

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

Meeting of Place Scrutiny Committee

Date: Monday, 30th January, 2023

Place: Jubilee Room - Civic Suite

Present: Councillor J Courtenay (Chair)
Councillors J Warren (Vice-Chair), M Berry, M Borton, K Buck,
S Buckley, T Cox*, M Davidson, M Dent, L Hyde, 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, P Collins, C Mulroney, M Terry, S Wakefield
(Cabinet Members) and K Evans
J Burr, A Richards, G Gilbert, N Hoskins, P Rabbitts, K Waters and
T Row

Start/End Time: 6.30 pm - 11.00 pm

638 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Jarvis (substitute: Councillor Cox) and Councillor Ward (no substitute).

639 Declarations of Interest

The following interests were declared at the meeting:

(i) Councillors Collins, 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) Councillor Berry – Minute No. 643 (Use of Section 106 Contributions) – Southend City Council appointed board member of Southend on Sea Forum Management Ltd. which was mentioned during the debate on the basis that the Forum/Focal Point Gallery had submitted the planning application;

(iii) Councillor Borton – Minute No. 644 (Grassland Management Policy) – Trustlinks was one of the charities supported by her during her Mayoral year (2021-22) which was mentioned during the debate;

(iv) Councillor Buck – Minute No. 644 (Grassland Management Policy) – Allotment holder;

(v) Councillor Buck – Minute No. 645 (Thorpe 20mph Neighbourhood) – Has had significant levels of contact from local residents on this matter;

(vi) Councillor Dent – Minute No. 645 (Thorpe 20mph Neighbourhood) – Has had contact from multiple local residents on this matter;

(vii) Councillor K Evans – Minute No. 644 (Grassland Management Policy) – Chair of Leigh Town Council and son works for Trustlinks both of which were mentioned during the debate;

(viii) Councillor Hyde – Minute No. 644 (Grassland Management Policy) – Allotment holder;

(ix) Councillor A Jones – Minute No.640 (Questions from Members of the Public) – Son works in the Council’s Strategic Transport Team which was mentioned;

(x) Councillor A Jones – Minute No. 644 (Grassland Management Policy) – Mention of bus stop greening, son works in the Council’s Strategic Transport Team and antisocial behaviour in Toledo Road was mentioned in the debate, which is near to her property;

(xi) Councillor Mulroney – Minute No. 646 (Thorpe 20mph Neighbourhood) – Mention of Leigh 20mph scheme which is located where she lives;

(xii) Councillor Thompson – Minute No. 643 (Use of Section 106 Contributions) – Southend City Council appointed board member of Southend on Sea Forum Management Ltd. which was mentioned during the debate on the basis that the Forum/Focal Point Gallery had submitted the planning application;

(xiii) Councillor Warren – Minute No. 644 (Grassland Management Policy) – Allotment holder; and

(xiv) Councillor Woodley – Minute No. 646 (Thorpe 20mph Neighbourhood) – Member of BERA which was mentioned during the debate.

640 Questions from Members of the Public

The Committee noted the responses of the Cabinet Member for Public Protection and the Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport & Parking to two questions from by Mr David Webb.

641 Minutes of the Special Meeting held on Thursday, 10th November, 2022

Resolved:-

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

642 Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday, 28th November, 2022

Resolved:-

That the Minutes of the meeting held on Monday, 28th November 2022 be received, confirmed as a correct record and signed.

643 Use of Section 106 Contributions

The Committee considered Minute No. 616 of Cabinet held on 12th January, 2023, which had been called-in to scrutiny, together with the report of the Executive Director (Growth & Housing) setting out the legality and wider implications of the motion of the Opposition Councillors (“Opposition Business”), referred to Cabinet by the Council on held on 15th December 2022.

The Committee discussed the matter in some detail and asked a number of questions which the Cabinet Member for Environment, Culture and Tourism and the Director of Planning responded to.

Resolved:-

1. That the matter be referred back to Cabinet for reconsideration on the basis that the report considered by Cabinet does not appear to address the points included in the motion in respect of the Development Control Committee being used to as a means implement Council policy and, in particular, the consultation and decisions should have been taken before the matter was referred to Development Control Committee for determination.

2. That, in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 39.2, the matter be referred to full Council for consideration. ||

Note: This is an Executive Function
Cabinet Member: Cllr Mulronev

644 Grassland Management Policy

The Committee considered Minute No. 621 of Cabinet held on 12th January 2023, which had been called-in to scrutiny, together with the report of the Executive Director (Neighbourhoods and Environment) presenting the Grassland Management Strategy which provides a framework for Southend-on-Sea City Council to improve the overall status and reduce losses in the diversity of pollinator species within the City.

The Committee discussed the matter in some detail and asked a number of questions that were responded to by the Cabinet Member for Environment, Culture & Planning and the Council’s Head of Parks and Open Spaces. The Committee felt there were a number of anomalies in the report, particularly in respect of cost savings and the lack of consultation with Ward Councillors and Residents’ Associations regarding the identification of appropriate areas prior to any decision being taken.

Resolved:-

1. That the matter be referred back to Cabinet for reconsideration.

2. That, in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 39.2, the matter be referred to full Council for consideration. ||

Note: This is an Executive Function
Cabinet Member: Cllr Mulroney

645 Southchurch Park Lake - Removal of Post and Rail

The Committee considered Minute No, 624 of Cabinet held on 12th January 2023, which had been called-in to scrutiny, together with the report of Executive Director (Neighbourhoods and Environment) seeking approval to replace small sections of the shin rail around the eastern section of the lake in Southchurch Park based on an agreed risk assessment.

The Committee discussed the matter in some detail and asked a number of questions that were responded to by the Cabinet Member for Environment, Culture & Planning and the Council's Head of Parks and Open Spaces.

In response to questions regarding the breakdown of the cost of replacing the fencing in terms of the labour and material costs, the Cabinet Member for Environment, Culture and Tourism undertook to circulate the details after the meeting.

In response to questions regarding the possibility of allocating £15,000 capital funding to the scheme, the Cabinet Member undertook to speak with the Executive Director (Finance & Resources) on this matter.

Resolved:-

That the matter be referred back to Cabinet for reconsideration to enable discussions between the Cabinet Member and the Executive Director (Finance & Resources) to take place on the possibility of allocating capital funding to enable the fencing to be installed around the lake.

Note: This is an Executive Function
Cabinet Member: Cllr Mulroney

646 Thorpe 20mph Neighbourhood

The Committee considered Minute No. 593 of Cabinet Committee held on 21st December 2022, which had been called-in for scrutiny, together with the report of the Executive Director (Neighbourhoods & Environment) that presented the results of the public consultation in respect of 20mph scheme proposals in Thorpe Ward.

Resolved:-

That the following decision of Cabinet Committee be noted:

“That neither Option A or B as set out in the public consultation be taken forward for construction at this time.”

Note: This is an Executive function
Cabinet Member: Cllr Wakefield.

647 In-depth Scrutiny Project - 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.

648 Council Procedure Rule 44.2

During consideration of Minute No. 645 (Southchurch Park Lake – Removal of Post and Rail) and upon the hour of 10.00pm 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: _____