

Sunderland City Council

At a meeting of SUNDERLAND CITY COUNCIL held in the CIVIC CENTRE on WEDNESDAY, 25th FEBRUARY, 2009 at 6.00 p.m.

Present: The Mayor (Councillor M. Smith) in the Chair

Councillors	Allan	M. Forbes	O'Connor	Tye
	Anderson	Foster	Old	Vardy
	Arnott	Francis	Oliver	Wake
	Ball	E. Gibson	I.J. Richardson	Wakefield
	Bell	P. Gibson	Rolph	Walker
	Blackburn	Gofton	Scaplehorn	J. Walton
	Chamberlin	G. Hall	J. Scott	L. Walton
	Charlton	Heron	Shattock	Wares
	Copeland	Kelly	D. Smith	P. Watson
	I. Cuthbert	Leadbitter	Snowdon	S. Watson
	M. Dixon	Paul Maddison	Speding	Whalen
	P. Dixon	Peter Maddison	Stephenson	A. Wilson
	Ellis	L. Martin	Stewart	D. Wilson
	Errington	T. Martin	Symonds	Wood
	Fairs	Miller	Tate	A. Wright
	Fletcher	Mordey	Timmins	T. H. Wright
	D. Forbes	Morrissey	Trueman	

The Notice convening the meeting was read.

Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 28th January, 2009 (copy circulated) be confirmed as a correct record subject to it being noted that Councillor Allan had advised that in relation to the vote on the reference back to the Personnel Committee the Deputy Mayor had stated that he had voted against the motion rather than abstaining as recorded.

Declarations of Interest

The following Councillors declared personal interests in the following items on the agenda for the reasons indicated:-

Question 2	Councillor Charlton	Non Executive Director of City Hospitals
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Mayor's Announcements

- (i) The Mayor welcomed the Students from Sunderland University to the meeting.
- (ii) It was with sadness that the Mayor reminded Council of the recent death of the former councillor, Alex Campbell.

Members and Officers joined the Mayor in observing a minute's silence as a mark of respect.

- (iii) At the invitation of the Mayor, the Portfolio holder for Resources, Councillor Allan informed the meeting of the Council's successes in the Local Government Chronicle and Health Service Journal Sustainable Communities Awards.

Reception of Petitions

None.

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted to the meeting on behalf of Councillors A. Cuthbert, A. Hall, Howe, D. Richardson, P. Smith and N. Wright.

The Cabinet reported as follows:-

1. Housing Standards and Neighbourhood Relations: Proposed Housing Renewal Enforcement Policy

That they had given consideration to a report of Health, housing and Adult Services (copy circulated) on a statutory requirement to produce and publish a service specific enforcement policy and to seek approval for the proposed housing renewal enforcement policy which would act to serve statutory, strategic and operational aims in respect of the exercise of regulatory functions.

Accordingly the Cabinet recommended the Council to approve and adopt the Housing Renewal Enforcement Policy with immediate effect.

They had also referred the report to the Regeneration and Community Review Committee for consideration and comment. The Review Committee had welcomed the report and had recommended that the Council support the proposed Housing Renewal Enforcement Policy.

Councillor P. Watson, seconded by Councillor Anderson, moved the report of the Cabinet and it was:-

RESOLVED that the report of the Cabinet, together with the views of the Review Committee, 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.

As the time limit was reached before the end of the questioning it was agreed that Councillor Old would receive a written response to her question.

