

MINUTES OF COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS

At a Meeting of the Council for the Borough of Slough held at the Council Chamber - Observatory House, 25 Windsor Road, SL1 2EL on Tuesday, 23rd November, 2021 at 7.00 pm

Present:- The Worshipful the Mayor (Councillor Nazir), in the chair; Councillors Ajaib, Ali, Anderson, Bal (left at 8.57pm), Bains, Basra, Begum, Brooker, Carter, A Cheema, H Cheema, J Davis, R Davis, Dar, Dhaliwal, Gahir, Gill, Hulme, Hussain, Kaur, Kelly, Malik, Mann, Matloob, Minhas, Mohammad, Muvvala, Pantelic, D Parmar, S Parmar, Qaseem, Sandhu, Sharif (from 7.58pm), Smith, Strutton, Swindlehurst and Wright

Apologies for Absence:- Councillors Akram, Bedi, Grewal and Sabah

37. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Bal declared that his daughter worked for the Council.

Agenda item 8: Re-Election of Leader of the Council - Councillor Swindlehurst declared a pecuniary interest.

38. To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the Council held on 23rd September 2021

Resolved - That the minutes of the Council meeting held on 23rd September 2021 be approved as a correct record.

39. To receive the Mayor's Communications.

The Mayor thanked Members who attended the events arranged throughout the Borough for Armistice Day and Remembrance Sunday. The efforts made to mark these important occasions were very well received by both the organisations involved and the public.

Members were informed that the Mayor was due attend the Slough Rotary Club Awards dinner to receive a cheque for £300 for the Mayor's Charity, in recognition of having the greatest number of walkers for their Annual Slough Together Charity Walk.

40. Questions from Electors under Procedure Rule 9.

One question had been received. The questioner was not present and a written reply would be sent.

41. Recommendation of the Licensing Committee from its meeting held on 14th October 2021

It was moved by Councillor H Cheema,
Seconded by Councillor R Davis,

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“That the Gambling Act 2005 Statement of Principles Policy (as amended 2021) be adopted as the Council’s Gambling Policy.”

The recommendation was put to the vote and agreed unanimously.

Resolved – That the Gambling Act 2005 Statement of Principles Policy (as amended 2021) be adopted as the Council’s Gambling Policy.

42. DLUHC - Reviews and Intervention

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

“That details of the report be noted and to make preparations to support the arrival of commissioners who are expected to be appointed for a period of three years by the Secretary of State for Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities (DHULC) in the coming weeks.”

The recommendation was put to the vote and agreed unanimously.

Resolved – That details of the report be noted and to make preparations to support the arrival of commissioners who are expected to be appointed for a period of three years by the Secretary of State for Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities (DHULC) in the coming weeks.

43. Recovery and Renewal Plan Update

The Mayor varied normal procedure rules to allow the Director of Finance/ Section 151 Officer to address the meeting. Members were informed that the capitalisation directive was currently estimated at £308m over a ten year period. A range of measures were being implemented to address issues as detailed in the recovery plan. Members asked a number of questions following which,

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

“That the current position on the Finance Recovery Plan be noted.”

The recommendation was put to the vote and agreed unanimously.

Resolved - That the current position on the Finance Recovery Plan be noted.

44. Review of the Council's Constitution

Governance Processes

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

“1. That the amendments set out in the following appendices be approved:
a. Article 7 The Executive

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- b. Part 3.3 Responsibility for Local Choice Functions
 - c. Part 3.5 Responsibility for Executive Functions
 - d. Part 4.4 Executive Procedure Rules
2. Amendments to the key decision threshold definition, as set out in Article 13 Decision Making as appended to the report, be approved.
 3. Delegated authority be given to the Monitoring Officer to make changes to the Council Procedure Rules to remove the reference to these applying to cabinet meetings.
 4. That the amendments to the Constitution will come into effect on the day following the Council meeting.”

The recommendations were put to the vote and carried with 32 votes for, 2 against and 3 abstentions.

Resolved –

1. That the amendments set out in the following appendices be approved:
 - a. Article 7 The Executive
 - b. Part 3.3 Responsibility for Local Choice Functions
 - c. Part 3.5 Responsibility for Executive Functions
 - d. Part 4.4 Executive Procedure Rules
2. Amendments to the key decision threshold definition, as set out in Article 13 Decision Making as appended to the report, be approved.
3. Delegated authority be given to the Monitoring Officer to make changes to the Council Procedure Rules to remove the reference to these applying to cabinet meetings.
4. That the amendments to the Constitution will come into effect on the day following the Council meeting.

Contract Procedure Rules

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

“That the amendments to Part 4.6.1 Contract Procedure Rules as set out in Appendix A to the report be approved and that the amendments to the Constitution will come into effect on the day following the Council meeting.”
The amendments were put to the vote and carried with 31 votes for, 2 against and 5 abstentions.

Resolved – That the amendments to Part 4.6.1 Contract Procedure Rules as set out in Appendix A to the report be approved and that the amendments to the Constitution will come into effect on the day following the Council meeting.

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45. Re-Election of Leader of the Council

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

“That Councillor Swindlehurst be re-elected as Leader of the Council until the annual council meeting following the local government elections in May 2023.”

