

FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Council

Date: Thursday, 21 October 2021

Venue: Council Chamber - Civic Offices

PRESENT:

Mrs P M Bryant
(Mayor)

M J Ford, JP
(Deputy Mayor)

Councillors: I Bastable, Mrs S M Bayford, F Birkett, Miss J Bull, T M Cartwright, MBE, Mrs L E Clubley, M R Daniells, S Dugan, Mrs T L Ellis, J M Englefield, G Fazackarley, J S Forrest, Miss T G Harper, Mrs P Hayre, Mrs C L A Hockley, L Keeble, Mrs J Kelly, G Kelly, Mrs K Mandry, S D Martin, Ms S Pankhurst, R H Price, JP, Mrs K K Trott, Mrs S M Walker, N J Walker and S D T Woodward



1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillors T Davies, P J Davies and N R Gregory.

2. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the Mayor be authorised to sign as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 29 July 2021.

3. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor was delighted to announce that since the last Council meeting, the Mayoral diary has become quite busy.

Engagements have included some delightful time spent at the summer playschemes, seeing excited youngsters given sailing training, beginners trampolining, and fantastic entertainment in the gardens at Westbury Manor for the younger ages.

The Mayor said that it had been good to have the Stubbington Fayre back on Bank Holiday Monday this year and to visit many of the charity stalls, despite the donkey derby not taking place due to donkeys being double booked, everyone appeared to enjoy getting back to the event.

The Mayor stated that it had been a privilege to attend the weekend events at St Mary's Church in Warsash for their Flower Festival and celebration of 150 years of worship there.

The Mayor stated they have also attended postponed AGM's and prizegiving's, church services including Harvest Festival and Law Sunday in Winchester Cathedral.

The Mayor was pleased to advise the meeting that they had finally been able to recognize last year's Citizens of Honour, and just last week had also entertained Graham Light, who retired recently as Principal Building Control Officer, for his 50 years of service to this council when along with his wife, joined the Mayor and Mayoress for tea

The Mayor stated that the re-opening of Fareham Leisure Centre last Saturday had to be the highlight of the year and exclaimed that following the transformation of the building which started its life as just an indoor swimming pool, and to have such advanced equipment in excellent surroundings, it is now by far the best leisure facility in the area.

The Mayor was pleased to announce that her Charity fundraising is slowly progressing, thanks to evenings in Antonio's restaurant. Antonio has kindly given one more date before the end of the year, on Wednesday 17 November and the Mayor stated that if Members wanted to attend, they were advised to call Antonio as soon as possible to book a table.

The Mayor concluded her announcements with thanks to the Chief Executive who has agreed to her having a small tea party in the Parlour on Wednesday 10 November at 2.30pm where she will look forward to entertaining visitors with a speaker.

This will be followed by tea and cake and tickets are priced £5.00 but to comply with safety, places MUST be booked in advance so that names are recorded for entry. The Mayor asked anyone wishing to attend to book a place by phoning her home number.

4. EXECUTIVE LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Executive Leader announced that Members would recall that at a recent meeting of the Council discussion had taken place about a new policy on dealing with unreasonable complaint behaviour. At that meeting, Members expressed some concerns about their own vulnerability in dealing with unreasonable behaviour, abuse and threats, particularly on social media.

The Executive Leader stated that sadly, the death of Sir David Amess has highlighted how easy it is for such behaviour to get out of control and he has therefore asked the Chief Executive Officer to review the Council's approach to member safety and to present a report to a future meeting of the Council setting out the issues and the possible ways in which we can reduce risk.

5. EXECUTIVE MEMBERS' ANNOUNCEMENTS

Health and Public Protection:

Building Control Partnership Achievements 2020-21

The Executive Member for Health and Public Protection announced that the Building Control Partnership (BCP) has safely worked throughout the Covid pandemic without any loss of service provision or customer focus. All services have been continuously provided against a background of increasing workload in all areas of operation.

