

MINUTES OF A VIRTUAL ORDINARY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL held remotely on Tuesday 16 March 2021 at 2.38pm (immediately after the conclusion of the extraordinary council meeting)

Link to the agenda

<https://democracy.portsmouth.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=146&MId=4270&Ver=4>

Council Members Present (virtually)

The Right Worshipful The Lord Mayor
Councillor Rob Wood (in the Chair)

Councillors

Dave Ashmore	Lee Mason
Matthew Atkins	Terry Norton
Chris Attwell	Stephen Morgan MP
Simon Boshier	Gemma New
Tom Coles	Robert New
Cal Corkery	Steve Pitt
Ben Dowling	Will Purvis
Jason Fazackarley	Darren Sanders
George Fielding	Jeanette Smith
John Ferrett	Lynne Stagg
David Fuller	Judith Smyth
Scott Payter-Harris	Luke Stubbs
Graham Heaney	Benedict Swann
Hannah Hockaday	Linda Symes
Suzy Horton	Claire Udy
Lee Hunt	Gerald Vernon-Jackson CBE
Frank Jonas BEM	Steve Wemyss
Donna Jones	Matthew Winnington
Leo Madden	Tom Wood
Hugh Mason	Neill Young

12. Declaration of Members' Interests

Councillor Ben Dowling declared a personal, non-prejudicial interest in agenda item 10 - Social Value Policy - in that he is a director of two social enterprises. As this item is not about implementation he would remain in the meeting. He also declared a personal, non-prejudicial interest in agenda item 15(c) - Recognising our Unsung Heroes in Schools.

Councillor Jeanette Smith declared a personal, non-prejudicial interest in agenda item 15(c) as she is a paid official of Unison.

Councillor Matthew Winnington declared a personal, non-prejudicial interest in agenda item 15(d) - Congratulations to the Government on the National Vaccination Programme as he works for Solent Mind.

Councillor Claire Udy declared a personal, non-prejudicial interest in agenda item 15(c) in that she is a trade union branch president representing schools' interests.

13. To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the Ordinary Council meeting held on 9 February 2021

It was

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

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

These were agreed by assent.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the council meeting held on 9 February 2021 be confirmed as a correct record.

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

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillor Jo Hooper as already dealt with in the extraordinary council meeting.

On behalf of the council, the Lord Mayor congratulated Councillor George Fielding and Councillor Cal Corkery on their recent appointment as Leader and Deputy Leader of the Labour Group respectively and thanked the former Labour Group Leader, Councillor Morgan and the former Deputy Group Leader, Councillor Coles for their work supporting the council in those roles.

The Lord Mayor said that this would be the last council meeting for Vicki Plytas as she is retiring at the end of April. He said Vicki had been an invaluable part of full council meetings over many years as part of the democratic process that she has supported in a highly skilled and professional manner. On behalf of the council the Lord Mayor thanked Vicki for her outstanding service and wished her all the best for the future.

15. Written Deputations from the Public under Standing Order No 24

The Lord Mayor advised that 12 written deputations were received for this meeting and had been previously circulated.

Three deputations were received in respect of agenda item 15(a) - Motion to Support the Climate and Ecological Emergency Bill. These were from Mr Peter De Sousa, Mr Tofu Wing and Ms Alison Van Haefen.

Six deputations were received in respect of agenda item 15(e) - Preserve the Former Records Store building. These were from Ms Alicia Denny,

Mr Stephen Fry, Mr Terry Henderson, Mr Ian Holder, Mr Ryan Taylor and Mr Alvin Edyvane.

One deputation was received in respect of agenda item 15(f) - Discharge of Sewage into Langstone Harbour. This was from Ms Kimberly Barrett.

Two deputations were received in respect of agenda item 15(g) - Right to Food. These were from Ms Charlotte Gerada and Mr James Taylor.

The Local Democracy Manager read out the deputations.