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

There voted for the recommendation:

Councillors Ajaib, Ali, Anderson, Bains, Bal, Basra, Begum, Brooker, Carter, A.Cheema, H.Cheema, Dar, J.Davis, R.Davis, Dhaliwal, Gahir, Gill, Hulme, Hussain, Kaur, Malik, Mann, Matloob, Minhas, Mohammad, Pantelic, S.Parmar, Qaseem, Sandhu, Sharif and Swindlehurst..... 31

There voted against the recommendation:

Councillors Kelly, Muvvala, Smith, Strutton and Wright..... 5

There abstained from voting on the recommendation:

Councillor D.Parmar and The Worshipful the Mayor, Councillor Nazir..... 2

Resolved - That Councillor Swindlehurst be re-elected as Leader of the Council until the annual council meeting following the local government elections in May 2023.

46. Allocation of Seats and Committee Appointments

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

- (a) “That the revised proportionality and entitlement to committee seats as set out in Appendix 1 be noted;
- (b) That Councillor Dar be appointed to the additional seat allocated to the Labour Group on the Planning Committee.”

The recommendations were put to the vote and carried with 31 votes for and 6 abstentions.

Resolved -

- (b) That the revised proportionality and entitlement to committee seats as set out in Appendix 1 be noted;
- (b) That Councillor Dar be appointed to the additional seat allocated to the Labour Group on the Planning Committee.

47. To consider Motions submitted under procedure Rule 14.

Clean Air, Net Zero and Sustainable Energy Supply

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

“This Council acknowledges;

- Dirty air impacts the health of people at all ages, is linked with increased risk of severe Covid-19 impacts, causes heart and lung diseases, is linked to low birth weight, affects children’s lung development, may contribute to mental health issues and that people living in the most deprived areas with the most toxic air suffer disproportionately greater ill health;
- Air pollution represents a national health emergency resulting in an estimated 40,000 early deaths each year, costing the UK £20 billion annually
- The potential for more community-scale renewable energy generation infrastructure to be built across the country, and for this growth to bring substantial benefits to the local economy and to help the council achieve its net zero carbon emissions target for the Borough.

Therefore, this council resolves to:

- Publish, after public review, its Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan by the turn of the year
- Write to Rebecca Pow, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (responsible for Air Quality) to introduce a Clean Air Act;
- Call on the Government to establish a legal right to breath clean air ensuring the law on air quality is at least as strict as WHO guidelines;
- Call on the Government to introduce a binding clean air plan across government, to take into account air pollution impacts in policy and funding decisions and to provide public information on air pollution health impacts
- Support the Local Electricity Bill which seeks to make changes to the energy marketplace, establishing a right to local supply by making the setup and running costs of selling renewable electricity to local customers proportionate to the size of the supply company
- Write to our local MPs asking that they support the Local Electricity Bill.”

The motion was put to the vote and agreed unanimously.

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Resolved -

This Council acknowledges;

- Dirty air impacts the health of people at all ages, is linked with increased risk of severe Covid-19 impacts, causes heart and lung diseases, is linked to low birth weight, affects children's lung development, may contribute to mental health issues and that people living in the most deprived areas with the most toxic air suffer disproportionately greater ill health;
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- Support the Local Electricity Bill which seeks to make changes to the energy marketplace, establishing a right to local supply by making the setup and running costs of selling renewable electricity to local customers proportionate to the size of the supply company
- Write to our local MPs asking that they support the Local Electricity Bill

Slough Library Services

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

“This Council recognises the vital role our local libraries play in acting as centres in the community for delivering services; the services which they provide go far and wide in supporting wider objectives such as increasing childhood literacy;

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acknowledging that there were over 4,700 active users of the Langley and Cippenham libraries in 2019/20 and resolves;

- That no closure can take place until an alternative location and/or method of provision is in place.
- To agree to an alternative model of delivery of other Council services in the community through these libraries which puts residents' wellbeing first.
- That closure of library services as a consequence of 'right-sizing' the Council should be a last resort due to the disproportionate impact such closures will have on our vulnerable and elderly residents, as well as students on out of school hours."

It was moved by Councillor Brooker, as an amendment,
Seconded by Councillor J Davis,

"This Council recognises the vital role our local libraries play in acting as centres in the community for delivering services; the services which they provide go far and wide in supporting wider objectives such as increasing childhood literacy; acknowledging that there were over 4,700 active users of the Langley and Cippenham libraries in 2019/20 and resolves

- ~~That no closure can take place until an alternative location and/or method of provision is in place.~~
- ~~To agree to an alternative model of delivery of other Council services in the community through these libraries which puts residents' wellbeing first.~~
- That closure of library services as a consequence of 'right-sizing' the Council should be a last resort due to the disproportionate impact such closures will have on our vulnerable and elderly residents, as well as students on out of school hours."

The amendment 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 recognises the vital role our local libraries play in acting as centres in the community for delivering services; the services which they provide go far and wide in supporting wider objectives such as increasing childhood literacy; acknowledging that there were over 4,700 active users of the Langley and Cippenham libraries in 2019/20 and resolves

- That closure of library services as a consequence of 'right-sizing' the Council should be a last resort due to the disproportionate impact such closures will have on our vulnerable and elderly residents, as well as students on out of school hours.

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(The Mayor asked that it be recorded that he reminded Members of the need to conduct debates in a respectful manner and that he may seek to propose a Member leave the meeting if there was improper conduct in future.)

48. To note Questions from Members under Procedure Rule 10.

A Member question had been received which had been published in the supplementary agenda together with the reply.

Chair

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