

MINUTES OF COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS

At an Extraordinary Meeting of the Council for the Borough of Slough held at the Town Hall, Slough on Thursday, 23rd June, 2011 at 7.00 pm

Present:- The Worshipful the Mayor (Councillor S K Dhaliwal), in the chair;
Councillors Abe, Anderson, Bains, Basharat, Buchanan, Carter,
S Chaudhry, Coad, Dale-Gough, Dar, Davis, A S Dhaliwal (left at 7.30 pm
and returned at 9.12 pm), Grewal, Haines, M S Mann, P K Mann,
Matloob, Minhas, Munawar (left at 9.30 pm), O'Connor, Pantelic, Parmar,
Plenty, Plimmer, Qureshi, Rasib, Sharif, Small, Smith, Sohal, Stokes,
Strutton, Swindlehurst, Walsh and A S Wright

Apologies for Absence:- Councillors Chohan, P Choudhry, Dodds, Long and
S P Wright

10. Declarations of Interest

None.

11. Five Member Requisition- Ofsted report 'Inspection of safeguarding and looked after children services' published on the 1st June 2011.

It was moved by Councillor Anderson,
Seconded by Councillor Swindlehurst,

“That in accordance with Procedure Rule 27, Council Procedure Rule 16, Rules of debate, Content and Length of speeches, be suspended, to allow the Commissioner for Children’s Services to make a presentation to the Council on the Ofsted Report published on 1st June, 2011.

Following the presentation the debate will return to normal debate rules as set out in Procedure Rule 16 other than the Commissioner for Children’s Services being entitled to reply to points raised during debate without prejudice to her entitlement to speak generally in the debate on any recommendations/amendments”.

The motion was put and carried by 24 votes to 10 votes with 1 abstention, and on a show of hands, a prior request having been made, for a record of the voting:

There voted for the motion –

Councillors Anderson, Bains, Carter, S Chaudhry, Dar, Davis, A S Dhaliwal,
Grewal, M S Mann, P K Mann, Matloob, Minhas, Munawar, O'Connor, Pantelic,
Parmar, Plenty, Qureshi, Rasib, Sharif, Small, Sohal, Swindlehurst and Walsh

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There voted against the motion:

Councillors Abe, Basharat, Buchanan, Coad, Dale-Gough, Haines, Smith, Stokes, Strutton and A S Wright 10

There abstained from voting:

The Worshipful the Mayor 1

Councillor Pantelic made a presentation to the Council on the Ofsted Report published on 1st June, 2011.

(Councillor A S Dhaliwal left the meeting)
(Councillor Plimmer joined the meeting)

It was moved by Councillor Dale-Gough,
Seconded by Councillor Smith,

“That in light of the deplorable Ofsted inspection report of 1st June 2011 about Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Children as administered by Slough Borough Council Education and Children’s Services department, which rated the department as inadequate, the Leader of the Council should acknowledge responsibility and make a public apology as did the Leader of Kent County Council when they too received and overall rating of inadequate from Ofsted last year”.

The motion was put and lost by 11 votes to 23 votes with 1 abstention.

Councillor Stokes sought to move an amendment on the subject of child trafficking but this was ruled out of order by the Mayor as it was not considered as part of the Ofsted report.

It was moved by Councillor Smith,
Seconded by Councillor Plimmer,

“This Council recommends,

- A complete review of all 1200 or so cases currently on the books to be satisfied that we have got to the bottom of the problem-
 - The formation of a working party comprised of 2 representatives from each Group to set the terms of reference and agree the criteria for this review
 - A stipulation that this Group meet fortnightly to monitor progress and produce update reports for the Full Council Meetings of the 20th July and 29th September (the latter being the target date for completion)
 - Adequate resources are made available to the Education and Children's services department to fund the review and all the changes necessary for the attainment of minimum legal requirements in child safeguarding out of general fund reserves if need be.

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- A monthly meeting to review complaints reports relating to safeguarding and Looked After Children attended by the Director of Education and Children's Services plus the relevant Commissioner with a view to strengthening monitoring and auditing of case files.
- In addition to this we would like the following information to be made available:
 - How often did the Director of Education and Children's Services conduct Complaints Meetings to review complaints regulating Safeguarding and Looked After Children between October 2010 and May 2011.
 - How many complaints were dealt with at each meeting.
 - In what categories did they fall.
 - How many resulted in a change of status or risk status or operational procedure.
 - Who was present at each of these meetings”.

