

Minutes

Sunderland City Council

At a meeting of SUNDERLAND CITY COUNCIL held in the CIVIC CENTRE on WEDNESDAY, 28TH NOVEMBER, 2012 at 6.00 p.m.

Present: The Deputy Mayor (Councillor R. Heron) in the Chair

Councillors	Allan	Foster	Oliver	Tate
	Anderson	Francis	Padgett	Thompson
	Atkinson	Gibson, E	Porthouse	Trueman, D.
	Ball	Gibson, P	Price	Trueman, H.
	Bell	Gofton	Richardson, D.	Turton
	Blackburn	Howe	Scanlan	Tye
	Bonallie	Jackson	Scaplehorn	Wakefield
	Copeland	Kelly	Shattock	Walker
	Davison	Lauchlan	Smiles	Watson, P
	Dixon	Lawson	Smith, D	Watson, S.
	Ellis	MacKnight	Smith, P.	Williams
	Emerson	Marshall	Snowdon, D	Wilson, A.
	Errington	Martin, L	Snowdon, DE	Wiper
	Essl	Martin, T	Speding	Wood
	Fletcher	Mordey	Stewart	Wright, N

The notice convening the meeting was read.

Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the ordinary meeting of the Council held on 26th September 2012 (copy circulated) be confirmed and signed as a correct record subject to the inclusion of Councillors Errington, Farthing, Lawson, Rolph and Wiper in the apologies for absence and the removal of Councillor Lawson as being present.

Declarations of Interest

Item 12(ii) –
Appointments to
Committees and Outside
Bodies – Tyne and Wear
Fire and Rescue
Authority

Councillor Price

Nominated person for the
Authority

Announcements

(i) Death of Former Councillors David Thompson, Richard Heron and Dorothy Whiteman

The Mayor paid tribute to former Councillors and colleagues, David Thompson, Richard Heron and Dorothy Whiteman who had recently passed away. Members and Officers stood for a minute's silence as a mark of respect.

(ii) Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development Awards

At the invitation of the Mayor, Councillor Trueman informed the meeting of the Council's success in gaining an award from the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development which was given to the Council in recognition of how a change initiative had altered the organisation.

The Judges were impressed by the Council's "extremely innovative approach to a huge challenge of significant cost cutting and potential job losses with strong commitment from leadership in supporting the change".

(iii) North East Contact Centre Awards

At the invitation of the Mayor, Councillor Gofton informed the meeting of the Council's success in achieving a regional award from the North East Contact Centre Awards which was given to the Council in recognition of the innovative use of technology in the partnership between the Customer Service Network and the Telecare Service.

The North East Contact Centre Awards celebrates and recognises outstanding achievement in one of the regions leading industries.

(iv) 2012 Royal Horticultural Society Britain in Bloom Awards

At the invitation of the Mayor, Councillor Blackburn informed the meeting of the success enjoyed by the City Council in this year's Northumbria In Bloom Competition; the Silver Gilt Certificate was awarded by the Royal Horticultural Society, in the National Finals of the Large City Class of Britain In Bloom 2012.

Sunderland was nominated to represent the Northumbria region in the National Finals and Royal Horticultural Society judges from across UK visited the City last summer to compare our parks and open spaces with the best in Britain.

The Silver Gilt award matched the highest the City had ever achieved in the National Finals, and was a great reflection of the fantastic efforts made by the Council's employees, and those community groups across the City which contributed to the success.

(v) International Schools Federation swimming championships

At the invitation of the Mayor, Councillor Kelly informed the meeting that Sunderland Aquatic Centre hosted the prestigious International Schools Federation swimming championships on Saturday 17 November. Young swimmers aged between 11 - 18, competed in the tri-nations event, with teams from England, Ireland and Wales competing for gold, silver and bronze - and England eventually winning gold.

Sunderland City Council were proud to host this major international event, which was the first time it has been held in the North East.

Following the successful hosting of the event a commemorative shield was presented to the Council for its outstanding contribution to event management and ensuring every aspect of the competition ran smoothly.

