towards what we all want an end to the conflict and a permanent ceasefire. That means creating the conditions where Israel is secure from another attack like October 7 and Palestinians can see a path to statehood and the reconstruction and renewal of Gaza.

Therefore the Council calls for the immediate release of all hostages and for the Government to do all it can to ensure an enduring cessation of fighting as soon as possible and a credible, diplomatic and political process to deliver the lasting peace of a two-state nation."

Following debate, the proposer of the original motion, Councillor Gerald Vernon-Jackson, agreed to subsume the amendment put by Councillor Cal Corkery into the motion. He did not however wish to subsume the amendment put by Councillor Graham Heaney into the motion.

Following a vote, the amendment in the name of Councillor Graham Heaney was declared LOST.

Council voted on the original motion, with the subsumed amendment in the name of Cllr Cal Corkery.

Following the vote, the motion was declared carried.

RESOLVED that:

As a City Council we support a lasting peace and a two-state solution in Israel and Palestine. In the face of the horrific violence of recent weeks, we are clear that a lasting peace is the only way to guarantee the dignity and security which both Palestinians and Israelis deserve.

Hamas' terrorist attacks on October 7th shocked the world. We condemn them and the taking of hostages, unequivocally. Hamas cannot, for the security of Israelis nor the future of Palestinians, be allowed to continue in charge of Gaza.

Right now we have a disaster. Charities and NGOs working on the ground in Gaza have reported how devastating a humanitarian catastrophe we are facing. Thousands of innocent civilians have already been killed, including thousands of children. The humanitarian crisis just seems to get worse. Essential supplies like water, food, medicine and fuel still remain in very short supply or totally cut off from Gaza. And many people are still held hostage, including children. The risk of regional escalation remains a significant threat.

Over two months since Hamas' atrocities, it is increasingly clear that a military solution to eliminate Hamas is not possible. Nor is it tenable for Israel to reoccupy Gaza.

Only a sustained political and diplomatic solution will resolve this conflict and deliver a lasting peace. We urgently need movement towards that solution now. The answer is via an immediate bilateral ceasefire. Whilst the recent truce is to be welcomed, a temporary freezing of the conflict is not acceptable. It leaves Hamas in place in Gaza.

Freezing the conflict doesn't look to the future and will do nothing to bring about that long term security nor guarantee the return of the remaining hostages.

A ceasefire cannot be an end in itself, even though it is very clearly needed now to stop the bloodshed and trauma for Palestinians and Israelis. It is temporary by its very definition; it is a step towards peace. It is contingent upon both parties sticking to it. If one party breaks the ceasefire, a military option remains on the table.

We are not naive about the difficulties involved in getting to this position. It may require a cessation in hostilities, as has already been called for, to create the basis for a ceasefire. We welcome any progress, however small, towards this goal. Nor will it be easy to rid Gaza of Hamas.

Maximum pressure now needs to be applied on all parties, with tough conditions carefully monitored and verified. That will require a huge and sustained effort from the international community and the UN, with a particular role to be played by Arab neighbours.

This City Council calls for an end to this conflict, and to the killing of thousands of innocent civilians, while ensuring that we do not return to how things were before October 7th. Movement towards a political solution, putting us back on the path to two states, is needed more than ever.

This Council also sends its warmest wishes to our sister city of Haifa in Israel and acknowledges the tragic personal losses suffered by her residents. The Council also notes that Haifa is in many ways a beacon of hope for a future of peaceful Jewish and Arab co-existence and we hope its residents are spared any further suffering as a result of the current conflict.

Full Council expresses its solidarity with the people of Gaza who in recent weeks and months have been subjected to horrific bombardment resulting in widespread death and destruction. As a practical way of displaying that solidarity Full Council asks the Cabinet and the Twinning Advisory Group to explore, and report back on, Twinning Portsmouth with a Palestinian city.

Full Council believes that a permanent ceasefire is the only way to move towards a lasting peace in the region.

Full Council therefore asks the Leader of the Council to write to the Foreign Secretary and our two city MPs outlining this position and requesting their support in lobbying for this necessary resolution to the conflict.

