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SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

Meeting of The Council

Date: Thursday, 7th September, 2023

Place: Council Chamber - Civic Suite

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

Start/End Time: 6.30 pm - 11.02 pm

49 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Beggs, Buckley, Jarvis, Lamb, Murphy, Walker and Wexham.

50 Declarations of Interest

The following declarations of interest were made:

(a) Cllr Buck – Minute 62 (Notice of Motion – Belfairs Park) – Member of Belfairs Golf Club for 30 years and former member of the Board.

(b) Councillor Collins - Minute 65 (Notice of Motion: Securing a Future for Southend United Football Club) – former season ticket holder of SUFC and lifelong supporter.

(c) Cllr Dent – Minute 60 (Notice of Motion – Stand in opposition to potential closure of Rail Station Ticket Offices in Southend-on-Sea) – Regular rail user.

(d) Cllr A Jones – Minute 60 (Notice of Motion – Stand in opposition to potential closure of Rail Station Ticket Offices in Southend-on-Sea) – son is employed by C2C.

(e) Cllr Line – Minute 65 (Notice of Motion: Securing a Future for Southend United Football Club) – Co-founder of Fans Supporting Southend Foodbanks.

(e) Cllr McMullan – Minute 60 (Notice of Motion: To stand in opposition to potential closure of Rail Station Ticket Offices in Southend-on-Sea) – Employer is a major shareholder in Greater Anglia.

(f) Cllr Terry – Minute 65 (Notice of Motion: Securing a Future for Southend United Football Club (SUFC) – Council appointed member to South Essex Homes Board and season ticket holder at SUFC).

(g) Cllr Wakefield – Minute 63 (Notice of Motion: Sheltered Accommodation Heating and Energy Efficiency Improvements) – sub-contractor for South Essex Homes.

(h) Cllr Woodley – Minute 65 (Notice of Motion: Securing a Future for Southend United Football Club (SUFC) – Wife is a season ticket holder at SUFC.

51 Communications

(a) Introductions

The Mayor welcomed to the meeting, Kim Sawyer, Interim Director of Legal Services) and also congratulated Alan Richards on his recent appointment to the position of Executive Director (Environment and Place).

(b) Mayors Chaplain

The Mayor informed Councillors that this was the last meeting for the Mayor's Chaplain, Father Clive Hillman. The Mayor placed on record his thanks and appreciation for his services and extended his best wishes for the future.

52 Questions from Members of the Public

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

53 Questions from Members of the Council

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

54 Minutes of the meeting of Extraordinary Council held Thursday, 29 June 2023

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting of Extraordinary Council held Thursday, 29 June 2023, be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

55 Minutes of the meeting of Council held Thursday, 13 July 2023

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Council held Thursday, 13 July 2023, be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

56 Minutes of the meeting of Special Council held Thursday, 20 July 2023

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting of Special Council held Thursday, 20th July 2023, be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

57 Minutes of the meeting of Special Council held Monday, 24 July 2023

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting of Special Council held Monday, 24 July 2023, be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

58 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 Aylen and Longstaff responded.

59 Petition - Residents Parking in Osborne Road and Windsor Road

Councillor O'Connor presented a petition signed by 101 residents calling on the Council to introduce Residents Only Parking Permit system in Osborne Road and Windsor Road.

Resolved:

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

60 Notice of Motion - To stand in opposition to potential closure of Rail Station Ticket Offices in Southend-on-Sea

During consideration of this matter an amendment was proposed by Councillor Nelson and seconded by Councillor Cox. The amendment was carried.

Resolved:

That the Notice of Motion concerning the potential closure of Rail Station Ticket Offices in Southend-on-Sea, as amended to add the following bullet point, be referred to Cabinet for consideration:

- *To request from C2C and Greater Anglia their action plan to ensure the elderly and disabled are not disadvantaged.*

61 Notice of Motion - Enhancing Council Practices on Animal Welfare

Resolved:

That the Notice of Motion concerning enhancing Council practices on animal welfare, be referred to Cabinet for consideration.

62 Notice of Motion - Belfairs Park

During consideration of this matter an amendment was proposed by Councillor Buck and seconded by Councillor Courtenay. The amendment was carried.

Resolved:

That the Notice of Motion concerning Belfairs Park, as amended below, be referred to the Cabinet for consideration:

'To save unnecessary costs being incurred on conducting a full investigation into a long term and well known legacy issue, that the Council resolves to fund through the Council's golf course starter hut management service provider, a trial of a full time park ranger dedicated primarily to the golf course to collect unpaid green fees, but also to provide a sense of formal security to all park users.'

63 Notice of Motion - Sheltered Accommodation Heating and Energy Efficiency Improvements

Resolved:

That the Notice of Motion concerning sheltered accommodation hearing cost reduction and energy efficiency improvements, be referred to Cabinet for consideration.