Reception of Petitions

RESOLVED that the under - mentioned petitions, submitted by the Councillors named, be received and referred for consideration in accordance with the Council's Petitions Scheme:-

Councillor Padgett – Petition calling for some form of prevention of speeding on Vigo Lane.

Councillor Ellis – Petition from residents of and visitors to the Dairy Lane Estate, Houghton le Spring, particularly Longacre and Dunelm Drive calling for action for Sunderland City Council to take all necessary action to prevent a recurrence of flooding of our homes which appears to be being caused by flooding in Gilpin Wood and the culverting of run-off water from the Rainton Meadow Industrial Estate to discharge adjacent to homes.

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted to the meeting on behalf of Councillors Curran, Farr, Farthing, Forbes, Kay, McClennan, Maddison, F. Miller, G. Miller, Rolph, Scott, Waller, D.Wilson and T.H Wright.

The Cabinet reported and recommended as follows: -

1. Audit Commission Annual Audit Letter 2011/2012

That they had given consideration by Council a report of the Chief Executive (copy attached) on the Audit Commission Annual Audit Letter covering the year 2011/2012 together with a copy of the Audit Letter which included issues arising from the audit of the Council's financial statements and the results of the Audit Commission's work undertaken as part of the assessment of the Council's arrangements to securing value for money in its use of resources.

The Cabinet recommended the Council to note the contents of the report.

2. Budget Planning Framework 2013/2014 and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2013/2014 – 2015/2016

That they had given consideration to a joint report of the Chief Executive and the Executive Director of Commercial and Corporate Services (copy attached) outlining the key factors influencing the development of the Councils financial plans into the medium term and setting out the headlines and context for the Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2013/2014 to 2015/2016.

They also referred the report to the Scrutiny Committee for its comments in the context of the approved consultation arrangements for the Council's budget. The Scrutiny Committee supported the proposed Budget Planning Framework and endorsed the Medium Term Financial Strategy and recommended that both were submitted to Council for approval.

Accordingly, the Cabinet recommended the Council to:-

- (i) approve the proposed Budget Planning Framework summarised at Section 11 of the report which will guide the preparation of the Revenue Budget for 2013/2014, and
- (ii) note that the full Medium Term Financial Strategy 2013/2014 to 2015/2016 will be presented to Cabinet in February.

3. Capital Programme Second Review 2012/2013 (Including Treasury Management)

That they had given consideration to a report of the Executive Director of Commercial and Corporate Services which detailed changes made to the Capital Programme 2012/2013 since the First Capital Review and provided an update on progress in implementing the Treasury Management Borrowing and Investment Strategy for 2012/2013.

They also referred the report to the Scrutiny Committee for advice and consideration in the context of inclusion of an additional scheme for 2012/2013 costing over £250,000 which was set out in the attached extract. The Scrutiny Committee supported the proposed additional scheme as set out in the extract to the report and recommended that the scheme was submitted to Council for approval.

Accordingly, the Cabinet recommended the Council to approve the inclusion of the additional scheme for 2012/2013 and associated resourcing of the Capital Programme since the First Review of the Capital Programme was approved by Council in July 2012.

4. Revenue Budget Second Review 2012/2013

That they had given consideration to a report of the Executive Director of Commercial and Corporate Services on the overall Revenue position following the second review for 2012/2013 including proposed contingency transfers.

In accordance with the Council's Budget and Policy Framework certain transfers require Council approval. The following extract refers to those transfer of funds:

'savings on capital financing charges as a result of slippage on the capital programme and income from interest on investments are anticipated to result in savings of approximately £4m at year end. It is proposed that these amounts and any further underspendings arising from unspent contingencies at the end of 2012/2013 are earmarked to support the overall 2012/13 position and transitional costs arising from the 2013/2014 budget setting process'.

They also referred the above extract of the budget transfers to the Scrutiny Committee, for advice and consideration. The Scrutiny Committee supported the transfer of funds to support the overall 2012/13 position together with the transitional costs from the 2013/14 budget setting process and recommended that the transfer was submitted to Council for approval.

