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SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

Meeting of The Council

Date: Thursday, 21st March, 2024

Place: Council Chamber - Civic Suite

Present: Councillor S Habermel (Chair)
Councillors K Robinson, B Beggs, M Berry, M Borton, H Boyd, K Buck, S Buckley, P Collins, J Courtenay, D Cowan, T Cowdrey, T Cox, M Davidson, A Dear, M Dent, F Evans, N Folkard, D Garston, S George, J Harland, L Hyde, A Jones, D Jones, J Lamb, A Line, R McMullan, J Moyies, C Mulrone, D Nelson, M O'Connor, M Stafford, M Terry, S Wakefield, N Ward, J Warren, P Wexham, R Woodley, S Aylen, C Campbell, O Cartey, R Longstaff, C Nevin, D Richardson and K Murphy

Start/End Time: 6.45 - 11.02 pm

118 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Burton, Gilbert, Jarvis, Leroy, Sadza and Walker.

119 Declarations of Interest

The following declarations of interest were made:

(a) Cllr Mulrone (Minute 123 – Public question 21) – Member of Leigh Town Council to which the question refers.

(b) Cllr Anne Jones (Minute 123 – public question 17) – relative works within the service area referred to in the question.

(c) Cllr Buckley - (Minute 123 – Public question 21) – partner is Member of Leigh Town Council to which the question refers.

120 Communications

Waste Collection Contract Procurement

The Mayor informed Councillors of the inclusion of the waste collection procurement matter as an urgent item of business on the agenda this evening. This matter will be taken immediately following the presentation of petition under item 9 on the agenda.

Quantock Tower Block Fire

The Mayor invited Councillor Garston to address the Council concerning the fire at the Quantock Tower Block earlier today.

121 Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 14 December 2023

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 14 December 2023 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

122 Minutes of the Meeting held on Thursday, 22 February 2024

Resolved:-

That the Minutes of the Meeting held on Thursday, 22 February 2024 be confirmed as a correct record and signed.

123 Questions from Members of the Public

The relevant Cabinet Member responded to written questions received from the public.

124 Questions from Members of the Council

The relevant Cabinet Members responded to written and supplementary questions received from Councillors.

125 Leader of the Council Update

The Leader of the Council addressed the Council and provided a brief overview of the work of the Cabinet. The Group Leaders and Councillors Ayles, Longstaff and Murphy responded.

126 Petition - Ironworks

Councillor Line presented a petition signed by residents calling on the Council to support the Ironworks community hub.

Resolved:

That in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 19.7 the petition be referred to the Cabinet for consideration.

127 Waste Collection Contract Procurement (referred from Cabinet on 14th March 2024)

The Council considered a joint report of the Executive Director (Finance and Resources) and Executive Director (Environment and Place) concerning the Waste Collection Contract Procurement which was included on the agenda as an urgent item of business.

The Mayor advised Councillors that this was an Executive matter and a special meeting of the Cabinet to determine the matter would be held on Thursday, 4 April 2024 commencing at 6.30pm.

Resolved:

That the submitted report and suggestions raised at the Place Scrutiny Committee on 11 March 2024 (Appendix 3) and at the Drop-in session on 19 March 2024 (Appendix 4), be noted.

128 **Outside Bodies**

The Council considered a report of the Executive Director (Strategy and Change) presenting the final report and recommendations of the Outside Bodies Task and Finish Group.

Resolved:

1. That the final report and recommendations arising from the Outside Bodies Task and Finish Group, as set out at Appendix A to the submitted report and below, be approved:

(a) That with effect from the commencement of the municipal year 2024/25, the Council no longer appoint representatives to the outside bodies set out in Appendix 1 to the final report.

(b) That with effect from the commencement of the municipal year 2024/25, the Council appoint representatives to the Outside Bodies set out at Appendix 2.

(c) That the number of Outside Bodies to which the Council currently appoints Councillor representatives is regularly reviewed using an appropriate set of criteria for establishing whether Councillor representation is appropriate. An annual 'light-touch' review would be undertaken each year by Democratic Services and Executive Directors, with a more detailed review to be undertaken in consultation with Councillors every 4 years (or as appropriate). The criteria to which appointments should be made to an Outside Body are where:

i) The authority has a statutory duty to be involved.

ii) It is essential to the work of the Council and delivery of its service area.

iii) Cabinet Members/Councillors are required to attend because of their specific role in the Council.

iv) The Outside Body/City Council would derive a significant benefit from the engagement of a Councillor.

d) That consideration be given to appointing Councillors according to their knowledge and expertise of a subject.

e) That all Councillors who are appointed to Outside Bodies will be expected to provide a monthly update (if appropriate) and an annual report to feedback any key points from their attendance on the Outside Bodies.

f) That Democratic Services support Councillors appointed to Outside Bodies by Council or Cabinet, in accordance with the process set out at Appendix 4.

g) As part of the induction process Councillors are supported in developing an understanding of their role and responsibilities regarding participation on Outside Bodies and provided with appropriate guidance.