He stated that in the first 9 months of 2021, demand for all services has been unprecedented with overall workload exceeding the 2020-year total by 15% to date. Market share against the private sector has jumped to from 74% to 83%. (the highest in Hampshire)

Income levels have correspondingly increased by over 15% and performance levels have also been outstanding with 88% of all Building regulation applications checked within 10 working days of submission and 95% within 15 working days.

The Partnership is also moving forward with projects to re-design and update the stand-alone Building Control Partnership website, back scan 13000 remaining live paper files and have received outstanding client feedback from

main clients such as Hampshire CC and from their annual survey of customers who have received a fee-paying service.

The Executive Member for Health and Public Protection further stated that the Building Control Partnership have also passed two external audits of their management systems by BSI with no non-conformances raised and concluded that, demonstrably, BCP has a great team, focused on delivering what customers want.

Leisure and Community:

Fareham Leisure Centre Investment

The Executive Member for Leisure and Community stated that she hoped Members had enjoyed their visit to Fareham Leisure Centre last Friday to see, for the very first time, the brand-new facilities.

For those who were unable to attend, the £6.33 million investment funded by the Council features state-of-the-art facilities including a new and extended gym, 'Top Rock' climbing wall for both children and adults, a soft play area for younger children and an indoor splash pad which is suitable for those with accessible needs.

The Executive Member for Leisure and Community was pleased to be able to report that nearly 3,000 people had visited the leisure centre last weekend for the relaunch that was officially opened by the Mayor and Declan Brooks – BMX Olympic Medallist and Fareham resident. Over the weekend many new memberships were taken out and lots of parents had signed their children up for swimming lessons.

The Executive Member for Leisure and Community was also pleased to announce that, on Tuesday, Fareham Leisure Centre was granted Changing Places status which means that both leisure centres in the Borough have recognised changing facilities that provide accessible toilets for people who cannot use standard accessible toilets, with equipment such as hoists, curtains, changing benches and space for carers. These are facilities that can be used by anyone, and not just members of the leisure centre.

Crafty Makery – Poppy Appeal

The Executive Member for Leisure and Community announced that Crafty Makery in Fareham shopping centre was working with community members and groups to make up to 1,000 ceramic poppies for Remembrance Sunday on 14 November which will then hopefully be put on display in the grounds of the Holy Trinity Church on West Street, Fareham.

The Executive Member for Leisure and Community stated that once Remembrance Sunday has concluded, the poppies will be sold for a suggested donation of £5 each to raise funds for the Royal British Legion.

To date 450 ceramic poppies have been made and sessions are being held at Westbury Manor Museum and at the Crafty Makery shop where there are will more poppies to be made.

The Executive Member for Leisure and Community asked Member to spread the word and also invited them to attend themselves and make one.

Christmas Light Switch On

The Executive Member for Leisure and Community announced that following feedback from residents, businesses and traders, this years Christmas Light Switch On event will be held on Saturday 20 November from 10am to 8pm with the lights being switched on at 5.30pm.

This is a free event for all of the family, with festive gift and food stalls, reindeer, activities for the children, themed street entertainers, fun fair rides and a special finale.

The Executive Member for Leisure and Community stated that promotional material will be circulated after Halloween and it will also include our new 'Live Love Local' campaign branding to help create a joined-up approach to our seasonal efforts to help bring people back into the town, so please save the date!

Planning and Development:**Local Plan**

The Executive Member for Planning and Development stated that Members will be aware the Council reached the significant milestone of submitting the Local Plan to the Planning Inspectorate for examination at the end of September. This act was the culmination of six years of work, involving five public consultations, the production of 103 documents and several changes to Government policy along the way. He stated that Plan is now officially 'at examination' and the Council has been informed that our Inspector will be Helen Hockenhull, who, we are told, will be in contact shortly via our appointed Programme officer. The Council is no longer in control of the timescale, but it could be that hearings will take place in the New Year and the Executive Member for Planning and Development will keep the Council informed of progress through further announcements.

