

COUNCIL - 6 October 2020

MINUTES

Present: Councillors: A Adeyemo, M Allen, K Allsopp, S Ashraf MBE, K Blunt, M Brain, J Burn, J Butler, C Buxton-Sait, S Caudwell, D Cole, I Courts, S Davis, T Diccico, J Fairburn, M Gough, K Grinsell, R Grinsell, B Groom, J Hamilton, K Hawkins, A Hodgson, T Hodgson, P Hogarth MBE, Mrs D Holl-Allen MBE, R Holt, D Howell, A Mackenzie, A Mackiewicz, K Macnaughton, L McCarthy, M McLoughlin, K Meeson, F Nash, M Parker, J Potts, W Qais, A Rebeiro, T Richards OBE, A Rolf, J Ryan, R Sexton, G Slater, R Sleigh OBE, K Thomas, P Thomas, J Tildesley, Mrs K Wild, C Williams and M Wilson

1. APOLOGIES.

No apologies were received.

2. COUNCIL MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 7th July 2020 were approved.

3. DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY OR CONFLICTING INTERESTS FROM MEMBERS

Councillor Mackiewicz made a declaration of interest as a Director of AMPA Associates Ltd who provided contracts procured by Solihull Council

Councillor Adeyemo made a declaration of interest as he was employed by a company who provided insurance to HS2 Ltd

Councillor Rebeiro made a declaration of interest in relation to any business related to the Local Plan, as his property was adjacent to one of the sites within the plan.

Councillor Kathryn Thomas made a declaration of interest in relation to any business related to the Local Plan, as she had influence in the choice of site space for her employee Jaguar Land Rover.

4. PETITIONS

Councillor Diccico submitted a petition on behalf of local residents which objected to a planning application at Woodlands Lodge, Green Lane, Meriden.

Councillor Kathryn Thomas submitted a petition which requested Solihull Council to reopen the blue badge parking on Drury Lane and Mill Lane.

Councillor McCarthy submitted a petition on behalf of residents which requested Solihull Council to install CCTV cameras in Elmdon Park and Damson Lane Park.

Councillor Slater submitted a petition on behalf of residents of Rangoon Road and Valley Road to prevent these roads being used to circumvent the Coventry Road.

5. ANNOUNCEMENTS

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The Mayor requested a moment of reflection to consider those who had lost loved ones during the COVID-19 crisis and those who were suffering at this time.

The Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health provided an update on the local COVID-19 situation

6. QUESTIONS AND DEPUTATIONS UNDER STANDING ORDER 9 AND 12

Alderman David Bell asked the Leader about the draft Local Plan Sites 2 and 3 and why the country park proposal had not been included in the submission. The Leader responded to the points raised, and explained why the proposal for a country park had not been included.

Mr McAllister made a deputation in relation to road safety for cyclists within the Borough. Mr McAllister was introduced by Councillor Tim Hodgson. The Cabinet Member for Environment and Highways explained that this would be addressed at future Decision Session meeting.

Mrs Cooper on behalf of the CPRE Warwickshire made a deputation in relation to sustainability and the Green Belt within the draft Local Plan. Mrs Cooper was introduced by Councillor Howell. The statement from Mrs Cooper was read out on her behalf. The Leader responded to the points raised, and explained that any representations would be passed to the planning inspectorate as part of the examination process.

Mrs McGarry made a deputation which requested the removal of site 3 from the draft Local Plan. Mrs McGarry was introduced by Councillor Diccio. The Leader responded to the points raised, and explained that any representations would be passed to the planning inspectorate as part of the examination process.

Mr O'Sullivan made a deputation in relation to the potential impact of the draft Local Plan on primary care services. Mr O'Sullivan was introduced by Councillor Dr Sexton. The Leader responded to the points raised.

Mr Lowe made a deputation which raised concerns with the amount of houses proposed for Shirley within the draft Local Plan. Mr Lowe was introduced by Councillor Allen. The Leader responded to the points raised.