The Lord Mayor thanked everyone for their deputations.

16. Questions from the Public under Standing Order 25

There were two public questions.

The first question was from Ms Charlotte Gerada

"When Liberal Democrat councillors were recently asked about progress on the rollout of bike hangers on Twitter, suggestions were made that councillors were too busy responding to the pandemic.

This is a deeply worrying response as we need a green Covid recovery plan in response to the pandemic that puts the environment, transport and sustainability first - and bike hangers are a really effective tool in giving residents the confidence to own and use a bike.

We now understand over a year later from when they were promised, the hangers will start going out from mid-March. How do these fit into a broader green Covid recovery strategy for Portsmouth? And when can we expect results from the trial and a commitment to roll out a proper cycling strategy?"

This was answered by the Leader of the Council, Councillor Gerald Vernon-Jackson.

The second question was from Kirsty Mellor

"Will the administration commit to opposing the closure of Guildhall Walk GP surgery and if necessary, pledge to work with the CCG, the patient participation group and others, to secure alternative provision as close as possible to the current surgery?"

This was answered by Councillor Matthew Winnington Cabinet Member for Health, Wellbeing & Social Care.

Following debate, it was

Proposed by Councillor Cal Corkery
Seconded by Councillor Claire Udy

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That the matter contained in Question 2 be referred to HOSP for consideration.

This was CARRIED by assent.

RESOLVED that the matter contained in Public Question 2 at the 16 March 2021 Council Meeting

"Will the administration commit to opposing the closure of Guildhall Walk GP surgery and if necessary, pledge to work with the CCG, the patient participation group and others, to secure alternative provision as close as possible to the current surgery?"

be referred to HOSP for consideration.

17. Appointments

There were no appointments.

18. Urgent Business

There was no urgent business.

19. Recommendation from the Remuneration Panel - Members' Allowance Review

The Lord Mayor advised that the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel have been forwarded to the council via the Governance & Audit & Standards Committee which met on 5 March 2021 and confirmed it was content with the process that had been followed. The recommendations had been previously circulated with the Chief Executive's overview report and supporting information. The Lord Mayor advised that although Mr Johnson, the Chair of the Independent Remuneration Panel had been invited to speak to this item, unfortunately he had not been able to join the meeting. The Lord Mayor thanked Mr Johnson and the other panellists for all their work undertaken as part of this review.

Minute 20 - Members' Allowance Review

This was approved unopposed.

20. Recommendations from the Cabinet Meeting held on 9 March 2021

Minute 23 - Capital Strategy 2021/22-2030/31

This was opposed to allow for debate.

It was

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

That the recommendations contained in minute 23 be approved.

Following debate, the recommendations contained in minute 23 were approved by assent.

RESOLVED

- 1. That Part I of the Capital Strategy (Capital Expenditure and Aspirations) be approved including:**
 - a) The Short / Medium / Long-term Aspirations set out in Appendix 1.**

- 2. That Part II of the Capital Strategy (Borrowing and Investing) be approved including:**
 - a) The Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) for Debt Repayment Policy (Part II, (paragraph 1.5)**
 - b) The investment indicators in Part II - Appendix 2 (Part II, paragraph 2.5)**
 - c) That the Director of Finance and Resources (Section 151 Officer) will bring a report to the next Cabinet and City Council if (Part II, paragraph 2.5):**
 - (i) The Council's gross General Fund (GF) debt exceeds 450% of GF net service expenditure or;**
 - (ii) Overall investment income from investment properties and long term treasury management investments exceeds 9.0% of GF net service expenditure**

Minute 24 - Treasury Management Policy 2021/22

This was approved unopposed.

Minute 31 - Social Value Policy

This was opposed to allow for questions.

It was

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

That the recommendations contained in minute 31 be approved.

Following debate, the recommendations contained in minute 31 were approved by assent.