The Executive Member for Planning and Development announced that, aligned with the Local Plan, he was pleased to update members that work on a new masterplan for Fareham Town Centre is progressing with a view to targeting spring 2022 for a draft Supplementary Planning Document for public consultation. As he has previously updated this Council back in June, we will be unable to move past the draft stage until the Local Plan is adopted but a degree of progress on a masterplan is important for the Council, its residents and businesses given the challenges our town centre, like many others in the country, is facing.

The Executive Member for Planning and Development stated that as the Local Plan is progressed to an advanced stage, it is likely that Planning Committee members in particular will start to see greater reference to some emerging policies in the reports. This is particularly relevant to policies requiring Electric Vehicle Charging Points for new properties and also the provision of additional spaces for nature under what is known as 'Biodiversity net gain' on sites, as both of which are expressly supported by national policy as well as our proposed Local Plan. Measures for biodiversity net gain can include green walls or rooves, extra woodland planting or the creation of ponds and wildflower areas.

The Executive Member for Planning and Development gave Members an update on the plan-making progress of two of our neighbours; Gosport Borough Council are currently out to consultation on the early stages of their new plan. Their consultation document acknowledges that, under the Government's standard methodology their housing requirement will increase to 328 homes per year but that they anticipate a 2,000 homes unmet need arising over the plan period. However, importantly for this Council, they have stated in this public document that they will not be requesting a single local authority to meet that need, instead they will wait for the outcomes of the PfSH sub-regional housing distribution work to determine where this unmet need should be distributed. This PfSH work is ongoing but has fallen behind the progress of the Fareham Local Plan and therefore is highly unlikely to bear any influence on this plan.

Portsmouth City Council are also out to consultation on an early version of their plan and suggest that with some new sites, including the controversial proposals at Tipner for 4,000 homes, and with a potential contribution of 1,000 homes to their unmet need, they can meet their housing requirement. We are aware, however, of a Motion at a recent Portsmouth Council meeting that signifies substantial uncertainty over whether the Council would support the inclusion of an allocation at Tipner. The implications of this opposition to the site on the progression of their Local Plan is currently unknown and the Executive Member for Planning and Development will provide further updates to the Council when their direction of travel is known.

The Executive Member for Planning and Development concluded that both consultation plans also mention the need to provide a biodiversity net gain. It is possible that as a 'green' borough where there are opportunities for environmental enhancement, we could, in time, see financial investment in Fareham green spaces to offset developments in our neighbouring urban boroughs of Gosport and Portsmouth.

New Forest Recreational Disturbance

The Executive Member for Planning and Development announced that on a separate but related matter, it was important for him to alert Member's attention to new advice from Natural England in relation to the potential for recreational disturbance from occupiers of new homes in this Borough on protected sites within the New Forest.

Natural England have advised that, on the back of ecological assessment and visitor survey data, mitigation for the potential impact of disturbance on both the heathland and woodland habitats themselves as well as disturbance to breeding birds, should be provided to offset the impact. This advice poses problems for our Development Management function primarily in granting planning permission in the absence of any mitigation and unfortunately a growing number of permissions are likely to be held up while this issue is resolved.

The Executive Member for Planning and Development stated that, at present, this Council disputes the advice that Natural England are giving us and have written to them to seek clarification and justification on their position. The Council has also written to the two Government departments in charge of

housing delivery and natural environment (Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and Defra respectively) for support on this matter and the Executive Member for Planning and Development will provide further updates as the matter develops.

Streetscene:

Green Flag Awards

The Executive Member for Streetscene was delighted to announce that the Council has retained the prestigious Green Flag Awards once again at two of its green spaces.

Holly Hill Woodland Park and The Sensory Garden in Fareham town centre have received recognition as two of the best parks in the country once again for the 14th and 12th year in a row – joining only around 2,000 sites in the UK to receive the honour.

The Green Flag Award scheme recognises and rewards well managed parks and green spaces, setting the benchmark standard for the management of recreational outdoor spaces across the UK and around the world. Its purpose is to ensure that everybody has access to green spaces and that these spaces are managed to meet the needs of the community they serve.