Accordingly the Cabinet recommended the Council to approve the budget transfers for the second quarter of 2012/2013 as set in the above extract.

5. Youth Justice Plan 2012-2013

That they had given consideration to a report of the Executive Director of Children's Services (copy attached) on the Youth Justice Plan 2012-2013 outlining the background, purpose and intentions of the Plan.

They also referred the report to the Scrutiny Committee for advice and consideration. The Scrutiny Committee supported the intention of the Plan to prevent offending and re-offending by young people.

Accordingly the Cabinet recommended the Council to approve the Youth Justice Plan 2012-13.

6. Children and Young People's Plan Annual Report 2011-2012

That they had given consideration to a report of the Executive Director of Children's Services (copy attached) on the Children and Young People's Plan Annual Report 2011-2012 which informed of the of progress and performance against the outcomes set out in the Children and Young People's Delivery Plan 2010-2013 covering the period of 2011-2012.

They also referred the report to the Scrutiny Committee for advice and consideration. The Scrutiny Committee recognised the achievements of the Council and partners in relation to children and young people and supported the scope of the areas for further improvement.

Accordingly the Cabinet recommended the Council to approve the Children and Young People's Plan Annual Report 2011-2012.

7. Gambling Act 2005 – Approval of the Council's Statement of Principles

That they had given consideration to a report of the former Executive Director of City Services (copy attached) on the draft statement of principles under the Gambling Act 2005.

They also referred the report to the Scrutiny Committee for advice and consideration. The Scrutiny Committee supported the intention of the Policy.

Accordingly the Cabinet recommended the Council to approve the statement of principles under the Gambling Act 2005.

Upon the report of the Cabinet being put to the meeting, it was: -

RESOLVED that the views of the Scrutiny Committee be noted and the report of Cabinet be approved and adopted.

Written Questions under Rule 8.2

Pursuant to Rule 8.2 of the Council Rules of Procedure, Members of the Council asked questions of the Leader and Members of the Executive.

The Human Resources Committee reported and recommended as follows:-

That they have given consideration to a report of the Director of Human Resources and Organisation Development (copy attached) on the progress to date on proposed changes to the senior management structure which contributed to meeting the significant budgetary challenge facing the Council.

The Human Resources Committee reviewed and approved the proposed changes to the organisation senior management structure following the resignation of the Executive Director of City Services, to take effect on 29 November 2012, following the Council meeting.

Accordingly the Human Resources Committee recommended Council to authorise the Head of Law and Governance to amend the delegation scheme in respect of chief officers as set out in the constitution, in order to reflect the reallocation of areas of responsibility.

Upon the report of the Human Resources Committee being put to the meeting, it was: -

RESOLVED that the Head of Law and Governance be authorised to amend the delegation scheme in respect of chief officers as set out in the constitution, in order to reflect the reallocation of areas of responsibility.

Action Taken on Petitions

The Council received the under mentioned reports on action taken in relation to petitions which had been presented to Council.

(i) Petition against the closure of the Grindon Walk in Centre Minor Injuries Unit – Presented by Councillor Waller on 20 June 2012.

The petition which was signed by 800 service users was forwarded to the Chief Officer designate for the NHS Sunderland Clinical Commissioning Group who is leading on this work. The Council has been advised that the proposed changes are subject to a formal consultation with local people and responses using their consultation document and website www.sotw.nhs.uk/yoursay/consultations were encouraged and were required to be made formally, using these routes to ensure that they are taken account of in the consultation process, which runs until 30 November 2012.

Councillor Waller and the lead petitioner had been informed accordingly.

(ii) Petition to improve street lighting in various parts of Farringdon Estate – Presented by Councillor Porthouse on 26 September 2012

The Deputy Chief Executive has investigated the petition and advised that this area had already been identified as one which requires improvement and has commissioned designers to work up a scheme that would satisfy current lighting standards.

The intention is to install new lighting in the near future and once a commencement date for works has been agreed with the Council's street lighting partner, Aurora, this will be notified to the Lead Petitioner and Ward Councillor accordingly.