h) That an Outside Body is free to request an alternate Council representative on the understanding that the replacement will be chosen by Council, not the outside body (e.g. repeated non-attendance at meetings without good reasons offers valid grounds for an Outside Body to request an alternative Council representative). The Council should also be permitted to replace its representative(s) on the grounds of regular non-attendance at meetings of an Outside Body without other good reason.

i) An Outside Body is free to inform the Council at any time that Council representation is no longer required (if its Constitution allows it to do so).

j) That for ease of reference, Cabinet Member only appointments be separated (if possible) from the main Outside Bodies appointee list but circulated for information only.

k) Those nominations to Local Government Association sub-groups, special interest groups or commissions be determined by the Leader of the Council (as Cabinet Member appointments).

l) That officer only memberships be removed from the Outside Bodies appointment list, as this is dealt with under a separate process.

129 Standing Orders - Changes to Council Meeting Procedures

The Council considered a report of the Executive Director (Strategy and Change) presenting changes to Council meeting procedure rules to make the meetings more effective, known as 'standing orders'.

Resolved:

1. That the proposed changes to the Council Procedure Rules, set out at Appendix A to the submitted report, be adopted.

2. That the separate procedure rules for Committees, Overview and Scrutiny Committees and Working Parties, as set out in Appendices B, C, and D to the report, be approved.

3. That minor revisions to the Contract Procedure Rules and Finance Procedure Rules, to make clear the procedures for key decisions relating to contracts, be approved.

4. That the Monitoring Officer be authorised to make minor revisions to the Constitution in response to organisational changes as necessary and appropriate.

130 Notice of Motion - Replacement of Paving Slabs

In accordance with Standing Order 20, a Notice of Motion concerning the replacement of paving slabs was submitted to Council by Councillor Aylen and seconded by Councillor Cowdrey.

Resolved:

That the Notice of Motion concerning the replacement paving slabs, set out below, be referred to the Cabinet for consideration:

'The policy of replacing paving slabs with a bitumastic type surface was voted through by the Southend council chamber. It was promoted on the information that imperial sized slabs could not be obtained only metric ones making it very difficult to replace broken slabs. Some of the slabs have been in place for over 100years and remain undamaged. The environmental implications have now changed, so too has the councils commitment to reduce its carbon footprint.

Not declared to Councillors at the time was the following skeleton facts regarding costs environmental damage street scene damage , health risks and services of underground facilities. The environmental damage bitumastic surface is continues polluting to the atmosphere and therefore never becomes environmental neutral. slabs are environmentally neutral after 12years.

For every 50 yards of bitumastic surface to offset the environmental impact two trees are required. Bitumastic by its chemical make-up encourages weed growth. The surface of bitumastic does not allow drain through were as slabs do, this adding to excess surface water and footway puddling. The flow off of bitumastic contains Flux oil that pollutes water courses. Bitumastic surface freezes over, compared to slabs creating a slippery surface forcing residents to walk in the road.

Summer creates higher temperatures with bitumastic compared to slabs preventing dogs wildlife using footways. bitumastic surface absorbs light compared with slabs, so streetlights have to be brighter to give the same illumination as slab foot ways.

Health, bitumastic as quoted by Southend city council the material is poison to pets wildlife and small children.

Costs currently Southend Council are charged £24 to remove broken slabs and £14 to buy back the crushed slabs for under fill. Any serviceable slabs we are assured are put in storage. but to remove slabs the contractor's smash them as health and safety does not permit the contractor to lift them complete due to the weigh.

The Council were not offered the cheaper solution for small sites to lift, level and repack slabs using a small amount of sand. Instead, even good slabs are smashed up and removed to be replaced with bitumastic. The material now being used does not offer a low slip surface, like older materials, thus exposing the council to increase claims for slipping incidents.

Therefore this Council resolves:

To relook at the cost benefit and whole life costs of the current council policy taking into account the environmental and cost impact as well as the disruption to the public and that the Council cannot replace Paving slabs as the current suppliers are unable to supply imperial ones. This is despite the fact that since 1971 council policy has been to only use metric slabs so replacement slabs are available if replacement of post 1971 slabs is required.'

131 Notice of Motion - Chichester Road Right Turn

In accordance with Standing Order 20, a Notice of Motion concerning the right turn at the Chichester Road junction was submitted to Council by Councillor Woodley and seconded by Councillor Cowdrey.

On consideration of the Notice of Motion the Leader of the Council agreed to bring a report to Cabinet on the matter.

Resolved:

That the Notice of Motion set out below concerning the right turn at Chichester Road junction be referred to Cabinet for consideration:

'In removing the right turn into Tylers Avenue this will enable Chichester Road to be narrowed at this junction which in turn will enable the footpath to be widened around the tree in doing so will protect it from destruction.

This Council therefore resolves:

To remove the right turn from Chichester Road into Tylers Avenue.'

132 Calendar of Meetings 2024/2025

Resolved:

That the submitted Calendar of Meetings 2024/25, be endorsed.

Chair: _____