

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

Meeting of Place Scrutiny Committee

Date: Monday, 8th July, 2024

Place: Committee Room 1 - Civic Suite

Present: Councillor C Mulroney (Chair)
Councillors S Badger (Vice-Chair), S Allen, M Borton, K Buck,
C Campbell, T Cox, A Dear, I Ferguson, R Longstaff, K Murphy,
S Nadeem, D Nelson*, J Norman, M O'Connor, S Wakefield and
J Warren

(*Substitute in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 30.)

In Attendance: Councillors D Cowan, I Gilbert and L Hyde (Cabinet Members) and
Councillor M Dent.
A Richards, G Halksworth, T Holland, N Hoskins, G Webb and S Cox

Start/End Time: 6.30 - 8.25 pm

8 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor D Jones (substitute: Councillor D Nelson).

9 Declarations of Interest

Councillor S Wakefield – Minute No.12 (Better Queensway Update) – sub-contractor of South Essex Homes.

A Richards, Executive Director of Environment and Place – Minute No. 12 (Better Queensway Update) – Director on Porters Place Southend-on-Sea LLP, the Joint Venture delivering the Better Queensway regeneration project and the lead officer on PSP Southend LLP.

10 Questions from Members of the Public

There were no questions from members of the public relating to the responsibilities of the Committee.

11 Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday 17th June 2024

Resolved:-

That the Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday 17th June 2024 be confirmed as a correct record and signed.

12 Better Queensway Update

The Committee received a report from the Executive Director for Environment and Place, by way of pre-Cabinet Scrutiny, that presented a series of

recommendations to enable the large-scale multi-phase Better Queensway Project, including the road scheme, to continue.

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Major Projects and Regulatory Services briefly summarised the history behind the Better Queensway Project for information purposes and the Committee asked a number of clarification questions.

The Committee discussed the report in some detail and asked questions that were responded to by the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Major Projects and Regulatory Services and appropriate officers, these included:

- The bidding process and concerns regarding re-alignment of highways plans.
- External due diligence of the bidding process and projected costings.
- Market research regarding office space.
- The impact the development would have on traffic flow around the town centre.
- 'Sunk costs' to date, the impact that the proposed additional works would have on further expenditure that could cause greater financial risk.
- The deadline date of the 'Get Building Fund' and the achievability of the proposed project.
- The water attenuation tank and the costs/responsibilities associated with this.

In accordance with Council procedure rule 21.1, Councillor D Nelson moved a motion to revise the wording of recommendation at 2.2 and introduced an additional recommendation at 2.4, as set out below. This was seconded by Councillor K Buck.

Proposed motion to change recommendations as set out in the original report:

That the Cabinet be recommended to delete from recommendation 2.2 the Highway works, except for demolition of the footbridge, and instead add a further recommendation at 2.4; That Portfolio Holders, the Leader of the Council and Group Leaders write to the Minister responsible asking for the Housing Infrastructure Funding (HIF) to be used for the delivery of housing in place of the highway works that were proposed. To invite local MP's to also support this proposal.

In accordance with Council procedure rule 26.1, Part 4(a) of the Council's Constitution, Councillors T Cox, K Buck, D Nelson and C Campbell requested a recorded vote be undertaken and entered into the minutes.

A recorded vote took place on the proposed new recommendation 2.2 and new recommendation 2.4, the result of which was:

For: Councillors K Buck, C Campbell, T Cox, A Dear, R Longstaff, K Murphy, D Nelson and J Warren (8).

Against: S Badger, S Allen, M Borton, I Ferguson, C Mulroney, S Nadeem, J Norman, M O'Connor and S Wakefield. (9)

Whereupon the Chair declared that the motion was lost.

A vote took place on the substantive recommendations that were included in the original report, the result of which was:

For: Councillors S Badger, S Allen, M Borton, I Ferguson, C Mulroney, S Nadeem, J Norman, M O'Connor and S Wakefield. (9)

Against: Councillors K Buck, C Campbell, T Cox, A Dear, R Longstaff, D Nelson and J Warren (7).

Abstain: Councillor K Murphy (1)

The Chair declared that the recommendations to Cabinet be carried.

Resolved:

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- 2.1 Approves to continue with the Reserved Matters Application for Phase 1a (the first phase of housing) and to proceed with the procurement of a partner to submit a planning application to bring forward the development of the area occupied by the existing temporary Essex Street Car Park, as set out in Section 4 – Phase 1a of this report.
- 2.2. Approves to the commencement of the highways work in line with the consented outline planning application, conditionally granted on 6th September 2021 which states bringing the Queensway underpass up to grade, creating a new roundabout and providing a new 4-lane carriage way with associated footpath. Further details set out in Sections 3.2, and at Appendix 1.
- 2.3 Notes the need to provide additional resource funding for the proposed project for the remainder of 2024/25 and futures years and that once that resource requirement is established this is subject to a further cabinet decision and will then need Council approval for addition to the Capital Investment Programme.

Note: This is an Executive function.
Cabinet Member: Councillor I Gilbert.

Chair: _____