147. Avoid an Increase in Council Tax Next Financial Year

It was

Proposed by Councillor Matthew Atkins
Seconded by Councillor Ryan Brent

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

In accordance with Standing Order 48(b), eight Councillors stood to request that a recorded vote be taken.

The following members voted in favour of the motion:

Councillor Matthew Atkins	Councillor Simon Boshier
Councillor Hannah Brent	Councillor Ryan Brent
Councillor Raymond Dent	Councillor Lewis Gosling
Councillor Russell Simpson	Councillor Emily Strudwick
Councillor John Smith	Councillor Daniel Wemyss

The following members voted against the motion:

Councillor Dave Ashmore	Councillor Chris Attwell
Councillor Kimberly Barrett	Councillor Stuart Brown
Councillor Peter Candlish	Councillor Cal Corkery
Councillor Jason Fazackarley	Councillor George Fielding
Councillor Graham Heaney	Councillor Ian Holder
Councillor Suzy Horton	Councillor Lee Hunt
Councillor Mark Jeffery	Councillor Abdul Kadir
Councillor Leo Madden	Councillor Hugh Mason
Councillor Kirsty Mellor	Councillor Leonie Oliver
Councillor Steve Pitt	Councillor Darren Sanders
Councillor Asghar Shah	Councillor Judith Smyth
Councillor Mary Vallely	Councillor Gerald Vernon-Jackson
Councillor Matthew Winnington	

The following members abstained from voting:

Councillor Yinka Adeniran	Councillor Tom Coles
Councillor Chris Dike	Councillor Brian Madgwick
Councillor George Madgwick	

RESOLVED that the motion was declared LOST.

148. Southern Water

It was

Proposed by Councillor Leo Madden
Seconded by Councillor Jason Fazackarley

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

As an amendment it was

Proposed by Councillor Graham Heaney
Seconded by Councillor Mary Vallely

To add a new paragraph four:

"Council notes that Ofwat have stated that 'Customer bills must be fair. Customers will only pay for future investment, not past company mistakes'.

(1) We call on Ofwat to ensure that there is rigorous scrutiny of water company plans to ensure this happens during the period of consultation. We also call on the government to give the water regulator Ofwat the power to ban bonuses for water company bosses until they have stopped regular discharge of untreated wastewater into rivers and the sea."

In paragraph five (now paragraph six) after "... Southern Water" add "...and the Chief Executive of Ofwat..."

(1) [Water companies must deliver a step change in performance and investment - Ofwat](#)"

Following debate, the proposer of the original motion, Councillor Leo Madden agreed to subsume the amendment put by Councillor Graham Heaney into the motion.

Council voted on the motion incorporating the subsumed amendment in the name of Councillor Graham Heaney.

Following the vote, the motion was declared carried.

RESOLVED that:

Council notes that Southern Water has advanced plans to increase domestic water bills by at least 55% in order to fund its environmental cleanup programme and shareholder payouts.

Customers in the area covered by Southern Water should not be penalised because of Southern Water's long-term mismanagement and incompetence.

Council asserts that Southern Water should be properly investing in its network to eliminate sewage discharges rather than expecting customers to bear the responsibility of shareholders.

Council notes that Ofwat have stated that 'Customer bills must be fair. Customers will only pay for future investment, not past company mistakes'. (1) We call on Ofwat to ensure that there is rigorous scrutiny of water company plans to ensure this happens during the period of consultation. We also call on the government to give the water regulator Ofwat the power to ban bonuses for water company bosses until they have stopped regular discharge of untreated wastewater into rivers and the sea."

Southern Water has a long history of "misreporting" its performance and being fined not only by Ofwat but by courts for polluting our waters.

Council calls on all group leaders to sign a joint letter to the Secretary of State for the Environment, the Chief Executive of Southern Water and the Chief Executive of Ofwat demanding a freeze on the proposed increase in customers' bills and asks our local MPs to do likewise.