RESOLVED that Council

- (1) Formally adopts the social value policy that reinforces a strategic position relating to social value as described in Appendix 1**
- (2) Adopts the roadmap principles, direction and confirms the key actions required to get to social value maturity within the timeline set out as described in Appendix 2.**

Minute 32 - Community Safety Plan for Portsmouth 2021/22

This was opposed to allow for questions.

It was

Proposed by Councillor Lee Hunt
Seconded by Councillor Steve Pitt

That the recommendations contained in minute 32 be approved.

Following debate, the recommendations contained in minute 32 were approved by assent.

RESOLVED that Council

- 1. endorses the strategic priorities contained in the Safer Portsmouth Partnership Plan 2021-22 (appendix 1)**
- 2. aligns the relevant budgets to support activity in line with section 17 Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (as amended).**

Minute 25 - Review of Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan

This was approved unopposed.

21. Recommendations from the Governance & Audit & Standards Committee Meeting held on 5 March 2021

Minute 19 - Appointment/Reappointment of Independent Persons

This was approved unopposed.

22. Recommendation from Employment Committee held on 2 March 2021

Minute 10 - Pay Policy Statement

This was approved unopposed.

23. Notices of Motion

There were seven notices of motion on the agenda for this meeting.

23.a Motion to Support the Climate and Ecological Emergency Bill

It was

Proposed by Councillor Will Purvis
Seconded by Councillor Dave Ashmore

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

As an amendment it was

Proposed by Councillor George Fielding
Seconded by Councillor Tom Coles

"Insert new points 3, 4 and 5 after "The Council notes - point 2"

"3. Since declaring a Climate Emergency, whilst we acknowledge some action has been taken on the part of the administration, we are still yet to see a Climate Citizen's Assembly or a Carbon Audit of the Council's assets.

4. Local governments should not wait for their national governments to change their policies.

5. Towns, cities and local authorities are uniquely placed to lead in tackling the climate and ecological emergency due to their close links with their residents."

Re-number 3 and 4 to 6 and 7

Insert the word "Presentation" at now point 6 (was 3) after "There is a" to read as follows:

"6. There is a Presentation Bill before Parliament"

Following debate the mover of the original motion did not wish to subsume into it the amendment.

Upon being put to a roll call vote, the amendment in the name of Councillor George Fielding was CARRIED.

Upon the substantive notice of motion incorporating the amendment being put to the vote, this was CARRIED by assent.

RESOLVED that

In Portsmouth, we accept the evidence human activity is driving unprecedented changes in the global climate, and that we are facing a climate emergency. We agree that action must be taken now to stop global temperatures rising to a point where the damage is irreversible and the consequences potentially catastrophic.

As a coastal city which is home to many areas of importance in the natural world, Portsmouth's people, built and natural environment and economy are all vulnerable to many of the worst effects of extreme weather events and damage to biodiversity caused by climate change. We already have an indication of this in the impacts of extreme weather and coastal erosion on our waterfronts, and many millions of pounds will be spent over the coming years to protect our city against this.

We are just a small part of the global community - but we are resolute in our commitment to tackling this issue to ensure that we safeguard the city and the planet for the future and the generations that will come after us. We will take responsibility for reducing the climate impact of our great waterfront city, and will encourage everyone who lives, works, invests and visits here to support us in these actions.

Council notes that:

- 1. The Council declared a climate emergency in March 2019;**
- 2. The Council has established a 'Portsmouth Climate Change Board', to underpin our efforts to decarbonise Portsmouth;**
- 3. Since declaring a Climate Emergency, whilst we acknowledge some action has been taken on the part of the administration, we are still yet to see a Climate Citizen's Assembly or a Carbon Audit of the Council's assets.**
- 4. Local governments should not wait for their national governments to change their policies.**
- 5. Towns, cities and local authorities are uniquely placed to lead in tackling the climate and ecological emergency due to their close links with their residents.**
- 6 There is a Presentation Bill before Parliament—the Climate and Ecological Emergency Bill (published as the “Climate and Ecology Bill”)—according to which the Government must develop an emergency strategy that:**
 - a. requires that the UK plays its fair and proper role in reducing greenhouse gas emissions consistent with limiting global temperature increase to 1.5 degrees C above pre-industrial temperatures;**
 - b. ensures that all the UK's consumption emissions are accounted for;**
 - c. includes emissions from aviation and shipping;**
 - d. protects and restores biodiverse habitats along overseas supply chains;**