7. RECOMMENDATION FROM CABINET - LOCAL PLAN REVIEW - DRAFT SUBMISSION PLAN

The Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Planning and Housing introduced the recommendations from Cabinet that Council endorse the Local Plan Review – Draft Submission Plan: and approve the publication of the Plan and arrangements for submission of the Plan to the Secretary of State for examination.

Members raised a number of questions and sought clarification on a number of issues which the Leader of the Council and the Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Planning and Housing responded to.

There then followed a debate and it was proposed by Cllr McCarthy and seconded by Cllr Burn that the Cabinet's recommendation (iii)(a) be amended to read:

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(iii) (a) The Draft Submission Plan be published for a period of 12 weeks inviting representations on the soundness and legal compliance of the plan.

The amendment was put and lost. The following Councillors requested that their names be recorded as voting for the amendment.

(Councillors Adeyemo, Allen, Ashraf, Burn, Buxton-Sait, Caudwell, Fairburn, Groom, Hamilton, A Hodgson, T Hodgson, Macnaughton, McCarthy, McLoughlin, Dr Sexton, Slater, K Thomas, Williams and Wilson).

The substantive motion was then put and carried and Council **RESOLVED**:

- (i) To endorse the Local Plan Review - Draft Submission Plan (Appendix A);
- (ii) To note the Sustainability Appraisal (Appendix B) and the Fair Treatment Assessment (Appendix C) as supporting documents to the Draft Local Plan;
- (iii) To agree:-
 - a) The publication of the Draft Submission Plan for a period of 6 weeks inviting representations on the soundness and legal compliance of the plan;
 - b) That prior to the formal publication of the Local Plan for a statutory period of representations, authority to make minor changes to the plan (if necessary) be delegated to the Director for Economy & Infrastructure in consultation with the Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Planning & Housing. Any such changes will be recorded in a schedule and published for transparency; and
 - c) That following a review of the representations that are subsequently received, delegate authority to the Director for Economy & Infrastructure in consultation with the Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Planning & Housing to take full account of the representations received, propose minor amendments to the Local Plan (where this is necessary to correct any errors and aid clarity) and submit the Local Plan to the Secretary of State for a period of public examination.

The following Councillors requested that their names be recoded as voting against the substantive motion.

(Councillors Adeyemo, Allen, Ashraf, Burn, Buxton-Sait, Caudwell, Fairburn, Groom, Hamilton, A Hodgson, T Hodgson, Macnaughton, McCarthy, McLoughlin, Dr Sexton, Slater, K Thomas, Williams and Wilson).

8. QUESTIONS UNDER STANDING ORDER 8

Councillor Buxton-Sait to Councillor Karen Grinsell, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health

“How many families have been placed in temporary hotel accommodation so far this calendar year?”

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The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health responded that there had been 112 family placements for the period January 2020 to date.

Councillor Buxton-Sait queried what the Council had done to prevent families being accommodated in inappropriate bed and breakfasts.

The Cabinet Member explained that their needs would be assessed and the family supported into appropriate permanent accommodation as soon as possible. During the COVID-19 pandemic, there was extra support made available to these families.

Councillor Buxton-Sait asked for reassurance that if a second lockdown occurred, housing allocations would not stop. The Cabinet Member outlined that these families would continue to be fully supported.

Councillor Kathryn Thomas to Councillor Karen Grinsell, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health

"There are a number of run down garage areas/parking sites across Elmdon and Lyndon wards. Many residents are reluctant to use them due to fears over safety and anti-social behaviour, creating parking problems on nearby streets. Would it be possible to convert these sites into badly needed additional housing?"

The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health responded that they were committed to building more social and affordable housing, however it was difficult to achieve this. Officers were investigating private garages in the area in relation to complaints. Council had no current issues on the sites owned by the Council. These sites are visited by SCH officers and cleared of rubbish.

Councillor Thomas highlighted there were a number of sites in Lyndon where drugs and drinks were being used and asked what the Council could do to improve communications between departments.

The Cabinet Member highlighted that it required people to continue to flag areas of concern.

Councillor Macnaughton to Councillor Karen Grinsell, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health

"What is the current average waiting time of a family of two parents, a two year old child and a new born baby in an urgent priority status (Band B) for a socially rented property in Solihull."

