

MINUTES OF COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS

At a Meeting of the Council for the Borough of Slough held as a Virtual Meeting on Tuesday, 27th April, 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, Chaudhry, A Cheema, H Cheema, Davis, Dhaliwal, Gahir, M Holledge, Hulme, Kelly, Mann, Matloob, Minhas, Mohammad, Nazir, Pantelic, D Parmar, S Parmar, Sabah, A Sandhu, R Sandhu, Sarfraz, Smith, Strutton, Swindlehurst and Wright

Apologies for Absence:- Councillors Dar, N Holledge, Plenty, Rasib and Sharif

70. Declarations of Interest

None received.

71. To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the Council held on 26th January 2021 and 8th March 2021

A prior request having been made for the record of the voting:

There voted for approval of the minutes:

Councillors Ajaib, Akram, Ali, Anderson, Bains, Basra, Begum, Carter, Chaudhry, A.Cheema, H.Cheema, Davis, Dhaliwal, Gahir, M. Holledge, Hulme, Mann, Matloob, Minhas, Mohammad, Nazir, Pantelic, D.Parmar, S.Parmar, Sabah, A.Sandhu, R.Sandhu and Swindlehurst..... 28

There voted against approval of the minutes:

Councillor Bedi 1

There abstained from voting on approval of the minutes:

Councillors, Kelly, Smith, Strutton, Wright and The Worshipful the Mayor, Councillor Brooker.....5

Resolved – That the minutes of the meetings held on 26th January 2021 and 8th March 2021 be approved as a correct record.

72. To receive the Mayor's Communications.

Members were reminded about the Mayor's Charity which was supporting the voluntary sector in Slough and that further details could be obtained from the Mayor's Executive Assistant.

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A minute silence was held to remember the Duke of Edinburgh who had recently passed away and also in memory of former colleague and friend Shabnum Sadiq, who had lost her life to COVID-19 last year.

73. Questions from Electors under Procedure Rule 9.

Three elector questions had been received. The electors were present and also asked a supplementary question. A written copy of replies to the questions would be sent to the electors following the meeting.

74. Recommendation of the Employment and Appeals Committee from its meeting held on 6th April 2021

It was moved by Councillor Ali,
Seconded by Councillor Gahir,

“That the Pay Policy Statement 2021/22, as attached at Appendix A of the report, be approved for publication.”

A prior request having been made for the record of the voting:

There voted for the recommendation:

Councillors Ajaib, Akram, Ali, Anderson, Bains, Basra, Begum, Carter, Chaudhry, A.Cheema, H.Cheema, Davis, Dhaliwal, Gahir, M. Holledge, Hulme, Mann, Matloob, Minhas, Mohammad, Nazir, Pantelic, D.Parmar, S.Parmar, Sabah, A.Sandhu, R.Sandhu, Sarfraz and Swindlehurst.....29

There voted against the recommendation:

Councillor Wright 1

There abstained from voting on the recommendation:

Councillors Bedi, Kelly, Smith, Strutton and The Worshipful the Mayor, Councillor Brooker.....5

Resolved – That the Pay Policy Statement 2021/22, as attached at Appendix A of the report, be approved for publication.

75. Recommendation of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee from its meeting held on 26th April 2021

It was moved by Councillor Dhaliwal,
Seconded by Councillor Satpal Parmar,

“That the Annual Scrutiny Report 2020/21 be endorsed.”

The recommendation was put to the vote and agreed unanimously.

Resolved - That the Annual Scrutiny Report 2020/21 be endorsed.

76. COVID-19 Decisions Update

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

- (a) "That the report be noted; and
- (b) That the significant decisions taken by Silver as set out in the Appendix to the report 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 Appendix to the report be ratified insofar as they relate to Council functions.

77. To consider Motions submitted under procedure Rule 14.

Motion A – Green Housing

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

"This council notes that existing homes are responsible for 20% of the UKs CO2e emissions with construction of new homes contributing a further 3% and 70% of homes remain at EPC 'D' or worse and that improving poor housing could save the NHS £1.4 billion a year and lift millions out of fuel poverty.

