

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

Meeting of Place Scrutiny Committee

Date: Monday, 28th November, 2022

Place: Council Chamber - Civic Suite

Present: Councillor J Courtenay (Chair)
Councillors S Buckley, B Beggs*, M Berry, M Borton, T Cox*,
M Davidson, M Dent, L Hyde, D Jarvis, A Jones, M Kelly, J Moyies,
A Thompson, P Wexham and R Woodley
(*Substitute in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 31.)

In Attendance: Councillors S George, C Mulroney, M Terry, S Wakefield (Cabinet Members) and K Evans
J Burr, S Dolling, J Gay, S Harrington and T Row

Start/End Time: 6.30 pm - 11.10 pm

500 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Buck (substitute: Councillor Beggs), Warren (substitute: Councillor Cox) and Ward (no substitute).

501 Declarations of Interest

The following interests were declared at the meeting:

(i) Councillors George, Mulroney, Terry and Wakefield (Cabinet Members) - Interest in the items referred direct; attended pursuant to the dispensation agreed at Council on 19 July 2012, under S.33 of the Localism Act 2011;

(ii) Councillors Berry, Dent, Hyde and Mulroney Minute No. 502 (Public Questions) – One of the questioners is known to them;

(iii) Councillor Borton – Minute No. 504 (Parking Strategy), Minute No. 507 (Annual Parking and Enforcement Report 2021/22) and Minute No. 508 (Highways Update Report) – Husband is a blue badge holder;

(iv) Councillor Cox – Minute No. 507 (Annual Parking and Enforcement Report 2021/22) – Daughter attend Richmond Avenue Primary School which was mentioned in the debate; and

(v) Councillor Anne Jones – Minute No. 504 (Parking Strategy), Minute No. 507 (Annual Parking and Enforcement Report 2021/22) and Minute No. 508 (Highways Update Report) – One of her sons works in Passenger Transport).

502 Questions from Members of the Public

The Committee noted the responses of the Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport & Parking to two questions from Donna Richardson and the responses

from the Cabinet Member for Public Protection and the Cabinet Member for Environment, Culture and Tourism to questions by David Webb.

503 Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday, 10th October, 2022

Resolved:-

That the Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 10th October 2022 be received, confirmed as a correct record and signed.

504 Parking Strategy

The Committee considered Minute No. 460 of Cabinet held on Tuesday, 8th November 2022, which had been called-in for scrutiny, together with the report of the Interim Director (Neighbourhoods and the Environment) which presented the Southend Parking Strategy 2022-2032 and Southend Parking Implementation Plan 2022-2032 and action plan.

The Committee discussed the report in some detail and asked a number of questions of the Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Parking. The Committee noted the low level of response to the consultation and questioned why the consultation had been undertaken solely via the “Your Say” facility on the Southend on Sea City Council’s website. It also expressed its concern at the inclusion of policies listed in paragraph 3.5 of the submitted report, particularly in relation to the potential partial pedestrianisation of the seafront, within the strategy.

The Cabinet Member explained that the Strategy, Implementation Plan and action plan were live, working documents and that the policies referred to in paragraph 3.5 of the submitted report were prioritised concepts that had been identified through the public consultation exercise for the highways department to progress. By way of clarification, he offered to amend the wording of the decision to reflect this and gave assurance that any proposals to progress these would be subject to reports through the Council’s decision-making process and public consultation where necessary.

The Committee concluded, however, that the wording of the report and documents and the decision of Cabinet were misleading and confused and should therefore be reconsidered. The Committee offered its support in the preparation of a new strategy or the amendment of the existing draft documents by way of the pre-Cabinet Scrutiny process.

Resolved:-

That the matter be referred back to Cabinet for reconsideration for with the following recommendations:

- further clarity to be given in respect of the policies referred to in paragraph 3.5 of the submitted report and resolution 2, what the proposals are and how they form part of the finalised Southend Parking Strategy; and

- the knock-on effect of any changes of this based on the approval of the Southend Vision for Parking, Southend Parking Strategy 2022-2032, Southend Parking Implementation Plan 2022-2032 and Action Plan as detailed in resolution 3.

Note: This is an Executive function
Cabinet Member: Councillor Wakefield

505 City of Culture Bid

The Committee considered Minute No. 461 of Cabinet held on Tuesday, 8th November 2022, which had been called-in for scrutiny, together with the report of the Executive Director (Adults and Communities) setting out the implications of a possible bid for the UK City of Culture competition.