The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health provided the following information:

- The 2 bed average waiting time is 127 weeks (889 days)
- The 3 bed average waiting time is 162 weeks (1134 days)

Councillor Macnaughton asked what the health impact would be on a child who lived their first 1001 days in these circumstances.

The Cabinet Member outlined that the first 1001 days of a child's life was a key priority for the Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

Councillor Macnaughton queried what actions would be taken to create socially rented accommodation within the Borough.

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The Cabinet Member explained that the draft Local Plan enabled more properties to be built within the Borough to add to the stock of houses.

Councillor Kathryn Thomas to Councillor Mackiewicz, Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Planning and Housing

“Can the Cabinet Member please tell us what is the average cost of the following in Solihull (please exclude age restricted properties from the figures):

- socially rented 1 bed flat; socially rented 2 bed flat?
- privately rented 1 bed flat; privately rented 2 bed flat?
- mortgage on 1 bed flat; mortgage on 2 bed flat?
- mortgage and rent payment on shared ownership 1 bed flat?
- mortgage and rent payment on shared ownership 2 bed flat?

The Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Planning and Housing provided the following information:

Councillor Kathryn Thomas asked whether the shared ownership figure included the mortgage and rent element?

Tenure	1 Bed Flat	2 Bed Flat
Social Rent – Council	£337	£359
Social Rent – Housing Association	£400	£485
Private Rented Sector	£620	£777
Mortgage	£674	£936
Shared Ownership	£525	£695

The Cabinet Member responded that it was the total cost.

Councillor Ashraf to Councillor Karen Grinsell, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health

“The Grenfell tragedy still lives on for us all. What is the Council's current risk rating around fire safety in council homes, are there any particular properties of concern and what actions is the Council and SCH taking to reduce these risks in general, and in the highest risk properties in particular?”

The Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care explained that Solihull Council were committed to actions which would ensure fire safety within its properties. All of the risks associated with fire safety would be on both Solihull Council and SCH risk register, where it was classified as an amber risk. There was a focus on high rise blocks where mitigations would be put in place. There was a stay put policy, fire prevention compliance, fire risk assessments, regular inspections of properties, daily reporting of fire risks and full compliance with material specification for any remedial works.

Councillor Ashraf questioned how SCH engaged with residents on fire safety, and whether risks were communicated to residents.

The Cabinet Member highlighted that there was a lot of fire safety measures taken, fire safety was included in the SCH newsletter and a resident was a fire monitor who reported on issues within blocks.

Councillor Ashraf asked how the stay put policy was communicated to residents.

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The Cabinet Member responded that this was done through the work of West Midlands Fire Service who had regular communications with tenants in high rise properties and with SCH.

Councillor Adeyemo to Councillor Courts, Leader of the Council

"Plans from Downing Street for devolution of Local Authorities will call for replacement of district councils with single-tier unitary authorities. What representations have been made from Solihull Council about this and how will this move affect Solihull Council?"

The Leader of the Council explained that Solihull Council were a single tier Council and would not be affected by the change. The situation however, would be kept under review.

Councillor Adeyemo flagged the consultation being undertaken on smaller councils and asked what the Leader of the Council would do to respond to this.

The Leader of the Council responded that the consultation was in relation to County Councils which were two tier authorities, which Solihull Council was not.

Councillor Adeyemo asked the Leader to raise his concerns about the potential impact of changes on Solihull. The Leader of the Council highlighted that the consultation would not affect Solihull Council.

Councillor Caudwell to Councillor Hawkins, Cabinet Member for Environment and Highways

"It came to light in a September Cabinet report that the Economy and Infrastructure Directorate has been relying on reserves to balance its books for several years, and that much of this overspend is related to the Environment and Highways portfolio. Now these reserves are exhausted, can the Cabinet Member outline how he is planning to achieve a balanced budget in his portfolio?"

The Cabinet Member for Environment and Highways explained that for 2020/21 Cabinet will be asked to approve the use of earmarked reserves to fund the adverse variance in Economy and Infrastructure.. These reserves will then be replenished as part of the budget process for 2021/22.

