

FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Council

Date: Thursday, 14 December 2023

Venue: Council Chamber - Civic Offices

PRESENT:

F Birkett
(Mayor)

Mrs P Hayre
(Deputy Mayor)

Councillors: Ms C Bainbridge, I Bastable, Mrs S M Bayford, R Bird, Mrs P M Bryant, Ms F Burgess, Miss J Burton, Mrs L E Clubley, M R Daniells, S Dugan, Mrs T L Ellis, J M Englefield, D G Foot, N R Gregory, D J Hamilton, Miss T G Harper, Mrs C L A Hockley, S Ingram, Mrs K Mandry, S D Martin, Mrs J Needham, P Nother, Ms S Pankhurst, N J Walker, Mrs S M Walker and S D T Woodward



1. PRAYERS

The meeting commenced with a short service of prayers.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M J Ford, JP, H Davis and Mrs K K Trott.

3. MINUTES

Whilst receiving the Minutes, Councillor N Walker asked the Mayor that in light of the announcement made by the Executive Leader of his intended retirement at the end of this municipal year, as at item 5, page 6 of the Minutes, consideration was given to convening a special meeting of the Council in February 2024 at which the Council could determine to award Councillor S D T Woodward with the Honorary Freedom of the Borough upon his retirement as a Councillor, in recognition on his eminent services to the Borough.

At the invitation of the Mayor, Councillor Mrs C Hockley spoke in support of this request by Councillor N Walker.

Having considered the request, the Mayor confirmed that a special meeting would be convened in February 2024 to coincide with Councillor S D T Woodward's final budget speech.

RESOLVED that the Mayor be authorised to sign, as a correct record, the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 26 October 2023.

4. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor announced that he had spent a very enjoyable evening at a Remembrance concert on Friday 10th November at Portchester Community Centre, celebrating popular musical theatre and traditional Remembrance themed music performed by HMS Collingwood Volunteer Band and Portsmouth Military Wives Choir in aid of his charities Veterans Outreach Support and Sophie's Legacy.

The Mayor told the meeting that he had recently held two successful and interesting charitable events: the first on 07 December was a Tea Party with a guest speaking about Christmas fauna, and the second was a wreath making event at St. Margaret's Nursery in Titchfield, both of which were enjoyed by everyone attending.

The Mayor also announced that his first tea party in the New Year will be held on Thursday 8th February at 2.30pm in the Council Chamber where there will be a talk on Seaside Postcards – Comedy and Social Comment.

5. EXECUTIVE LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

WELBORNE

The Executive Leader announced that the potential for a shortfall in funding in the M27 junction 10 scheme was highlighted when he addressed a Hampshire County Council Cabinet meeting on Tuesday 12 December. Unfortunately, but unsurprisingly, the issue has been inaccurately reported upon since then.

The Executive Leader stated that, to date, £97.5M funding for the Junction 10 improvements has been secured for the project and, two years ago, this figure was deemed sufficient to cover the costs.

Two years on, with the country having been ravaged by inflation, it is anticipated that there may well be a shortfall. The provisional target price for the construction phase is expected to be known early next year and will be subject to formal acceptance by both the County Council as the delivery body and VolkerFitzpatrick, the contractor.

The Executive Leader stated that the M27 Junction 10 Improvement Scheme is pivotal to the progression of Welborne and he continues to hold firm to the pledge he made many years ago that not a brick will be laid until all of the infrastructure required is identified, we know where it is going and most importantly how it will be funded. Of course, that funding was identified two years ago and was the result of a concerted effort from everyone involved and supported at the highest level.

With 6,000 new homes, 6,000 jobs, a district and village centre, three primary schools, a secondary school, retail, health and community facilities and a hotel among its many benefits, Welborne Garden Village is the largest planned development in Hampshire and will make a vital contribution to Hampshire's economy.

The Executive Leader stated that Michael Gove in particular was extremely supportive when he visited Welborne earlier in the year and agreed to the Executive Leader's request that he will do whatever it takes to help us deliver the new community. The Executive Leader and Councillor Rob Humby will be jointly writing to Mr Gove with a view to meeting him to ask him to deliver on his pledge.

TITCHFIELD FESTIVAL THEATRE

The Executive Leader announced that Members will be aware that a planning contravention notice was issued against Titchfield Festival Theatre for opening a 450 seat theatre in St Margaret's Lane without planning permission partly in a building which, until recently, was used as a warehouse by a company called Welbro. That separate building has, after the removal of walls, been joined to the building occupied by Titchfield Festival Theatre. Following the issue of the notice a highly offensive missive was published by the theatre. The Council has published a fact check which is now published on our website and gives the lie to many of the claims made within that document.

Members will be updated in due course regarding the issue.

TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION

The Executive Leader announced that over 1,000 Fareham businesses, residents and visitors participated in Fareham Borough Council's town centre listening exercise at the start of this month. The purpose was to understand what residents, businesses and visitors think about Fareham Town Centre. Strong themes have emerged about the role the town centre can play, and better support our community and attract visitors in the future.

This feedback is now being considered alongside other technical assessments to develop a business case for future regeneration activities. These findings will be shared in the New Year, and there will be further opportunities to discuss the future of Fareham during a second phase of engagement in the Spring.

The Executive Leader stated that he has been very pleased by the number of Fareham residents that have participated in this early listening exercise and shared their views for how our town centre can become more vibrant, economically successful and continue to be somewhere to be proud of. The record levels of feedback are testament to the local support for this once-in-a-generation opportunity to rejuvenate our town centre. The Executive Leader thanked everyone for taking the time to share views - whether they wrote to the Council, spoke to the consultation team, or completed our Council's digital questionnaire and he looks forward to reviewing the findings and to start shaping a regeneration strategy that will seize upon the opportunities they have helped identify.

DIRECTOR OF NEIGHBOURHOODS

The Executive Leader was delighted to advise the Council that the Appointments Panel, following a rigorous external recruitment process, has appointed Sarah Ward to the role. Sarah, who is currently Head of Strategic Sites, will take up her new role on 8th January 2024. The Executive Leader was sure that everyone would join him in offering congratulations to Sarah. It is always good when our own people beat all comers to progress within the organisation.

6. EXECUTIVE MEMBERS' ANNOUNCEMENTS

Executive Member for Streetscene

Sanitary bins for male toilets

The Executive Member for Streetscene informed the Council that in respect of the provision of sanitary bins for male toilets, a plastic bin is currently available in the toilets at Cloff Road, Monks Hill, Barry's Meadow and Fareham Cemetery. The Council has also agreed with its cleaning contractor to undertake a trial of similar facilities in two other male public toilets around the borough.

The Executive Member for Streetscene advised the Council that provision in Fareham and Holly Hill leisure centres has been agreed with the operator but

is not currently in place. Westbury Manor Museum has provision in the unisex toilet, and whilst not under the Streetscene portfolio, the Chief Executive has made provision in the Civic Offices and at the Council Depot. Fareham Live will also have suitable male sanitary bin provision.

7. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made at this meeting.

8. PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS

There were no petitions presented at this meeting.

9. DEPUTATIONS

There were no deputations given at this meeting.

10. REPORTS OF THE EXECUTIVE

(1) Minutes of meeting Monday 11 December 2023 of Executive

The minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on Monday 11 December 2023 were tabled at the meeting for consideration.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on Monday 11 December 2023 be received.

(2) Schedule of Individual 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, 15 November 2023 of Planning Committee

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on Wednesday, 15 November 2023 be received.

(2) Minutes of meeting Monday, 27 November 2023 of Audit and Governance Committee

RESOLVED that Council:

(a) notes the comments made by the Committee in respect of Part One of the Monitoring Officer's report;

- (b) endorses the new Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy as provided at Appendix B to the Monitoring Officer's report;
- (c) endorses the proposed revisions to Financial Regulation 13.5 (Disposal of Assets) as provided at Appendix C to the Monitoring Officer's report;
- (d) approves the change to the deputation scheme as provided at Appendix D to the Monitoring Officer's report; and
- (e) agrees that the minutes of the meeting of the Audit and Governance Committee held on Monday, 27 November 2023 be received.

12. REPORTS OF THE SCRUTINY PANELS

- (1) Minutes of meeting Wednesday, 1 November 2023 of Planning and Development Scrutiny Panel

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Planning and Development Scrutiny Panel held on Wednesday 01 November 2023 be received.

- (2) Minutes of meeting Tuesday, 14 November 2023 of Leisure and Community Scrutiny Panel

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Leisure and Community Scrutiny Panel held on Tuesday, 14 November 2023 be received.

- (3) Minutes of meeting Thursday, 16 November 2023 of Streetscene Scrutiny Panel

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Streetscene Scrutiny Panel held on Thursday, 16 November 2023 be received.

13. QUESTIONS UNDER STANDING ORDER 2.12

Questions by Councillor N Gregory:

1. Can the Executive Member please give guarantees that all new homes/ builds within the Borough have been subjected to the "Local Government Finance Act 1988 – 1992"?
2. From my understanding of this Act, can you confirm that the companies responsible for the construction of the Wellborne new build development of 7000 houses will be subject to council revenue income through this act via Council Tax bills of £7,560,000.00 once the properties are within 3 months of completion **and** that Fareham Borough Council will be imposing this. The way I have worked this out is that The Act allows the Council to apply council tax 3 months before the buildings are signed off from building control and issued a certificate of completion and then a further 12 weeks is required by solicitors for conveyancing work once the property is sold. So I have based this calculation on 7000 houses at Band c, £180 per month x 6 months.