Councillor Porthouse and the lead petitioner had been informed accordingly.

Notices of Motion

Notice of Motion – Newcastle International Airport Limited

Councillor Oliver seconded by Councillor Wood, moved the following motion in relation to Newcastle International Airport Limited:-

“We believe the council should consider selling its shares in Newcastle International Airport Limited.”

Upon being put to the vote the motion was defeated with 5 Members voting in favour, viz:-

Councillors	Francis	Howe	Oliver	Wiper Wood
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55 members voting against, viz:-

The Deputy Mayor (Councillor R. Heron) in the Chair

Councillors	Allan	Fletcher	Porthouse	Thompson
	Anderson	S. Foster	Price	D. Trueman
	Atkinson	P. Gibson	D. Richardson	H. Trueman
	Ball	Gofton	Scanlan	Turton
	Bell	E. Gibson	Scaplehorn	Tye
	Blackburn	Jackson	Shattock	Wakefield
	Bonallie	Kelly	Smiles	Walker
	Copeland	Lawson	D. Smith	P. Watson
	Davidson	Lauchlan	P. Smith	S. Watson
	Dixon	Marshall	D. Snowdon	Williams
	Ellis	MacKnight	D.E. Snowdon	A. Wilson
	Emerson	T. Martin	Speding	N. Wright
	Errington	Mordey	Stewart	
	Essl	Padgett	Tate	

It was therefore:-

RESOLVED that the motion be defeated.

(ii) Notice of Motion – Revaluation of Business Rates

The Leader of the Council seconded by Councillor Kelly moved the following motion in relation to the revaluation of business rates:-

Upon being put to the meeting, the motion was carried unanimously and it was: -

RESOLVED that following the Tory led Coalition Government's recent decision to postpone the 2013 revaluation of business rates for two years, which effectively means the revaluation due to be implemented in 2015 will not now take place until 2017.

This Council calls upon the Tory led Coalition Government to reverse this preposterous, scandalous, perverse and damaging decision which will only result in businesses in Sunderland subsidising businesses in the wealthy south.

(iii) Notice of Motion – Coalition Government’s Energy Policy

Councillor Speding seconded by Councillor P. Smith moved the following motion regarding the Coalition Government’s Energy Policy

Upon being put to the meeting, the motion was carried unanimously and it was: -

RESOLVED that following recent contradictory statements from Ministers, which has caused utter confusion around this Governments Energy Policy and given their dismissive attitude towards renewable energy. This Council requests that the Tory led Coalition Government gets its act together and lays out definitively its intentions for future energy generation and supply so that there is clarity for the citizens of Sunderland.

Quarterly Report on Special Urgency Decisions

The Leader of the Council submitted a quarterly report (copy circulated) on executive decisions which had been taken under Regulation 11 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

RESOLVED to note the report.

Appointments to Committees and Outside Bodies – Human Resources Committee, Children’s Trust, Adult Partnership Board, Sunderland AFC Foundation Partnership Board and Appeals under the Education Acts – Constitution of Panel Members

The Executive Director of Commercial and Corporate Services submitted a report (copy circulated) requesting Council to consider appointments to the Hylton Red House Academy Trust, the Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority, the Northumbria Police and Crime Panel and the Sunderland AFC Foundation Partnership Board.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

The Leader moved the recommendations contained within the report and the addendum and was duly seconded by the Deputy Leader.

RESOLVED that approval be given to: -

- (i) the appointment of Councillor Bell in place of Councillor Davison to the Hylton Red House Academy Trust,
- (ii) the nomination of Councillor Price to replace Councillor Waller on the Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority,
- (iii) the nomination of the Deputy Leader of the Council to replace Councillor Gofton on the Northumbria Police and Crime Panel and the Cabinet Secretary to replace both the Deputy Leader of the Council and Councillor S. Watson as the substitute, and
- (iv) the nomination of the Deputy Chief Executive as a replacement to serve on the Sunderland AFC Foundation Partnership Board.

(Signed) R. Heron
Deputy Mayor.