The Executive Member for Streetscene stated that every site is assessed by experienced judges who inspect the site and meet staff and volunteers. They judge the parks using eight criteria:

1. A welcoming place
2. Healthy, safe and secure
3. Well maintained and clean
4. Environmental management
5. Biodiversity, landscape and heritage
6. Community involvement
7. Marketing and communication
8. Management

The Executive Member for Streetscene stated that this award is testament to the commitment and hard work from Council staff and volunteers who help maintain these beautiful parks to such a high standard all year round and this award is the best thank you the Council could ask for after the particularly challenging few years due to the pandemic.

Green Waste Collection Service

The Executive Member for Streetscene announced that the new Garden Waste collection service 'Clip and Collect' was launched on the 01 September with an early bird discount offer available until the 31 October allowing you to purchase your choice of bin at half price.

The Executive Member for Streetscene stated there had been a positive response to this scheme with over 13,000 households subscribing; 70% online, 27% over the telephone and the remainder opting to visit the Civic Offices in person with 1,100 joining in one day!

The Executive Member for Streetscene extended his thanks to all officers for coping with the increased work involved with the early bird sign-up. 4,000 additional bins have been ordered to meet demand and bin delivery will commence in January with collections commencing in February.

The Executive Member for Streetscene concluded by announcing that green waste collections will cease on 17 December but there will be a Christmas tree collection this year.

6. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made at this meeting.

7. PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS

There were no petitions presented at this meeting.

8. DEPUTATIONS

A written deputation was received from Mrs Verity Fair and Mr Rob Lipsham in respect to agenda item 13(1) – Notice of motion dated 05 October 2021 received from Councillor RH Price JP.

9. MOTIONS UNDER STANDING ORDER 2.6

At the agreement of the Mayor, this item was brought forward on the Agenda as it relates to deputation heard at item 8.

- (1) Notice of Motion dated 05 October 2021 received from Councillor R H Price, JP

A notice of motion was received from Councillor RH Price, JP.

“Due to costs for the Council in removing Travellers and to protect the Residents/Public from the issues of Travellers parking in the large car park at Portchester Precinct.

I request that Height barriers be erected at the Entrance and Exit off of the road from Jubilee Road and the Entrance/Exit off the road leading to Assheton Court with immediate effect”

Having been duly proposed by Councillor R H Price, JP and seconded by Councillor G Kelly, the motion was referred to the Health and Public Protection Scrutiny Panel for consideration. Officers will ensure that Councillor Price is able to address the Panel with his reasons for putting forward the motion.

- (2) Notice of Motion dated 11 October 2021 received from Councillor J Forrest

A notice of motion was received from Councillor J Forrest.

“This Council endorses the policies set out in the LGA publication Improving Digital Citizenship: a practical guide for councillors (www.local.gov.uk/publications), which encourages councillors to avoid “the spread of unverified rumours, misinformation and disinformation”.

Acknowledges that a key factor in limiting misinformation is to make accurate information as widely available as possible, by encouraging public engagement in its business, and providing easy access to the fullest possible record of its meetings.

Notes that the live streaming of meetings during the Covid lockdown was a step forward in improving access to meetings and provided a fuller record of debate than is possible through Minutes. Resolves to resume live streaming of meetings of the Council, Scrutiny Panels and main committees as soon as possible, taking advantage of the current review of Ways of Working to do so as cost-effectively as possible.”

Having been duly proposed by Councillor J Forrest and seconded by Councillor R H Price, JP, the motion was referred to the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Panel for consideration. Officers will ensure that Councillor Forrest is able to address the Panel with his reasons for putting forward the motion.

10. REPORTS OF THE EXECUTIVE

(1) Minutes of meeting Monday, 9 August 2021 of Executive

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on Monday 09 August 2021 be received.

(2) Minutes of meeting Thursday, 26 August 2021 of Executive

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting for the Executive held on Thursday 26 August 2021 be received.

(3) Minutes of meeting Tuesday, 21 September 2021 of Executive

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on Tuesday 21 September 2021 we received.

(4) Minutes of meeting Thursday, 30 September 2021 of Executive

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on Thursday 30 September 2021 be received.