Answers

1. Yes, as far as I am aware.
2. Yes, subject to the correction of the number of houses which therefore means the calculations are incorrect based on an incorrect starting number. The spelling of Welborne, as set out in the Motion, was also incorrect.

14. MOTIONS UNDER STANDING ORDER 2.6

- (1) Notice of Motion dated 23 November 2023 received from Councillor Mrs K K Trott.

A notice of Motion was presented by Councillor Mrs C Bainbridge on behalf of Councillor Mrs K K Trott:

“Boys need Bins.

This Council notes:

- Prostate cancer is the most common cancer in men. As many as 69% of those treated with surgery may experience urinary incontinence as a result.
 - 1 in 25 men aged over 40 will experience some form of urinary leakage every year.
 - At the 2021 Fareham census there were 31,668 men over 40.
 - That 1 in 40 figure gives us 1,266. The number who will benefit, if this Motion is agreed, will be higher as we consider Fareham's population is older than 'average' and visitors would also benefit.
 - 1 in 20 men aged 60 or over will experience bowel incontinence in the UK.
- Men who need to dispose of their sanitary waste (*including incontinence pads, pouches, stoma, catheter, colostomy, ileostomy waste by-products*), often have no direct access to a sanitary bin in male toilets.
- A survey of men living with incontinence revealed that 95% feel anxiety due to a lack of sanitary bins in men's toilets for disposing of pads hygienically.
- Nearly one third of men surveyed have been forced to carry their own waste in a bag.

This Council believes:

- that men should be able to safely and hygienically dispose of incontinence products easily and with dignity wherever they go.

- that men who need to dispose of their sanitary waste should have direct access to sanitary bins in male toilets.

This Council resolves:

- That the Executive Member for Streetscene should consider as soon as reasonably practicable the provision of at least one sanitary bin in all Council male toilets, both public and in Council buildings.
- To encourage other providers of public and workplace toilets in our area to make **male sanitary bins** available in their facilities.
- To support Prostate Cancer UK's '**Boys need Bins**' campaign.
- That the Executive Leader should write on behalf of the Council to our local MPs asking them to support Prostate Cancer UK's '**Boys need Bins**' campaign and their request for Government to update any necessary regulations to ensure that 'suitable' means for the disposal of sanitary dressings' is provided in all toilets."

Having been duly proposed by Councillor Mrs C Bainbridge and seconded by Councillor P M Nother, the motion was referred to the relevant Scrutiny Panel for consideration.

- (2) Notice of Motion dated 26 November 2023 received from Councillor Mrs C Bainbridge

A notice of Motion was presented by Councillor Mrs C Bainbridge:

"Climate & Ecology Bill motion

(Last Updated 20/10/23)

Preamble

Humans have already caused irreversible climate change, the impacts of which are being felt in the UK, and across the world. The average global temperature has already increased by 1.2°C above pre-industrial levels and—alongside this—the natural world has reached crisis point, with 28% of plants and animals threatened with extinction. In addition, the UK is one of the most nature-depleted countries in the world as more than one in seven of our plants and animals face extinction, and more than 40% are in decline.

Climate change remains a major concern for UK voters with 66% of people (according to YouGov) expressing they are 'worried about climate change and its effects'. Alongside this, the popularity of Sir David Attenborough's *Save Our Wild Isles* initiative demonstrates public concern that UK wildlife is being destroyed at a terrifying speed.

Climate & Ecology Bill

The Climate & Ecology Bill, a private member's bill currently before the House of Commons, seeks to address the challenges that this situation poses by creating a whole-of-government approach to deliver a net zero and nature positive future.

Based on the latest science, the CE Bill aims to align current UK environmental policy with the need to halt and reverse nature loss by 2030, which was goal agreed to at COP15, via the *Kunming-Montreal Framework* (22 December 2022); and reduce greenhouse gas emissions in line with the UK's fair share of the remaining global carbon budget to give the strongest chance of limiting global heating to 1.5°C, which was the goal agreed to at COP21, via the *Paris Agreement* (12 December 2015).

By bridging the gap between the UK Government's current delivery, and what has been agreed at international levels, Britain has a chance to be a world leader on climate and the environment; seizing the opportunities of the clean energy transition, including green jobs and skills; reduced energy bills; and boosting the UK's food and energy security.