- e. **restores and regenerates the UK's depleted soils, wildlife habitats and species populations to healthy and robust states, maximising their capacity to absorb CO2 and their resistance to climate heating;**
 - f. **sets up an independent Citizens' Assembly, representative of the UK's population, to engage with Parliament and Government and help develop the emergency strategy.**
7. **The Council Leader has written to both local Portsmouth MPs asking them to support this Bill.**

The Council resolves to publicly support the Climate and Ecological Emergency Bill. We ask all group-leaders to join the Council Leader in writing to our local MPs, asking them to support the Bill.

Council adjourned at 18.05.

Council resumed at 18.20.

23.b Supporting Local Business

It was

Proposed by Councillor Robert New
Seconded by Councillor Terry Norton

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

As an amendment it was

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

"After last line insert:

The council further notes the Go Shop, Go Eat, Go Safe, Go Local campaign that was launched to help shops and hospitality businesses to re-open last summer, the work of the officer team and Hive volunteers who put themselves out on the streets to assist with queuing and helping people to feel safe.

Council also wishes to thank the Business Support Team who have worked tirelessly to support thousands of local businesses, offering a real human response to each individual situation and being a friend to our business community at a crucial time.

Council also acknowledges that the Business Helpline, the first to be set up in the region, was key to ensuring that local businesses could easily access this support.

Council wishes to express its thanks to Shaping Portsmouth and Portsmouth Creates for all their efforts over the last year to champion our local businesses.

Shaping's mentoring and support through the council's Crowdfunder Scheme helped over 20 local businesses to survive the pandemic and in partnership with Portsmouth Creates, secured 20 micro-commissions to support local artists through the We Believe arts trail. The We Create market at the former Debenhams store helped over 200 local makers and creators to have a safe and vibrant place to trade when they had lost out on so many of their usual opportunities through the pandemic. The queues around the block were testimony to the demand for locally produced products, proving that the sentiments at the heart of this motion most definitely ring true here in our great city of Portsmouth."

Following debate, the proposer of the original motion agreed to subsume into it the amendment.

The substantive motion incorporating the amendment was CARRIED by assent.

RESOLVED that

This city council recognises the need to promote local businesses. We commit to thinking of inventive ways to help these businesses as well as bringing much-needed footfall into our High Streets and City Centre.

And, additionally, the city council backs the campaign to encourage people to 'Buy British' and all this includes, including buying food that is 'closer to source (local produce etc)' which should be more sustainable and with a lower carbon footprint.

The council further notes the Go Shop, Go Eat, Go Safe, Go Local campaign that was launched to help shops and hospitality businesses to re-open last summer, the work of the officer team and Hive volunteers who put themselves out on the streets to assist with queuing and helping people to feel safe.

Council also wishes to thank the Business Support Team who have worked tirelessly to support thousands of local businesses, offering a real human response to each individual situation and being a friend to our business community at a crucial time.

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23.c Recognising our Unsung Heroes in Schools

It was

Proposed by Councillor Terry Norton
Seconded by Councillor Matthew Atkins

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

Following debate, notice of motion (c) was CARRIED by assent.

RESOLVED that

This Council recognises the importance of providing an Educational setting for children and young people to learn, play and develop. We therefore wish to acknowledge the enormous contribution made by those who have provided on site provision during this pandemic. In particular we wish to express our thanks to support staff for the commitment and care they have provided to our city's most vulnerable children and those of keyworkers.