(5) Minutes of meeting Monday, 11 October 2021 of Executive

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on Monday 11 October 2021 we received.

(6) Schedule of Executive Member and Officer Delegated Decisions

RESOLVED that the Schedule of Individual Executive Member and Officer Delegated Decisions be received.

11. REPORTS OF OTHER COMMITTEES

- (1) Minutes of meeting Wednesday, 14 July 2021 of Planning Committee

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on Wednesday 14 July 2021 be received.

- (2) Minutes of meeting Friday, 23 July 2021 of Planning Committee

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee meeting held on Friday 23 July 2021 be received.

- (3) Minutes of meeting Friday, 10 September 2021 of Planning Committee

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on Friday 10 September 2021 be received.

- (4) Minutes of meeting Wednesday, 15 September 2021 of Planning Committee

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on Wednesday 15 September 2021 be received.

- (5) Minutes of meeting Monday, 27 September 2021 of Audit and Governance Committee

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Audit and Governance Committee meeting held on Monday 27 September 2021 be received.

- (6) Minutes of meeting Tuesday, 28 September 2021 of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs Committee

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Licensing and Regulatory Affairs Committee held on Tuesday 28 September 2021 be received.

12. REPORTS OF THE SCRUTINY PANELS

- (1) Minutes of meeting Wednesday, 18 August 2021 of Health and Public Protection Scrutiny Panel

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Health and Public Protection Scrutiny Panel held on Wednesday 18 August 2021 be received.

- (2) Minutes of meeting Tuesday, 7 September 2021 of Daedalus Scrutiny Panel

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Daedalus Scrutiny Panel held on Tuesday 07 September 2021 be received.

- (3) Minutes of meeting Tuesday, 14 September 2021 of Planning and Development Scrutiny Panel

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Planning and Development Scrutiny Panel held on Tuesday 14 September 2021 be received.

- (4) Minutes of meeting Thursday, 16 September 2021 of Housing Scrutiny Panel

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Housing Scrutiny Panel held on Thursday 16 September 2021 be received.

- (5) Minutes of meeting Wednesday, 29 September 2021 of Leisure and Community Scrutiny Panel

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Leisure and Community Scrutiny Panel held on Wednesday 29 September 2021 be received.

- (6) Minutes of meeting Tuesday, 5 October 2021 of Leisure and Community Scrutiny Panel

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Leisure and Community Scrutiny Panel held on Tuesday 05 October 2021 be received.

- (7) Minutes of meeting Wednesday, 6 October 2021 of Policy and Resources Scrutiny Panel

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Panel held on Wednesday 06 October 2021 be received.

13. QUESTIONS UNDER STANDING ORDER 2.12

Question by Councillor Mrs K K Trott:

1. What information and help is Fareham Borough Council giving to Tenants and Leaseholders who will inevitably face huge rises for their energy costs from now onwards. Fareham Borough Council has an excellent, hardworking Housing Team. This has been evidenced in the Independent Report Review of homelessness in the Fareham Borough Council local authority area by Neil Moreland & Company, presented to the Executive for their meeting on October 11th:

“The Council has a dedicated and hardworking team of officers to help with their housing needs. The team would benefit from having some additional posts to help cope with the increased workload.”

We will all be aware of the impending huge price rises for energy. Jonathan Brealey, of Ofgen has been quoted as saying, *“Looking at the costs that are in the system we expect a significant rise in April.”*

Not wishing to load yet more work onto the team but aware of problems ahead, what advice and help is available.? Is there a plan to disseminate information to our residents on how they can cut down on

energy costs? This may prove difficult when we are being advised to keep air circulating to minimise Covid susceptibility.

Those of us who may have been brought up without the benefit of Central Heating will remember the need to wear warm clothes indoors, but suggestions that include wearing an extra layer of clothing and turning down the thermostat may not be immediately obvious to those accustomed to central heating. Nor may closing curtains to keep heat in or the benefits of lined curtains.