Council therefore resolves to write to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government to call for the Government to:

- Recognise their Social Housing Decarbonisation fund of just £50m is woefully inadequate compared to the £1.8 billion of investment which is required annually and immediately extend this project to meet existing need
- Extend the Green Homes Grant at least for the next 18 months.
- Bring forward and extend the Public Sector Decarbonisation Fund for at least the next 18 months.
- Scale up the affordable homes programme, re-balancing it in favour of council and social rented homes and ensuring it enables meeting environmental and safety standards, to prevent the need for expensive retrofitting in the future."

A prior request having been made for the record of the voting:

There voted for the motion:

Councillors Ajaib, Akram, Ali, Anderson, Bains, Basra, Begum, Carter, Chaudhry, A.Cheema, H.Cheema, Davis, Dhaliwal, Gahir, Hulme, Mann, Matloob, Minhas,

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Mohammad, Nazir, Pantelic, D.Parmar, S.Parmar, Sabah, A.Sandhu, R.Sandhu, Sarfraz and Swindlehurst.....28

There voted against the motion:

Councillor Smith 1

There abstained from voting on the motion:

Councillors Bedi, Kelly, Strutton, Wright and The Worshipful the Mayor, Councillor Brooker.....5

Resolved -

This council notes that existing homes are responsible for 20% of the UKs CO2e emissions with construction of new homes contributing a further 3% and 70% of homes remain at EPC 'D' or worse and that improving poor housing could save the NHS £1.4 billion a year and lift millions out of fuel poverty.

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- Extend the Green Homes Grant at least for the next 18 months.
- Bring forward and extend the Public Sector Decarbonisation Fund for at least the next 18 months.
- Scale up the affordable homes programme, re-balancing it in favour of council and social rented homes and ensuring it enables meeting environmental and safety standards, to prevent the need for expensive retrofitting in the future.

Motion B – Bullying and Intimidation

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

“This Council acknowledges that:

- The Councillor Code of Conduct states that Members must treat each other with respect, and that Members must not conduct themselves in a manner which could reasonably be regarded as bringing the Council, into disrepute.
- There must be no place for bullying or intimidation in this local authority, and that examples of such behaviour in public meetings could risk breaching the Councillor Code of Conduct.
- Women in politics have been disproportionately impacted by social media abuse in recent years, potentially discouraging many women from standing for elected office.
- That labelling female politicians as “traitors” is inflammatory language.

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This Council resolves to:

- Take a zero-tolerance approach to bullying or intimidation within the Council and supports the review of the Councillor Code of Conduct currently under way with a focus on investigating allegations of bullying or intimidation in a timely manner and supports imposing sanctions where appropriate.”

It was moved by Councillor Pantelic, as an amendment,
Seconded by Councillor Mann,

“This Council acknowledges that:

- The Councillor Code of Conduct states that Members must treat each other with respect, and that Members must not conduct themselves in a manner which could reasonably be regarded as bringing the Council, into disrepute.
- There must be no place for bullying or intimidation in this local authority, and that examples of such behaviour in public meetings could risk breaching the Councillor Code of Conduct.
- Women in politics have been disproportionately impacted by social media abuse in recent years, potentially discouraging many women from standing for elected office.
- ~~That labelling female politicians as “traitors” is inflammatory language.~~

This Council resolves to ~~take a zero-tolerance approach to bullying or intimidation within the Council and supports~~ **reaffirm its commitment and support for** the review of the Councillor Code of Conduct currently under way with a focus on investigating allegations of bullying or intimidation in a timely manner and supports imposing sanctions where appropriate.”

A prior request having been made for the record of the voting:

There voted for the amendment:

Councillors Ajaib, Akram, Ali, Anderson, Bains, Basra, Begum, Carter, A.Cheema, H.Cheema, Davis, Gahir, Hulme, Mann, Matloob, Minhas, Mohammad, Nazir, Pantelic, D.Parmar, S.Parmar, A.Sandhu and Swindlehurst.....23

There voted against the amendment:

Councillors Bedi, Kelly, Smith, Strutton and Wright5

There abstained from voting on the amendment:

Councillor R.Sandhu and The Worshipful the Mayor, Councillor Brooker.....2

The amendment to the motion was carried and became the substantive motion.

