

Minutes

Sunderland City Council

At a meeting of SUNDERLAND CITY COUNCIL held in the CIVIC CENTRE on
WEDNESDAY 22 NOVEMBER 2017 at 6.00 p.m.

Present: The Mayor (Councillor D MacKnight) in the Chair

Councillors	Allan	Francis	McClennan	Taylor
	Allen	Galbraith, G	Middleton	Trueman, D
	Ball	Galbraith, I	Miller, F	Trueman, H
	Beck	Gibson, E	Miller, G	Turner
	Bell	Gibson, P	Mordey	Turton, M
	Blackburn	Heron	Oliver	Turton, W
	Chequer	Hodson	O'Brien	Tye
	Curran	Howe	O'Neil	Walker, G
	Davison	Hunt	Porthouse	Walker, P
	Dixon, D	Jackson	Scanlan	Waller
	Dixon, M	Johnston	Scaplehorn	Waters
	Elliott	Kay	Scullion	Wilson, A
	English	Kelly	Smith	Wilson, D
	Essl	Lauchlan	Snowdon, DE	Wood
	Farthing	Lawson	Snowdon, D	Wright, N
	Fletcher	Leadbitter	Speding	Wright, T
	Foster	Marshall	Stewart	

Also Present:-

Honorary Aldermen: - Arnott, M.L
Greenfield, M
Tate, R D

The notice convening the meeting was read.

Minutes

35. RESOLVED that the minutes of the Council Meeting held on 20 September 2017 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

Declarations of Interest

The following Councillors declared interests as follows: -

Item 9 – Written	Councillor Tye	Member of Gentoo Board
Questions – 1 and 12		

The Mayor requested that the Council consider varying the order of the proceedings to deal with the reception of petitions in view of the fact that there were a number of people present who wished to observe the submission of a petition for consideration by Council.

It was therefore:-

36. RESOLVED that the order of the proceedings be varied to deal with the reception of petitions as the next item.

Reception of Petitions

37. RESOLVED that the petition listed below submitted by the Councillor named, be received and referred for consideration in accordance with the Council's Petitions Scheme: -

Councillor J. Fletcher - Petition of 9000 signatures from the people of Washington against the proposed siting of the Rolton Kilbride gasification plant.

Announcements

(i) Sunderland Youth Parliament

The Mayor advised that the Sunderland Youth Parliament would be meeting on Friday 24 November 2017 at 9.30 a.m. should any Member wish to attend.

(ii) Tributes to Leader of the Council, Councillor Paul Watson

The Mayor, was joined by the Deputy Leader of the Council, Councillor H. Trueman and Councillors Heron, Oliver, M. Dixon, Wood, N. Wright, Mordey, D. Wilson and T. Wright, to honour the Leader of the Council, Councillor Paul Watson who had recently passed away. Members paid tribute to the huge contribution he had made to the City of Sunderland and the North East region as a whole, particularly for his role in regeneration in the City, the new Wear Crossing, the International Advanced Manufacturing Park, development of the former Vaux site, as well as the forthcoming Tall Ships Race and the bid for UK City of Culture in 2021.

Members commented that Councillor Watson had worked tirelessly throughout his illness and he would be sadly missed.

The Mayor having thanked Members for their kind sentiments read a letter of thanks received from Councillor Susan Watson thanking everyone for the support which had been given to Councillor Watson during his illness. She particularly thanked everyone for their kind donations to his charities which had raised £1,500 and the overwhelming amount of cheques sent direct to the Sunderland Royal Hospital and the Freeman Hospital.

(iii) Former Borough Treasurer, Frank Coulthard

The Mayor paid tribute to the service and contribution of Frank Coulthard, who was the former Treasurer of the Houghton Urban District Council and former Borough Treasurer for Sunderland Borough Council, who had recently passed away.

Members and Officers stood for a minute's silence as a mark of respect for the Leader of the Council, Councillor Paul Watson and Mr Frank Coulthard, former Borough Treasurer.

(iv) UK Public Sector Communications Awards 2017

At the invitation of the Mayor, Councillor Mordey informed Members that at the recent UK Public Sector Communications Awards ceremony, the Council and DTW public relations and marketing agency, had won an award in the category for Media Relations Campaign of the Year for the New Wear Crossing. He reported that the award recognised an exemplary media relations campaign that delivered exceptional results and coverage.

Apologies

Apologies for absence were submitted to the meeting on behalf of Councillors Atkinson, Cummings, Emerson, Gofton, S. Watson, Williams together with Honorary Alderman Forbes.

Report of the Cabinet

The Cabinet reported and recommended as follows: -

1. Amendment of Council Procedure Rules

That they will be giving consideration to a joint report of the Chief Executive and the Head of Law and Governance on proposed amendments to the Council Procedure Rules in the Constitution to include a procedure for enabling the public to ask questions on notice at meetings of full Council and other amendments referred to in the report.