Action Taken on Petitions

The Council received the undermentioned reports on action taken in relation to petitions which had been presented to the Council: -

- (i) **Petition from residents of Houghton-le-Spring regarding the condition of Kirklea Playing Field, John Street. Dogs are being injured by broken glass, litter is uncollected for months on end and what could be a pleasant amenity is left to deteriorate. It is a risk to public health and an environmental eyesore. Presented by Councillor Colin Wakefield on 24th September, 2008**

The Director of Community and Cultural Services, following consultation with Councillor Rolph had agreed the following actions:

- (i) Arrangements were made to trim and weed treat all fence lines and hard surfaces before the end of November 2008.
- (ii) Litter would be removed prior to grass cutting operations.
- (iii) The dog and litter bins were relocated away from resident's premises.
- (iv) Staff will continue to monitor the area to determine whether additional litter bins are required.
- (v) Anti-social behaviour issues would be discussed at the next Local Multi Agency Problem Solving meeting.
- (vi) Play areas are currently being improved as part of a play area refurbishment programme.
- (vi) Repainting of the perimeter fence to be considered for inclusion in the 2009/10 maintenance programme.

Councillor Wakefield and petitioners to be notified.

(ii) **We the Residents of Keats Avenue would like to bring to the attention of Councillors continuous ASB of the family that live at xx Keats Avenue the catalogue of events are listed below:-**

- 1. Drug abuse and dealing in Drugs**
- 2. Continuous Police presence**
- 3. Foul and unruly behaviour**
- 4. Continuous drinking outside home on step till after 2am**
- 5. Continuous build up of litter around front door and street**
- 6. Theft from other residents**
- 7. Litter in back street**
- 8. Throwing bottles of urine over walls**
- 9. Throwing pornographic books over walls**
- 10. Urinating in street**
- 11. Unruly behaviour in street late at night**
- 12. Discarding bottles of methadone over next doors wall**
- 13. Intimidating feelings felt by residents because mass of young people drinking in Street throughout day and night.**

We feel it is time we spoke as one. We want this street to return to the pleasant street it was prior to this family. We are unable to let our children play in the street as a result. Also people are even contemplating selling their homes and moving. This must be addressed please help the residents of Keats Avenue. Presented by Councillor Copeland on 25th June, 2008.

The Chief Executive, following consultation with Northumbria Police, the Director of Health, Housing and Adult Services, the Director of Community and Cultural Services and the Safer Communities Manager, had notified the lead petitioner of the partnership approach taken and eventual positive outcome of the problem family leaving the area achieved in relation to residents concerns about issues of alleged substance misuse, crime, disorder, anti-social behaviour, environment and cleanliness, and overall community safety matters as reportedly perpetrated by the residents of xx, Keats Avenue, Southwick, Sunderland.

Notice of Motion – Supporting Members

The Mayor advised that a requisition had been received from the Majority Group in Opposition for an Extraordinary Meeting of the Council to be called to deal with the Notice of Motion and she had agreed, following consultation and in order to facilitate the business of the Council, that the motion should be added to the agenda for this meeting.

She advised that consideration of the Motion was also subject to the Council resolving under Council Rule of Procedure No. 20 to suspend the

requirements relating to notice and signature contained in the Rule of Procedure No. 9 in respect of Motions on Notice

Upon being put to the meeting the Council agreed the suspension of Council Rule of Procedure No. 9.

Councillor L. Martin, seconded by Councillor Morrissey, then moved the following Motion:-

“This Council recognises that:-

- being a local government councillor is not supposed to be a full-time job
- many elected members manage to hold down full-time jobs
- that those members in employment have obligations to their work colleagues as well as to council and particularly so during a recession
- those who have careers bring skills and expertise to their duties as councillors
- the percentage of councillors under 45 years of age has fallen from 18 percent in 1997 to 13 percent today

And, resolves to:

Make it easier for working people to become and remain local government councillors by instructing the Chief Executive to ensure that from the commencement of the next municipal year council and committee meetings and other events requiring attendance are not routinely scheduled during the normal working day.”

At the suggestion of Councillor L. Martin the Council agreed that its condolences be sent to David Cameron and his family following the death of his son, Ivan.

Councillor L. Martin then spoke to his motion.

Councillor Wood, seconded by Councillor Mrs Forbes, moved that the time limit in respect of Councillor L. Martin’s speech be extended.