(1) [Water companies must deliver a step change in performance and investment - Ofwat](#)

149. Recycling of Domestic Waste

It was

Proposed by Councillor Graham Heaney
Seconded by Councillor George Fielding

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

As an amendment it was

Proposed by Councillor Dave Ashmore
Seconded by Councillor Steve Pitt

To delete paragraph four and replace with:

"Therefore, Council acknowledges that the Cabinet Member for Environmental Services is already developing a plan that will including specific measures, and an estimated timescale, to increase the rate of recycling of household waste collected in Portsmouth. However, the Council also acknowledges that some of the timescales and plans already considered and developed by the cabinet member may need to be modified once the Government has set clear outlines for its 'Simpler Recycling' plan for local authorities. Any consideration this Council or any other local council in Hampshire makes will also need to be discussed at the Project Integra board where we work in partnership with other local authorities across Hampshire to all manage our waste, increase recycling and invest in large scale financial waste projects together."

Following debate, the proposer of the original motion, Councillor Graham Heaney agreed to subsume the amendment put by Councillor Dave Ashmore into the motion.

Council voted on the original motion with the subsumed amendment in the name of Councillor Dave Ashmore.

Following the vote, the motion was declared carried.

RESOLVED that:

The most recent data published by DEFRA on local authority recycling rates (2021/22) show that Portsmouth is 325th out of 343 local authorities rated for the percentage of household waste that is recycled. The figures show Portsmouth recycles 27.1% of its household waste.

We welcome the introduction and extension of food waste collection but despite this it is estimated that the recycling rate for 2022/23 will be 27.9%.

Council notes that in future household waste recycling plans will need to take account of recent government announcements about how increases in recycling can be achieved.

Residents support the recycling of waste but the level of improvement in the recycling rate in Portsmouth has been limited so far.

Therefore, Council acknowledges that the Cabinet Member for Environmental Services is already developing a plan that will including specific measures, and an estimated timescale, to increase the rate of recycling of household waste collected in Portsmouth. However, the Council also acknowledges that some of the timescales and plans already considered and developed by the cabinet member may need to be modified once the Government has set clear outlines for its 'Simpler Recycling' plan for local authorities. Any consideration this Council or any other local council in Hampshire makes will also need to be discussed at the Project Integra board where we work in partnership with other local authorities across Hampshire to all manage our waste, increase recycling and invest in large scale financial waste projects together.

150. Questions from Members under Standing Order No 17.

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

The first question was from Councillor Daniel Wemyss.

"Can the Cabinet Member explain the communication plans in place when a large event is cancelled at short notice such as the case with the recent firework display in Hilsea?"

This and supplementary questions were answered by the Cabinet Member for Resources, Councillor Lee Hunt.

The second question was from Councillor John Smith.

"Can the Leader of the Council update members and the hundreds of residents who signed a petition against demolition of the former Record Office, in Museum Road, of the council's plans for the building?"

This and supplementary questions were answered by the Leader of the Council, Councillor Steve Pitt.

The third question was from Councillor Matthew Atkins.

" Residents have reported a significant amount of broken glass and rubbish in the landscaping and soil heaps left after the works at KGV. What further clean up and beautification is planned for KGV to rectify the damage done and waste spread across the site by the works and to improve the amenity of the site for local residents?"

This and supplementary questions were answered by the Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure & Economic Development, Councillor Steve Pitt.

The fourth question was from Councillor Graham Heaney

"The review of the council constitution has suffered from some understandable delays but work on this appears to have stalled as no meetings have been scheduled or updates been provided for over six months. Can the leader of the council give an assurance that the review will not be further delayed?"

This and supplementary questions were answered by the Leader of the Council, Councillor Steve Pitt.

The fifth question was from Councillor Daniel Wemyss.

" Can the Leader of the Council shed light on the decision-making process behind the restriction of written deputations for Councillors at the Planning Committee? Additionally, could the Leader elaborate on the rationale behind not allowing written deputations and how this approach aligns with the Council's commitment to transparency and effective representation?"

This and supplementary questions were answered by the Leader of the Council, Councillor Steve Pitt.

The sixth question was from Councillor Daniel Wemyss.

"Can the Cabinet Member update me on the works promised in the sea defences to commemorate those who lost their lives on the Theofano?"

This question was answered by the Cabinet Member for Planning Policy & City Development Councillor Hugh Mason.

The meeting concluded at 5.59 pm.

Lord Mayor