The Cabinet is requested to recommend to Council to:-

- (i) approve the amendments to the Council Procedure Rules set out in the report and
- (ii) authorise the Head of Law and Governance to update the Constitution accordingly and to make any typographical and stylistic corrections required.

Cabinet's recommendations to Council were set out in a supplementary report (copy circulated) and were as follows:-

- (i) approve the amendments to the Council Procedure Rules set out in the report, together with a further amendment in respect of the provision for written notice to be given of any amendments to be moved to Budget or Policy Framework proposals, which is set out in draft Rule 13.7 (f), in order to make it clear that the written notice to be given must set out the proposed amendment, so the first part of the Rule will state that:

“No amendments to a motion or recommendation that relates to the Budget or Policy Framework may be moved unless written notice, which sets out the amendment or amendments proposed, has been given by the member(s) proposing the amendment and has been delivered to the Chief Executive’s Office not later than noon on the second working day before the date of the meeting” and

- (ii) authorise the Head of Law and Governance to update the Constitution accordingly and to make any typographical and stylistic corrections required.

2. International Advanced Manufacturing Park Area Action Plan – Adoption

That they will be giving consideration to a report of the Executive Director of Economy and Place seeking approval to recommend the adoption of the Sunderland and South Tyneside Councils’ joint Area Action Plan (AAP) for the International Advanced Manufacturing Park (IAMP) following its independent examination conducted by the Planning Inspectorate on behalf of the Secretary of State.

During the course of this examination, a number of modifications to the AAP had been proposed by Sunderland and South Tyneside Councils, the Planning Inspector and those parties who had made representations at the examination. The modified AAP had been subject to additional consultation and the Planning Inspector had issued his report (Appendix A). This confirmed that he considered the AAP (Appendix C) to be “Sound” subject to these main modifications (Appendix B).

Upon adoption the AAP will become part of the Local Plans of both South Tyneside and Sunderland Councils, and will provide the spatial planning policy that will shape the future development of the IAMP. South Tyneside Council will consider a report on the adoption of the AAP on 30th November 2017.

The Cabinet is requested to recommend to Council to:-

- (i) Note the Planning Inspector’s Report on the IAMP AAP (Appendix A) and accept the Main Modifications set out in Appendix B;

- (ii) Adopt the International Advanced Manufacturing Park Area Action Plan including the Policies Map (Appendix C) to take effect from 30 November 2017, subject to South Tyneside Council also resolving to adopt the IAMP AAP.

Cabinet's recommendations to Council were set out in a supplementary report (copy circulated) and were as follows:-

- (i) Note the Planning Inspector's Report on the IAMP AAP (Appendix A) and accept the Main Modifications set out in Appendix B;
- (ii) Adopt the International Advanced Manufacturing Park Area Action Plan including the Policies Map (Appendix C) to take effect from 30 November 2017, subject to South Tyneside Council also resolving to adopt the IAMP AAP.

The Deputy Leader of the Council, Councillor H Trueman, duly seconded by the Cabinet Secretary, Councillor Speding, moved the report of the Cabinet.

Councillor Oliver, duly seconded by Councillor Francis, moved that the Amendment of Council Procedure Rules report be referred back to the Cabinet for further consideration as follows:-

- it was felt that the changes would make it more difficult to scrutinise the Executive,
- the change to the notice of questions from two days prior to the Council meeting to four days would not enable emerging issues to be questioned,
- similarly with the prior notice of amendments for Budget and Policy Framework matters, there should be a fair expectation that amendments could be handled on the day of the meeting, and
- in respect of the State of the City Debate, the debate should be chaired by a local independent, impartial person.

Upon being put to the vote, the reference back was defeated with 11 members voting in favour: -

Councillors	Curran	Francis	Leadbitter	Trueman, D.
	Dixon, M.	Hodson	O'Brien	Wood
	Fletcher	Howe	Oliver	

50 Members voting against:-

Councillors	Allan	Galbraith, I.	Middleton	Trueman, H.
	Ball	Gibson, E.	Miller, F.	Turner
	Bell	Gibson, P.	Miller, G.	Turton, M.
	Blackburn	Heron	Mordey	Turton, W.
	Chequer	Hunt	O'Neil	Tye
	Davison	Jackson	Porthouse	Walker, G.
	Dixon, D.	Johnston	Scanlan	Walker, P.
	Elliott	Kay	Scullion	Waller
	English	Kelly	Smith	Waters
	Essl	Lauchlan	Snowdon, D.	Wilson, A.
	Farthing	Lawson	Speding	Wright, T.
	Foster	Marshall	Stewart	
	Galbraith, G.	McClennan	Taylor	

And 1 abstention

Councillor Beck

Councillor Hodson, seconded by Councillor O'Brien, proposed two amendments to the report on Council Procedure Rules (pp. 17-28):-

At pages 24-25, Item 9.3, at the end of the present text, add: "A digest of questions received will be communicated to the leaders of all political groups on the Council."