64 Notice of Motion - Southend Urban Trees

Resolved:

That the amended Notice of Motion set out below, concerning Southend Urban Trees, be referred to Cabinet for consideration:

'They say an oak tree spends 300 years growing, 300 years living and 300 years dying. There are huge environmental and social implications to how a council values tree maintenance. This motion aims to improve our tree management, especially the management of declining trees, to maximise the benefits and lifespan of trees on council-owned or council-managed land.'

Southend's urban trees are assets of immense community value, providing tree canopy cover (TCC) which is proven to reduce 'urban heat island effect' that is the cause of an increasing number of fatalities across Europe due to climate heating.

Despite significant tree planting in recent years our TCC currently stands at 13% on average, and just 10% in Leigh-on-Sea. The value of mature trees cannot adequately be replaced by saplings so we must do more to retain our mature trees and to improve our current TCC to the Forestry Commission's recommendation of 15% at the very least.

More trees will bring many benefits to our city such as an improvement in air quality, greater local sequestering of carbon to aid our Net Zero ambitions, and a positive effect on the mental health of local people.

To maintain and increase our TCC we must seek to prolong the lifespans of our mature trees alongside planting thousands of new ones through a variety of methods including tree planting focused grant applications. This will require a progressive and pragmatic approach to tree management and a refinement of practices with a preservation-first approach.

Therefore, Southend-on-Sea City Council resolves to:

- 1. Establish a biodiversity and tree retention working party with observers from external organisations with knowledge and expertise in arboriculture and biodiversity. The remit of the working party will be to consider tree management and preservation, including assessing trees marked for removal, unless there is a perceived immediate risk, and to informally advise the administration on matters of tree preservation, maintenance, and biodiversity.*
- 2. Invoke an immediate moratorium on tree felling where there is not an immediate risk to the public until there has been a review of existing practices around maintenance and retention of highways trees to develop an alternative methodology toolbox to align with best practice under the Tree Design Action Group, the Forestry Commission and the Tree Council of Great Britain.*
- 3. Embed quality assurances procedures within a tree retention policy as part of best practice so that common scenarios can be actioned quickly and without ambiguity.*
- 4. Continuously seek funding opportunities to bid for to plant new trees.*
- 5. Review potential planting locations across the city and keep an up to date map for the use of tree officers and highways surveyors.*
- 6. Where practicable, seek to plant replacement trees as far in advance as possible of a removal.*
- 7. Where practicable, plant larger, more mature trees in build-outs at the end of double yellow line demarcations to alleviate pressure on our drainage system from stormwater attenuation and to preserve the integrity and longevity of our highways trees and nearby footpaths.'*

65 Notice of Motion - Securing a Future for Southend United Football Club

During consideration of this matter an amendment was proposed by Councillor Woodley and seconded by Councillor Terry. The amendment was carried.

Resolved:

That the Notice of Motion concerning securing the future of Southend United Football Club, as amended to add the following recommendation, be referred to Cabinet for consideration:

'To call a Special Council if Council investment would make the difference in saving the club, to consider an offer.'

66 Delivery of Southend Outcomes and Priorities - Annual Report and Provisional Outturn 2022/23

The Council had before it Minute 21 (Recommendations 2 to 11) of the Cabinet held on 18th July 2023 concerning the delivery of Southend Outcomes and Priorities.

Resolved:

That Minute 21 (Recommendations 2 to 11), be approved.

67 Official Feed and Food Control Service Plan 2023-24

The Council had before it Minute 23 of the Cabinet held on 18th July 2023 concerning the Feed and Food Control Service Plan.

Resolved:

That Minute 23 of Cabinet held 18th July 2023, be approved.

68 Removal of 6pm - 9pm Parking Charges and Enforcement in Zone 1A

The matter concerning Minute 9 (Recommendation 1) of Cabinet held on 28th June 2023, called-in to Special Place Scrutiny Committee on 24th July 2023 concerning the removal of 6-9pm parking charges was deferred.

69 Designation of Statutory Officer Roles

The Council considered the report of the Executive Director (Finance and Resources) seeking approval to the designation of statutory officer roles.

Resolved:

1. That the Monitoring Officer be designated to the post of Director of Legal Services with immediate effect.

2. That the Chief Executive, Rob Tinlin MBE, be appointed as the Council's Electoral Registration Officer and Returning Officer with immediate effect, in accordance with Sections 8 and 35 of the Representation of the People Act 1983 respectively.

70 Appointments to Committees, etc

Resolved:

That it be noted that Councillor Anne Jones will replace Councillor Nevin on the Appointments and Disciplinary Committee.

Chair: _____

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