It was moved as an amendment by Councillor Stokes,

“That discussions be initiated with Senior Officers drawn from all of the organisations represented on the Slough Local Safeguarding Children’s Board in order to assess the extent of the serious problem of child trafficking”.

Councillors Smith and Plimmer as mover and seconder of the original motion confirmed that they were prepared to accept the proposed amendment which then became the substantive motion.

The motion was put and lost by 10 votes to 23 votes with 2 abstentions.

It was moved by Councillor Dale-Gough,
Seconded by Councillor Haines,

“This Council: -

- Regrets that the Commissioner for Education and Children's Services, Cllr Pantelic has failed to ensure that child safeguarding policies and procedures have been effectively enforced.
- This Council regrets that Commissioner for Education and Children's Services, Cllr Pantelic, has presided over a decline in the rating given to Child safeguarding in Slough Borough Council from Ofsted over her two year tenure.
- Calls for Cllr Pantelic to acknowledge her failure and step down accordingly from her post”.

The motion was put and lost by 11 votes to 23 votes with 1 abstention, and on a show of hands, a prior request having been made, for a record of the voting:

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There voted for the motion :-

Councillors Abe, Basharat, Buchanan, Coad, Dale-Gough, Haines, Plimmer, Smith, Stokes, Strutton and A S Wright 11

There voted against the motion :-

Councillors Anderson, Bains, Carter, S Chaudhry, Dar, Davis, Grewal, M S Mann, P K Mann, Matloob, Minhas, Munawar, O'Connor, Pantelic, Parmar, Plenty, Qureshi, Rasib, Sharif, Small, Sohal, Swindlehurst and Walsh 23

There abstained from voting:

The Worshipful the Mayor 1

(Councillor A S Dhaliwal rejoined the meeting)

It was moved by Councillor Coad,
Seconded by Councillor Abe,

"This Council recommends,

- In light of the damning Ofsted report Slough Borough Council received in regards to Child safeguarding on 1st June 2011, changes should be made to the management and structure of the Education and Children's Services department which showed systemic failure in its ability to safeguard children".

The motion was put and lost by 11 votes to 24 votes with 1 abstention, and on a show of hands, a prior request having been made, for a record of the voting:

There voted for the motion :-

Councillors Abe, Basharat, Buchanan, Coad, Dale-Gough, Haines, Plimmer, Smith, Stokes, Strutton and A S Wright 11

There voted against the motion :-

Councillors Anderson, Bains, Carter, S Chaudhry, Dar, Davis, A S Dhaliwal, Grewal, M S Mann, P K Mann, Matloob, Minhas, Munawar, O'Connor, Pantelic, Parmar, Plenty, Qureshi, Rasib, Sharif, Small, Sohal, Swindlehurst and Walsh 24

There abstained from voting:

The Worshipful the Mayor 1

(Councillor Munawar left the meeting)

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It was moved by Councillor Haines,
Seconded by Councillor Strutton,

“This Council:-

- Acknowledges that the Ofsted Inspection Report notes that, ‘the quality of assessment including the identification of risk, care planning and quality assurance by managers and independent reviewing officers had consistently failed to identify ongoing harm to children and ensure appropriate action is taken’ (Ofsted Inspection report 1st June 2011, page 12, paragraph 33).
- In light of the failure to complete adequate risk assessments this Council recommends:-
 - A new quality management framework is written in partnership with external, independent organisations such as Barnado’s.
 - Training procedures are re-assessed and training is procured from organisations such as Barnado’s to enable all frontline, customer facing staff, to address Child Safeguarding in a holistic manner”.

The motion was put and lost by 11 votes to 23 votes with 1 abstention, and on a show of hands, a prior request having been made, for a record of the voting:

There voted for the motion :-

Councillors Abe, Basharat, Buchanan, Coad, Dale-Gough, Haines, Plimmer, Smith, Stokes, Strutton and A S Wright 11

There voted against the motion :-

Councillors Anderson, Bains, Carter, S Chaudhry, Dar, Davis, A S Dhaliwal, Grewal, M S Mann, P K Mann, Matloob, Minhas, O’Connor, Pantelic, Parmar, Plenty, Qureshi, Rasib, Sharif, Small, Sohal, Swindlehurst and Walsh 23

There abstained from voting:

The Worshipful the Mayor 1

Chair

(Note: The Meeting opened at 7.00 pm and closed at 9.40 pm)