Upon being put to the vote, the motion to extend the time limit was defeated with 22 members voting for the extension viz:-

Councillors	Chamberlin	G. Hall	Oliver	Wakefield
	I. Cuthbert	Leadbitter	I. Richardson	J. Walton
	M. Dixon	Paul Maddison	D. Smith	L. Walton
	Fairs	Peter Maddison	Vardy	Wood
	M. Forbes	L. Martin	Wake	A. Wright
	Francis	Morrissey		

And 42 members voting against, viz:-

Councillors	Allan	Foster	Rolph	Trueman
	Anderson	E. Gibson	Scaplehorn	Tye
	Ball	P. Gibson	J. Scott	Walker
	Bell	Gofton	Shattock	Wares
	Blackburn	Heron	Speding	P. Watson
	Charlton	Kelly	Stephenson	S. Watson
	Copeland	T. Martin	Stewart	Whalen
	Ellis	Miller	Symonds	A. Wilson
	Errington	Mordey	Tate	D. Wilson
	Fletcher	O'Connor	Timmins	T. H. Wright
	D. Forbes	Old		

Councillor P. Watson, seconded by Councillor Anderson, moved the following amendment:-

In the first line, after this Council, insert “already”.

After, make it easier for, delete “working people” and insert “anyone”.

After, other events requiring attendance are, insert, “as now”.

Upon being put to the vote, the amendment was carried with 39 members voting for the amendment, viz:-

Councillors	Allan	E. Gibson	Rolph	Timmins
	Anderson	P. Gibson	Scaplehorn	Trueman
	Ball	Gofton	J. Scott	Tye
	Bell	Heron	Shattock	Walker
	Blackburn	Kelly	Snowdon	Wares
	Charlton	T. Martin	Speding	P. Watson
	Copeland	Miller	Stephenson	S. Watson
	Errington	Mordey	Stewart	A. Wilson
	Fletcher	O'Connor	Symonds	T.H. Wright
	Foster	Old	Tate	

And 23 members voting against, viz:-

Councillors	Arnott	M. Forbes	Morrissey	Wakefield
	Chamberlin	Francis	Oliver	J. Walton
	I. Cuthbert	G. Hall	I. Richardson	L. Walton
	M. Dixon	Leadbitter	D. Smith	Wood
	Ellis	Paul Maddison	Vardy	A. Wright
	Fairs	L. Martin	Wake	

Upon being put to the vote, the new substantive motion was carried, with 39 members voting in favour thereof, viz:-

Councillors	Allan	E. Gibson	Rolph	Timmins
	Anderson	P. Gibson	Scaplehorn	Trueman
	Ball	Gofton	J. Scott	Tye
	Bell	Heron	Shattock	Walker
	Blackburn	Kelly	Snowdon	Wares
	Charlton	T. Martin	Speding	P. Watson
	Copeland	Miller	Stephenson	S. Watson
	Errington	Mordey	Stewart	A. Wilson
	Fletcher	O'Connor	Symonds	T.H. Wright
	Foster	Old	Tate	

One member abstaining, viz:-

Councillor Wakefield

And 20 members voting against, viz:-

Councillors	Arnott	M. Forbes	L. Martin	Wake
	Chamberlin	Francis	Morrissey	J. Walton
	I. Cuthbert	G. Hall	Oliver	L. Walton
	M. Dixon	Leadbitter	I. Richardson	Wood
	Fairs	Paul Maddison	Vardy	A. Wright

Accordingly it was:-

RESOLVED that this Council already recognises that:-

- Being a local government councillor is not supposed to be a full-time job
- Many elected members managed to hold down full-time jobs
- That those members in employment have obligations to their work colleagues as well as to council and particularly so during a recession
- Those who have careers bring skills and expertise to their duties as councillors
- The percentage of councillors under 45 years of age has fallen from 18 percent in 1997 to 13 percent today

And, resolves to:

Make it easier for anyone to become and remain local government councillors by instructing the Chief Executive to ensure that from the commencement of the next municipal year council and committee meetings and other events requiring attendance are, as now, not routinely scheduled during the normal working day.

(Signed) M. SMITH,
Mayor.