

MINUTES OF COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS

At a Meeting of the Council for the Borough of Slough held as a Virtual Meeting on Tuesday, 26th January, 2021 at 7.00 pm

Present:- The Worshipful the Mayor (Councillor Brooker), in the chair; Councillors Ajaib, Akram, Ali, Anderson, Bains, Basra, Bedi, Begum, Carter, A Cheema, H Cheema, Dar, Dhaliwal, Gahir, Hulme, Kelly, Mann, Matloob, Minhas, Nazir, Pantelic, D Parmar, S Parmar, Plenty, Qaseem, Sabah, A Sandhu, R Sandhu, Sharif, Strutton, Swindlehurst and Wright.

Apologies for Absence:- Councillors Chaudhry, Davis, M Holledge, N Holledge, Mohammad, Rasib, Sarfraz and Smith.

53. Declarations of Interest

None declared.

54. To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the Council held on 24th November 2020

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 24th November 2020 be approved as a correct record.

55. To receive the Mayor's Communications.

Members were informed that the Council's Public Health Team had launched a campaign to encourage residents to take Vitamin D supplements as early indications suggested that it may contribute to the fight against coronavirus.

The Mayor thanked Slough CVS for their continued support in assisting the Council in getting volunteers to help at the testing and vaccination centres.

A minute's silence was held in memory of those who had lost their lives due to the pandemic.

56. Questions from Electors under Procedure Rule 9.

Three questions were received and two of the electors were present. A written copy of the reply would be sent to the Electors following the meeting.

57. Recommendation of the Audit and Corporate Governance Committee from its meeting held on 10th December 2020

It was moved by Councillor Sabah,
Seconded by Councillor Wright,

"That the Councillors' Code of Conduct, in the terms set out at paragraph 5.10 of this Report, be amended to include provision to make "basic" checks on all Councillors and "enhanced" checks on Councillors who hold portfolios relating to

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vulnerable adults and children, with the Disclosure & Barring Service (“DBS”), and for any fees payable to the DBS for making checks to be met from the respective Councillors’ allowances; effective from the municipal year 2021.”

The recommendation was put to the vote and agreed unanimously.

Resolved - That the Councillors’ Code of Conduct, in the terms set out at paragraph 5.10 of this Report, be amended to include provision to make “basic” checks on all Councillors and “enhanced” checks on Councillors who hold portfolios relating to vulnerable adults and children, with the Disclosure & Barring Service (“DBS”), and for any fees payable to the DBS for making checks to be met from the respective Councillors’ allowances; effective from the municipal year 2021.

58. COVID-19 Decisions Update

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

“ (a) That the report be noted; and
(b) That the Significant Decisions taken by Silver as set out in the Appendices be ratified insofar as they relate to Council functions.”

The recommendations were put to the vote and agreed unanimously.

Resolved –

- (a) That the report be noted; and
- (b) That the Significant Decisions taken by Silver as set out in the Appendices be ratified insofar as they relate to Council functions.

59. To consider Motions submitted under Procedure Rule 14.

A) Air Quality

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

“This Council resolves to

- a) Acknowledge
 - That Slough has one of the highest levels of air pollution related deaths in the South East, and that roadside Nitrogen Dioxide emissions has a direct impact on both the environment, and public health.
 - That raising local awareness and understanding of air pollution in the town, by mitigating the environmental impact of fireworks and using innovative technologies to tackle roadside Nitrogen Dioxide emissions, will improve air quality in Slough.

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b) Agrees to

- Raise public awareness of air pollution, building on the example of Sheffield City Council, by forming a local community group to be involved in monitoring local air pollution through the use of low cost diffusion tubes, to build local understanding of air pollution and to engage the local community in assessing and taking action on local issues.
- To implement a Zero Emissions Network (ZEN) across Slough to offer advice to businesses who wish to reduce their emissions.
- To trial innovative approaches and technologies to tackle roadside Nitrogen Dioxide emissions.
- To actively promote a public awareness campaign in Slough regarding the use of fireworks, and informing users of the steps that can be taken to mitigate their effects on wildlife, and the environment.“
- Implement more stringent environmental requirements in any Simplified Planning Zone (SPZ) within the Borough, requiring both Green Energy Production, rainwater collection and recycling.”

It was moved by Councillor Anderson, as an amendment,
Seconded by Councillor Swindlehurst,

“This Council ~~resolves to~~ **acknowledges:**

a) ~~Acknowledge~~

- The Slough has one of the highest levels of air pollution related deaths in the South East, **with road traffic vehicles accounting for 60% of all Nitrogen Dioxide emissions across Slough** and that ~~roadside Nitrogen Dioxide emissions~~ **this** has a direct impact on both the environment, and public health.
- **There has been a 33-55% reduction in nitrogen dioxide levels at the four continuous monitoring locations assessed in Slough.**
- **Air quality sensors are already operational in Slough at a further 14 locations across the Borough & are used to engage with the wider community about the importance of tackling air pollution.**
- **Comparisons by Air Quality England that show without covid Slough would have recorded lower levels of Nitrogen Dioxide in 2020 than 2018 and 2019.**
- **The Council’s bid for government funding of a project to support taxi drivers to make the transition to zero emission electric vehicles designed to complement the on-going work to install taxi priority electric charging infrastructure in Slough**
- **As part of the Urban Tree Challenge, by the end of the 2020/21 planting season the Council will have planted 8,906 new trees across the Borough.**
- **Slough’s Digital Urban Forest is held as an exemplar by Government and the Forestry Commission and allows residents, businesses and visitors to Slough to monitor real time air quality measurements.**
- **That raising local awareness and understanding of air pollution in the town, ~~by mitigating the environmental impact of fireworks and using innovative technologies to tackle roadside Nitrogen Dioxide emissions,~~ will improve air quality in Slough.**