Resolved:-

That the following decision of Cabinet be noted:

“That the potential benefits of developing a City of Culture bid in the future, be noted. However, as a fledging City, which alongside the City’s residents and businesses, is faced with the cost of living crisis, inflation and significant pressures in adult and children’s social care, it is considered inappropriate to incur any expenditure in relation to a bid in the 2029 competition.”

Note: This is an Executive function
Cabinet Member: Councillor Mulrone

506 Minutes of the Public Protection Working Party held Thursday, 6 October 2022

The Committee considered Minute No. 467 of Cabinet held on Tuesday, 8th November 2022, which had been called-in for scrutiny. This concerned the recommendations of the Public Protection Working Party from its meeting held on Thursday, 6th October 2022.

In response to questions, the Council’s Interim Head of Waste and Climate Change undertook to investigate the possibility of reporting levels of fly-tipping, misrepresented waste and associated enforcement action on the Waste Dashboard more frequently and preferably on a monthly basis.

Resolved:-

That the following decisions of Cabinet be noted:

“1. That the Notice of Motion seeking the establishment of an online ‘Wall of Shame’ to highlight incidences of flytipping and environmental crime across Southend, be noted.

2. That the Interim Executive Director (Neighbourhoods and Environment) work with the Council’s current waste management contractor to identify opportunities for the enhancement of the current approach to the tackling of incidences of flytipping and environmental crime.

3. That a report be made to a future meeting of the Cabinet setting out fully costed and evaluated options for the enhancement of the Council's current approach to the tackling of incidences of flytipping and environmental crime, including the potential establishment of a 'Wall of Shame' as proposed by the Notice of Motion and the possible expansion of the Council's CCTV infrastructure.

4. That in the meantime:

(a) Officers continue to provide appropriate education for councillors and the public on flytipping and mispresented waste and associated enforcement action.

(b) Officers continue to provide councillors with the quarterly 'Waste Dashboard' reporting levels of flytipping and mispresented waste across the City."

Note: This is an Executive function

Cabinet Member: Councillor Terry

507 Annual Parking & Enforcement Report 2021/22

The Committee considered Minute No. 445 of Cabinet Committee held on Monday, 7th November 2022, which had been called-in for scrutiny, together with the report of the Interim Executive Director (Neighbourhoods and Environment) that provided an overview of the annual parking report and performance for 2021/22 which must be published publicly in accordance with the requirements of the Traffic Management Act 2004 (TMA).

In response to questions the Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Parking, undertook to:

- investigate the possibility of reporting the parking enforcement information on the monthly service area dashboard for Councillors;
- provide the Committee with the details of the number of Southend Passes that had been issued;
- investigate whether there was any signage for the Gas Works Car Park for traffic travelling east to west and to erect some if required; and
- confirm when the Greenways School Streets scheme would be re-instated.

Resolved:-

That the following decision of Cabinet Committee be noted:

"That the report be noted."

Note: This is an Executive function.

Cabinet Member: Councillor Wakefield

508 Highways Update Report

The Committee considered Minute No. 446 of Cabinet Committee held on Monday, 7th November 2022, which had been called-in for scrutiny, together with the report of the Interim Executive Director (Neighbourhoods and Environment) that provided an annual update on the implementation of the highway asset management approach to managing the City's highway infrastructure.

In response to questions, the Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Parking gave his assurance to investigate why only a short section of Delaware Road had been resurfaced when it had been listed for the entire length to be done and would confirm when this would be completed.

Resolved:-

That the following decision of Cabinet be noted:

“That the report be noted.”

Note: This is an Executive function
Cabinet Member: Councillor Wakefield

509 In-depth Scrutiny Project 2022/23 - Preparing Southend for the EV Revolution - Update

The Committee noted an oral update on the progress that had been made in respect of the in-depth scrutiny project entitled “Preparing Southend for the EV revolution.”

Resolved:-

That the report be noted.

This is a Scrutiny function.

510 Council Procedure Rule 44.2

During the consideration of Minute 505 (City of Culture Bid) and upon the hour of 10.00 p.m. having been reached, the Committee:

Resolved:-

That, in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 44.2, all remaining items of business be dealt with at the meeting.

Chair: _____