23.d Congratulations to the Government on the National Vaccination Programme

This was withdrawn.

23.e Preserve the Former Records Store building

It was

Proposed by Councillor Matthew Atkins
Seconded by Councillor Steve Wemyss

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

Following debate notice of motion (e) was CARRIED by assent.

RESOLVED

In view of considerable pressure by residents and heritage supporters who wish to see the future of the former Records Office Store in Museum Road, Southsea, re-examined, as illustrated by a petition which has attracted 947 signatures, the council asks for the outline plan for demolition and re-development for housing on the site to be reconsidered.

23.f Discharge of Sewage into Langstone Harbour

It was

Proposed by Councillor Matthew Winnington
Seconded by Councillor Darren Sanders

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

Following debate notice of motion (f) was CARRIED by assent.

RESOLVED

Council notes with regret the continued discharge of storm water by Southern Water into Langstone Harbour, despite the protests it raised with the company following the motion it passed two years ago.

Southern Water's reliance on regular storm water discharges to fulfil its mandate is unacceptable and a sign that it is a failing infrastructure provider. The discharges lead to pollution which is damaging these sites of international environmental significance and harbour users who regularly report sickness related to the sewage which is pumped into the harbour in periods of increased rainfall. It is clear that there needs to be large, nationally led changes to achieve real improvements in sewage infrastructure and water quality.

Council welcomes the recent decision of Chichester Council to complain to OFWAT about discharges into Chichester Harbour.

Council also welcomes the resolution of the Langstone Harbour Board - including City Council members - to work with other councils to improve matters and notes the support in principle the Board has received from Havant Borough, Chichester District and Hampshire and West Sussex County Councils, as well as the Chichester Harbour Conservancy, for taking further action.

It also welcomes the work Harbour staff have been doing to resolve issues around licences and giving evidence to the recent review by the Environmental Audit Committee on this subject.

It also recognises the work of all MPs on this matter and welcomes the establishment of a regional Forum on these issues by the MP for Havant.

On that basis, Council:

1. **Reiterates what it agreed in March 2019, that the practice of discharging sewage into the Harbour ceases and an alternative method found.**
2. **Believes that the penalties for unauthorised discharges are derisory and fail to provide a deterrent.**
3. **Calls on Government to conduct an urgent review of the frequency of allowable discharges and the conditions attached to those discharges.**
4. **Endorses the Harbour Board's desire for an urgent response from the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, starting with a roundtable discussion with relevant stakeholders, including local MPs and councils.**
5. **Asks the MP for Havant to invite both Portsmouth MPs and a representative of the City Council to join his regional Forum to demonstrate the cross-party desire for change.**
6. **Backs Philip Dunne MP's Sewage (Inland Waters) Bill, which places a duty on water companies to ensure that untreated sewage is not discharged into rivers and other inland waters.**
7. **Agrees that enclosed coastal waters such as harbours should be included in the scope of the Environmental Audit Committee's ongoing review.**

23.g Right to Food

It was

Proposed by Councillor Tom Coles
Seconded by Councillor Cal Corkery

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

Following debate, upon being put to a roll call vote, notice of motion (g) was CARRIED.

RESOLVED

We are seeing a crisis of food poverty borne out of the political choices and systemic failings created over the past four decades, which have now reached a tipping point for so many in our communities. The figures are devastating for one of the richest nations in the world and highlight the inequality of the UK in 2021.

The Trussell Trust reports a soaring 81% increase in emergency food parcels from food banks in its network during the last two weeks of March 2020 compared with the same period in 2019, including a 122%

rise in parcels given to children as the coronavirus pandemic continued to unfold.

This council notes the consistent high rates of poverty across large areas of Portsmouth. In January 2020 some 25% of children in the city were entitled to Free School Meals and that figure is thought to have increased significantly over the course of the pandemic.