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A prior request having been made for the record of the voting:

There voted for the substantive motion:

Councillors Ajaib, Akram, Ali, Anderson, Bains, Basra, Begum, Carter, Chaudhry, A.Cheema, H.Cheema, Davis, Dhaliwal, Gahir, Hulme, Mann, Matloob, Minhas, Mohammad, Nazir, Pantelic, D.Parmar, S.Parmar, A.Sandhu and Swindlehurst.....25

There voted against the substantive motion:

Councillors Bedi, Kelly and Strutton.....3

There abstained from voting on the substantive motion:

Councillors R.Sandhu, Smith and The Worshipful the Mayor, Councillor Brooker.....3

Resolved -

This Council acknowledges that:

- The Councillor Code of Conduct states that Members must treat each other with respect, and that Members must not conduct themselves in a manner which could reasonably be regarded as bringing the Council, into disrepute.
- There must be no place for bullying or intimidation in this local authority, and that examples of such behaviour in public meetings could risk breaching the Councillor Code of Conduct.
- Women in politics have been disproportionately impacted by social media abuse in recent years, potentially discouraging many women from standing for elected office.

This Council resolves to reaffirm its commitment and support for the review of the Councillor Code of Conduct currently under way with a focus on investigating allegations of bullying or intimidation in a timely manner and supports imposing sanctions where appropriate.

Motion C - Heathrow Airport

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

“This Council acknowledges that since the start of the pandemic over 70,000 Slough residents have received support from the Government’s furlough scheme; over 7,000 Slough residents have applied for assistance from the Self-Employed Income Support Scheme and over 8,000 Slough residents have been in receipt of Universal Credit.

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This Council therefore resolves to undertake a strategic review into this authority's over-reliance on Heathrow Airport as an employment source; in doing so, seeking to shine a light on a long-term solution to the sustainable creation of jobs for Slough residents in the years, and decades to come."

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

"This Council acknowledges that since the start of the pandemic ~~over 70,000~~ Slough **1 in 6 working age** residents have received support from the Government's furlough scheme; over 7,000 Slough residents have applied for assistance from the Self-Employed Income Support Scheme and over 8,000 Slough residents have been in receipt of Universal Credit.

This Council therefore resolves to undertake a strategic review ~~into this authority's over-reliance on Heathrow Airport as an employment source; in doing so, seeking to shine a light on a long-term solution to the sustainable creation of jobs for Slough residents in the years, and decades to come~~ **to build upon the work already being undertaken by the council.**"

The amendment to the motion was put to the vote and carried with 25 votes for, 5 against and 1 abstention and became the substantive motion.

The substantive motion was put to the vote and agreed with 28 votes for and 3 abstentions.

Resolved -

This Council acknowledges that since the start of the pandemic 1 in 6 working age residents have received support from the Government's furlough scheme; over 7,000 Slough residents have applied for assistance from the Self-Employed Income Support Scheme and over 8,000 Slough residents have been in receipt of Universal Credit.

This Council therefore resolves to undertake a strategic review on a long-term solution to the sustainable creation of jobs for Slough residents in the years, and decades to come to build upon the work already being undertaken by the council.

78. To note Questions from Members under Procedure Rule 10

None received within the relevant timeframe.

79. Vote of Thanks to the Retiring Mayor

Councillor Anderson moved and Councillor Swindlehurst seconded a vote of thanks to the retiring Mayor for his service during what had been an exceptionally unique municipal year. A number of other Members also added their thanks to the Mayor.

80. Vote of Thanks to the Retiring Deputy Mayor

Councillor Akram moved and Councillor Hulme seconded a vote of thanks to the retiring Deputy Mayor for his service during the past municipal year. A number of other Members also added their thanks.

(Councillors Bedi, Kelly, Smith, Strutton and Wright abstained from voting on this item)

Chair

(Note: The Meeting opened at 7.00 pm and closed at 10.47 pm)