So that, amended it reads:

"9.3 If the Chief Executive considers that the number of questions received is such that they cannot all be answered within 15 minutes, he/she will, after consulting with the Mayor, select those which are to be put to the Council meeting. Any question which cannot be dealt with at the meeting because of lack of time will be dealt with by a written answer to be sent within 5 working days of the Council meeting by the member of whom the question was asked. A digest of questions received will be communicated to the leaders of all political groups on the Council."

At page 25, Item 9.8, leave out: "Questions that have been accepted will be read out at the relevant meeting by the Mayor.", and insert: "The Questioner will be invited to put their question to the relevant meeting in person, or opt to have their question read out at the relevant meeting by the Mayor. Questions that have been accepted will then be read out at the relevant meeting by the Questioner, or by the Mayor on their behalf."

So that, amended it reads:

"9.8 The Questioner will be invited to put their question to the relevant meeting in person, or opt to have their question read out at the relevant meeting by the Mayor. Questions that have been accepted will then be read out at the relevant meeting by the Questioner, or by the Mayor on their behalf."

Upon being put to the vote, the amendments were defeated with 9 members voting in favour: -

Councillors	Allen Dixon, M. Francis	Hodson Howe	Leadbitter O'Brien	Oliver Wood
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57 Members voting against:-

Councillors	Allan Ball Beck Bell Blackburn Chequer Curran Davison Dixon, D. Elliott English Essl Farthing Fletcher	Foster Galbraith, G. Galbraith, I. Gibson, E. Gibson, P. Heron Hunt Jackson Johnston Kay Kelly Lauchlan Lawson Marshall	McClennan Middleton Miller, F. Miller, G. Mordey O'Neil Porthouse Scanlan Scaplehorn Scullion Smith Snowdon, D. Snowdon, D.E. Speding	Stewart Taylor Trueman, D. Trueman, H. Turner Turton, M. Turton, W. Tye Walker, G. Walker, P. Waller Waters Wilson, A. Wilson, D. Wright, T.
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Upon the report of the Cabinet being put to the Council it was: -

38. RESOLVED that the report of the Cabinet, including the supplementary report, be approved and adopted.

Report of the Audit and Governance Committee

The Audit and Governance Committee reported and recommended as follows: -

1. Annual Audit Letter 2016/2017

That they have given consideration to the Annual Audit Letter (copy attached) covering the year 2016/2017 prepared by the Council's external auditor Mazars LLP.

Accordingly, the Committee recommends Council to note the Annual Audit Letter for 2016/2017.

Councillor O'Neil, duly seconded by the Cabinet Secretary, Councillor Speding, moved the report of the Audit and Governance Committee.

Upon the report of the Audit and Governance Committee being put to the Council it was: -

39. RESOLVED that the report of the Audit and Governance Committee be noted.

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.

Action on Petitions

The Council received and noted the report below which detailed the action taken in relation to the following petition which had been presented to the Council at its meeting held on 20 September, 2017.

(i) Petition to Council to reopen the Cat & Dog Steps Public Toilets

Detail of the Petition

The following petition signed by over 180 residents was presented by Councillor Leadbitter on behalf of the Lead Petitioner:-

“We, the undersigned, are concerned citizens who urge the council to act now and reopen the public conveniences. This is the only public toilet and is having a significant impact on visitors to the area.”

Background

The toilets were closed in July, shortly before the Sunderland Air Show, due to a breakdown of the sewage pumping system.

Every effort was made by the Council's building maintenance and drainage teams to carry out repairs and reopen the toilets in advance of the air show however due to the unavailability of replacement parts and extent of work required this was not possible. Unfortunately the Council was left with no option other than to keep the facilities closed until such time as necessary repairs had been completed.

Repairs were carried out in late September and the toilets reopened for use on 2 October. Every effort was made to keep the temporary closure period to a minimum.

Actions Taken in Response

Whilst at the date of the receipt of the petition the toilets were closed, it was always the Council's intention to reopen the facilities while making every effort to keep the period of closure to a minimum. As stated above, the toilets reopened on 2 October.

The Ward Councillors and lead petitioner have been advised of the outcome.

40. RESOLVED that the action taken on petitions be noted.

Report on Special Urgency Decisions

The Deputy Leader of the Council submitted a quarterly report on executive decisions which had been taken as a matter of special urgency, which advised that there were no such instances since the last report.

The Deputy Leader of the Council, Councillor H. Trueman, duly seconded by the Cabinet Secretary, Councillor Speding, moved the report.

41. RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

Appointments to Outside Bodies – Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority

The Head of Law and Governance submitted a report which requested the Council to consider the appointment of Councillor I. Galbraith to replace Councillor Middleton to serve on the Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority.

The Deputy Leader of the Council, duly seconded by the Cabinet Secretary, moved that the recommendation contained in the report be approved and it was: -

42. RESOLVED that Councillor I. Galbraith be appointed to replace Councillor Middleton to serve on the Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority.

(Signed) D MACKNIGHT
Mayor