We recognise the growing concern amongst our health and care professionals of the current situation and the likely exacerbation of poverty figures through the impact of the Covid19 pandemic and economic uncertainty continuing through 2021.

The National Food Strategy is the first independent review of England's entire food system for 75 years. Its purpose is to set out a vision for the kind of food system we should be building for the future, and a plan for how to achieve that vision. It is headed by Henry Dimbleby and next reports to Government in the first half of 2021.

The "Right To Food" campaign is arguing that the 11 million people in food poverty should be central to this strategy. Enshrining the 'Right To Food' into law would clarify Government obligations on food poverty and would introduce legal avenues to hold Government bodies accountable for violations.

Full Council therefore calls for the 'Right To Food' to be incorporated into the 'National Food Strategy' and asks that the Chief Executive write to Henry Dimbleby to further this request.

24. Questions from Members under Standing Order No 17

There were eight questions before council today.

Question 1 was from Councillor Cal Corkery

"Could the Leader of the Council explain through which transparent and democratically accountable process it was decided that the council owned port would bid to become a Freeport?"

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

Question 2 was from Councillor Graham Heaney

"Can the Cabinet member please say what progress has been made on the introduction of low traffic neighbourhoods in the city?"

This and supplementary questions were answered by the Cabinet Member for Traffic and Transportation, Councillor Lynne Stagg.

Question 3 was from Councillor Matthew Atkins

"Can the cabinet member confirm how many housing units are likely to be earmarked to be built in the area around Cosham Town Centre under current proposals for the new local plan and the 5 year housing land supply?"

This and supplementary questions were answered by the Cabinet Member for Planning Policy and City Development, Councillor Hugh Mason.

The Cabinet Member undertook to try to obtain a breakdown of the costs to circulate to Members.

Question 4 was from Councillor Robert New

"Would the leader of the city council work with ward colleagues to help the residents of both Harbourside and Southsea Leisure Parks who currently are desperate for our help (as the landowner of the respective sites) to address the alleged injustices they report are happening at both sites?"

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

Question 5 was from Councillor Simon Boshier

"Can the Cabinet Member give an update on Operation Transmission and the role of partner agencies?"

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

Question 6 was from Councillor Luke Stubbs

"Will parking meters be installed on Eastern Parade and St Helens Parade?"

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

The Cabinet Member undertook to circulate to members a timetable for the proposed parking meters if this is the option pursued. Ward Councillors will be informed.

Question 7 was from Councillor Judith Smyth

"Given that the Full Council unanimously approved the Climate emergency motion this time two years ago on 19 March 2019 please could the Leader of the council or cabinet spokesperson tell us why we have not made progress on the citizens assembly, the carbon audit and the development of a requirement for all contractors to the city to need to demonstrate their contribution to reducing carbon and air pollution?"

This and supplementary questions were answered by the Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change, Councillor Dave Ashmore but as time ran out the Cabinet Member agreed to send a written response to Members.

The time allowed for questions expired before the remaining question could be put and so in accordance with Standing Order 17(h) written replies would be circulated to members.

The Lord Mayor said that this would be his last meeting before the local elections and thanked everyone for their support for him during the last year. He understood that Councillors Stephen Morgan, David Fuller, Tom Wood, Will Purvis, John Ferrett, Donna Jones, Steve Wemyss and Neill Young would not be standing for re-election to the city council. The Lord Mayor on behalf of the council thanked them for their excellent service and wished them well for the future.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Vernon-Jackson wished to place on record his thanks to all those who were standing down and in particular to the leaders of the Conservative and Labour group, Councillors Donna Jones and Stephen Morgan for their time as group leaders. He also placed on record his thanks to Councillor David Fuller, former Lord Mayor who was also standing down this year.

Finally, the Leader of the Council thanked the current Lord Mayor, Councillor Rob Wood for all his work during the past year.

The meeting concluded at 9.55 pm.

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Lord Mayor