This Council therefore resolves to

b) ~~Agrees to~~

- Produce a Clean Air Plan to act as an overarching strategy which will consolidate all air quality aspirations and improvement plans across the Borough into one comprehensive strategy for both nitrogen dioxide and particulate pollution
- ~~Continue to~~ Raise public awareness of air pollution, ~~building on the example of Sheffield City Council, by forming a local community group to be involved in monitoring local air pollution through the use of low cost diffusion tubes to build local understanding of air pollution and to engage the local community in assessing and taking action on local issues.~~
- ~~To implement a Zero Emissions Network (ZEN) across Slough to offer advice to~~ continue to work with local business and the Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce offer advice to businesses who wish to reduce their emissions.
- To continue to trial and expand upon the innovative approaches and technologies in use by the council to tackle roadside Nitrogen Dioxide emissions.
- To actively promote a public awareness campaign in Slough regarding the use of fireworks, and informing users of the steps that can be taken to mitigate their effects on wildlife, and the environment.
- Explore the Implementation of more stringent environmental requirements in Statutory Planning Policy ~~any Simplified Planning Zone (SPZ) within the Borough,~~ requiring both Green Energy Production, rainwater collection and recycling.”

The amendment to the motion was put to the vote and agreed unanimously and became the substantive motion.

The substantive motion was put to the vote and agreed unanimously.

Resolved -

This Council acknowledges;

- Slough has one of the highest levels of air pollution related deaths in the South East, with road traffic vehicles accounting for 60% of all Nitrogen Dioxide emissions across Slough, and that this has a direct impact on both the environment, and public health.
- There has been a 33-55% reduction in nitrogen dioxide levels at the four continuous monitoring locations assessed in Slough.
- Air quality sensors are already operational in Slough at a further 14 locations across the Borough & are used to engage with the wider community about the importance of tackling air pollution.
- Comparisons by Air Quality England that show without covid Slough would have recorded lower levels of Nitrogen Dioxide in 2020 than 2018 and 2019.
- The Council's bid for government funding of a project to support taxi drivers to make the transition to zero emission electric vehicles designed

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to complement the on-going work to install taxi priority electric charging infrastructure in Slough.

- As part of the Urban Tree Challenge, by the end of the 2020/21 planting season the Council will have planted 8,906 new trees across the Borough.
- Slough's Digital Urban Forest is held as an exemplar by Government and the Forestry Commission and allows residents, businesses and visitors to Slough to monitor real time air quality measurements.
- Raising local awareness and understanding of air pollution in the town will improve air quality in Slough.

This Council therefore resolves to:

- Produce a Clean Air Plan to act as an overarching strategy which will consolidate all air quality aspirations and improvement plans across the Borough into one comprehensive strategy for both nitrogen dioxide and particulate pollution
- Continue to raise public awareness of air pollution to build local understanding of air pollution and to engage the local community in assessing and taking action on local issues.
- To continue to work with local business and the Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce to offer advice to businesses who wish to reduce their emissions.
- To continue to trial and expand upon the innovative approaches and technologies in use by the Council to tackle roadside Nitrogen Dioxide emissions
- To actively promote a public awareness campaign in Slough regarding the use of fireworks, and informing users of the steps that can be taken to mitigate their effects on wildlife, and the environment.
- Explore the implementation of more stringent environmental requirements in Statutory Planning Policy including Green Energy Production, rainwater collection and recycling.

B) Universal Credit Payments

It was moved by Councillor Akram,
Seconded by Councillor Hulme,

“This Council notes that the government plans, from April, to remove the £20 it added to Universal Credit payments to further support claimants in Slough, and therefore resolves to write to the Chancellor, Rishi Sunak and to the Prime Minister, Boris Johnson demanding that the £20 increase to Universal Credit is made permanent and extended to claimants on legacy benefits.”

It was moved by Councillor Strutton, as an amendment,
Seconded by Councillor Wright,

“This Council notes that **throughout this pandemic the Government has protected those most in need, and boosted our safety net welfare system which has seen Universal Credit increased by £1000 per year** to further support claimants in Slough, and therefore resolves to write to the Chancellor, Rishi Sunak and to the Prime Minister, Boris Johnson **welcoming the Government's support thus far and seeking assurances**

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that in the upcoming budget that the increase to Universal Credit is extended to claimants throughout the course of the pandemic.”

The amendment to the motion was put to the vote and lost with 3 votes for, 29 against and 1 abstention.

The original motion was put to the vote and a prior request having been made for the record of the voting:

There voted for the motion:

Councillors Ajaib, Akram, Ali, Anderson, Bains, Basra, Bedi, Begum, Carter, A.Cheema, H.Cheema, Dar, Dhaliwal, Gahir, Hulme, Mann, Matloob, Minhas, Nazir, Pantelic, D.Parmar, S.Parmar, Plenty, Qaseem, Sabah, A.Sandhu, R.Sandhu and Swindlehurst..... 28

There abstained from voting on the motion:

Councillors Kelly, Strutton, Wright and the Worshipful The Mayor, Councillor Brooker, 4

Resolved – This Council notes that the government plans, from April, to remove the £20 it added to Universal Credit payments to further support claimants in Slough, and therefore resolves to write to the Chancellor, Rishi Sunak and to the Prime Minister, Boris Johnson demanding that the £20 increase to Universal Credit is made permanent and extended to claimants on legacy benefits.

60. To note Questions from Members under Procedure Rule 10

None received.

Chair

(Note: The Meeting opened at 7.02 pm and closed at 8.48 pm)