Fareham Council notes that:

The Climate and Ecology Bill has been introduced in the UK Parliament on four occasions since 2020, including most recently in the House of Commons 10 May 2023. The Bill is backed by **180** cross-party MPs and Peers, **250** local authorities, alongside the support of eminent scientists, such as Sir David King; NGOs, such as the Wildlife Trusts, the Doctors' Association, Oxfam, the W.I. and CPRE; businesses, such as The Co-operative Bank, Riverford and The Body Shop; and 42,000 members of the public.

The CE Bill would require the UK Government to develop and achieve a new environmental strategy, which would include:

1. Delivering a joined-up environmental plan, as the crises in climate and nature are deeply intertwined, and require a plan that considers both together;
2. Reducing greenhouse gas emissions in line with 1.5°C to ensure emissions are reduced in line with the best chance of meeting the UK's Paris Agreement obligations;
3. Not only halting, but also reversing the decline in nature, setting nature measurably on the path to recovery by 2030;
4. Taking responsibility for our overseas footprint, both emissions and ecological;
5. Prioritising nature in decision-making, and ending fossil fuel production and imports as rapidly as possible;
6. Providing for re-training for those people currently working in fossil fuel industries; and

7. Giving the British people a say in finding a fair way forward via a temporary, independent and representative *Climate & Nature Assembly*, as part of creating consensus and ensuring that no one and no community is left behind.

Fareham Council therefore resolves to:

1. Support the Climate and Ecology Bill;
2. Inform local residents and inform local press/media of this decision;
3. Write to **Suella Braverman MP** to inform them that this motion has been passed, and urge them to sign up to support the CE Bill—or thank them for already doing so;
4. Write to Zero Hour, the organisers of the cross-party campaign for the CE Bill, expressing Fareham Councils support (councils@zerohour.uk).

At the invitation of the Mayor, Councillor S D Martin, Executive Member for Planning and Development thanked Councillor Mrs Bainbridge for the submission of the motion and made the following statement:

I look forward to the discussion of this matter when it is raised at the upcoming Climate Change Scrutiny panel.

As I hope members will know, this bill amongst other things is to require the UK to achieve climate and nature targets and to give the Secretary of State a duty to implement a strategy to achieve those targets. This would also include the reversion of the decline in nature taking responsibility for our emissions and improving for biodiversity.

These matters are important particularly in light of the new agreement made at COP28 this week.

Since approving our first Climate Change Action Plan in 2020, the Council has reported annually on its progress alongside our operational carbon footprint, which reduced by 22% between 2020 and 2023. Our extensive use of Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil, a low carbon fuel, within our vehicle fleet has contributed greatly to this reduction.

Whilst we have made strong progress, challenges to achieving our 2030 carbon neutral commitment remain. Options for reducing the emissions from our ageing and energy inefficient operational buildings are currently being explored and could support potential future funding bids.

However, ambitious proposals are also being developed for a 3.5MW Solar Farm in the west of the Borough, which could help offset emissions and raise much needed revenue.

All of our new housing properties and larger development projects such as Fareham Live incorporate a range of green technologies. Our Housing service has committed to a number of initiatives to help mitigate climate

change as part of the 'Fareham Housing Greener Policy' and energy efficiency improvements have been installed in over 150 Fareham Housing properties, benefiting tenants at risk of fuel poverty.

We continue to embrace our leadership role across the Borough, working with partners to promote energy efficiency schemes such as Warmer Homes and Solar Together, allowing hundreds of our residents to reduce their carbon footprints and energy bills.

Given the important and precious natural environment in Fareham, we also have a strong focus and delivery record on natural environmental issues.

We continue to take a lead, sometimes at a national level, on the delivery of nutrient mitigation to deliver much need housing and ensure our waters are protected.

Our support of the New Forest environmental disturbance has led to significant investment in our own sites in Fareham. Our approach to securing wider environmental benefits has delivered significant new and improved open space including Queen Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee Park and Abbey Meadows.

We have adopted a proactive approach to the incoming legal requirement for a 10% increase in biodiversity on development sites and have both an adopted Local Plan policy and an innovative approach to delivering biodiversity units on council owned land.

Looking forward, there is a clear need for an integrated Environment Strategy which pulls together these interconnected strands, placing them at the heart of our work.

A position statement setting our current environment projects and programmes will be presented to Council on 23 February 2024, following consideration by our Climate Change and Planning and Development Scrutiny Panels. A detailed Environment Strategy will then follow later in the year.

Having been duly proposed by Councillor Mrs C Bainbridge and seconded by Councillor D J Hamilton, the Motion was referred to a Planning & Development led Scrutiny Panel with Climate Change Scrutiny Panel members invited to attend.

15. APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES

There were no changes to appointments to committees.

Before concluding the meeting, the Mayor invited Members to 'hold the date' of the 19 April 2024 for the Mayor's Charity Ball.

(The meeting started at 6.00 pm

and ended at 6.29 pm).

..... Chairman

..... Date