I noted the report for the Climate Change Scrutiny Panel of October 12th included in the minutes of the May 27th meeting, that the Panel requested a presentation or report on environmental upgrades to the Council's Housing Stock be brought to a future meeting. I expect Cllr Birkett and Cllr.Mrs Ellis, recognising the relevance to both their areas of responsibility are already considering how that can be taken forward.

Response by the Executive Member for Housing:

I know that many of our tenants and leaseholders are worried about their household finances. The Neighbourhood Team and Sheltered Housing Team are there to help and offer support on money advice and claiming benefits. Additionally, our Welfare Support Officer provides practical advice on how residents can better manage their finances and ideas on how they can save money (including how to change energy suppliers).

The Winter edition of our newsletter 'Tenants Voice' which goes out to all our tenants and leaseholders will include information about energy bills and hints/tips on how to save money.

Questions by Councillor P Davies:

1. Is the Leader aware that Chichester District Council has embarked on an ambitious tree planting programme (as per attachment) with funding from DEFRA, outreach to local industries, community groups and individuals?
2. Can the Leader update us on the Executive decision of 21st September Tree Service Review on the progress of 'engagement with local communities and the building up of a volunteer resource'.
3. Can the Leader assure us that local businesses will be approached for sponsorship of tree planting? 100 businesses responded in Chichester.
4. Is the Leader aware of a new group 'Branching out' in Fareham, currently applying for Charity status and would he support their aim to plant more trees in Fareham?
5. Does the Leader agree that we have a massive climate change issue and that as well as residents including Councillors using their cars as little as possible, we need a massive tree planting programme?

Answers by Councillor Martin

1. Yes details of the Chichester District [Tree Planting Scheme](#) have been brought to my attention. Chichester is one of five pilot locations in England, who have benefitted from significant DEFRA funding to support an extensive programme of tree planting by residents and organisations across their District. It will be helpful to understand the lessons learnt from this pilot, as Fareham moves forward with its own new approach to tree planting.
2. Engagement with local communities and the building up of a volunteer resource is a significant element of the Tree Planting approach, approved by the Executive only a month ago on 21 September 2021 and is actively being worked on now. It is anticipated that a progress update will be brought to members in the near future.
3. One of the actions identified during the recent Council Trees Service Review was the need to update and refresh the Council's Tree Strategy. As part of the development of the new Tree Strategy, opportunities for further engagement with business, including sponsorships, will be explored and presented to a future meeting of the Executive for approval.
4. I have been made aware of a new group called 'Branching Out', which is currently seeking charity status. I am highly supportive of this group, and indeed any other voluntary or charity group, who aim to plant more trees within our Borough.
5. With regards the Council's carbon footprint arising from the delivery of services, it is likely that the largest carbon reductions can be made through projects that eliminate emissions, such as the Council switching to green energy suppliers or through reducing direct emissions through the use of low emission vehicle fuels for the Council's vehicle fleet. The Executive has recently approved both the use of LAD2 funding to improve the energy efficiency of many Council homes, and the development of a programme of sustainable planting and activities going forward.

With respect to pro-active tree planting, the Executive has recently agreed a new approach which will focus the Council's future tree planting programme on strategic locations, building on opportunities for community involvement and exploring external funding. It should be remembered that tree planting has wide environmental benefits contributing to improved biodiversity and helping create high quality places to visit within the Borough.

As part of the Council's leadership role in supporting wider carbon reduction across the Borough, the Council is actively working with the Greening Campaign and launched the promotion of a pilot scheme with the community of Titchfield just yesterday evening.

The Council will clearly also continue to work closely with Hampshire County Council as Highway and Public Transport Authority, supporting transport initiatives designed to reduce emissions.

14. APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES

- (1) Hampshire 2050 Partnership

Having been proposed by the Executive Leader and duly seconded by Councillor N J Walker, it was RESOLVED that Councillor S D Martin is

appointed as the Representative to the Hampshire 2050 Partnership and Councillor T M Cartwright, MBE as the Deputy.

15. APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES

There were no changes made to the Appointments of Seats on Committees.

(The meeting started at 6.20 pm
and ended at 7.15 pm).