Councillor Caudwell asked for clarification on what actions would be undertaken to tackle reduced money from weekly waste collections and car parking fees.

The Cabinet Member responded that the strategic environment contract and through changes to historic underlying budget problems would help to tackle these issues.

Councillor Adeyemo to Councillor Hawkins, Cabinet Member for Environment and Highways

"Blue badge disabled parking bays are currently closed off in several locations around the borough, causing severe inconvenience to our most vulnerable residents. When will they all be reopened, and can you please clarify which Active Travel Schemes from Phase 1 remain in operation and which are intended to remain permanently?"

The Cabinet Member for Environment and Highways highlighted the majority of the parking space reserved for Blue Badge holders were re-opened on 23rd September. However, there were four spaces in Station Road that remained closed to allow safe access for passengers using the adjacent temporary bus stop. Also, there were just 3

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spaces closed off in Mill Lane and Drury Lane. Activity in all of these areas is being monitored, due to the continued high COVID rate of infection in Solihull, to ensure visitors to the Town Centres can visit safely and comply with the current Social Distancing advice. The next review was due to take place on 13th October Decision Session and the Tranche 1 and Tranche 2 programmes would be considered at the Decision Session on 25th November.

Councillor Adeyemo asked whether the Cabinet Member would apologise to local residents who had been told that all of the blue badge parking spaces were open.

The Cabinet Member responded that his comments outlined that some of the blue badge parking spaces had reopened.

Councillor Ade Adeyemo to Councillor Karen Grinsell, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health

“What measures are being taken to support local GP surgeries in light of the COVID crisis?”

The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health explained that NHS England and NHS Improvement who commission GP services produced a standard operating procedure for practices to follow which has been updated over the course of the pandemic. Birmingham and Solihull CCG have designed a primary care model to support the transformation of care during COVID-19. Some of the initiatives included:

- Wide collaboration
- Peer support
- Additional resources
- Relaxation of contractual requirements to enable the delivery of core services
- Managerial support to help to plan services
- Communications toolkit
- Closer work with partners
- New IT infrastructure implemented

Councillor Adeyemo asked what practical support had been provided to GP surgeries in the Borough.

The Cabinet Member responded that many of the initiatives would support the GP surgeries and the STP Board would enable discussions about demand on GP surgeries.

Councillor Adeyemo questioned whether the move to large groups of surgeries would continue to be a good idea.

The Cabinet Member explained Primary Care Networks enabled 7 day a week working, and that the issues stems from the phone systems which is being resolved.

9. COUNCIL TOPIC OF DEBATE

There was no topic of debate.

10. NOTICE OF MOTION

Councillor Sleight introduced the motion which was seconded by Councillor Courts.

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“This Council welcomes the financial support given by this government to business, to the Council and to residents of the Metropolitan Borough of Solihull during the current Covid-19 Pandemic.

Whilst welcome, pressures not least financial, continue beyond the support already received.

This Council therefore calls on government to consider further support to business, the Council itself and residents of Solihull Borough to take us through this pandemic period and beyond.”

It was **RESOLVED** that the motion be referred to the Resources and Delivering Value Scrutiny Board for consideration.

11. REPORTS FROM CABINET

Councillor Courts – Leader of the Council

The Leader of the Council presented the decisions taken at Cabinet meetings on 16th July, 13th August and 16th September 2020 and attached the Economic Strategy report.

Councillor Adeyemo asked why the Leaders Decision Sessions had been cancelled and whether future meetings could be cancelled with more notice. The Leader responded that the majority of business took place at Full Cabinet and would look into whether future meetings could be cancelled.

Councillor Sleigh – Cabinet Member for Resources

The Cabinet Member for Resources presented the decisions taken at the Decision Session on 8th September 2020.

Councillor Rolf – Cabinet Member for Stronger and Safer Communities

The Cabinet Member for Stronger and Safer Communities presented the decisions taken at the Decision Sessions on 29th July and 21st September 2020.

Councillor Robert Grinsell questioned when the community would be told whether there could be a Remembrance Service outside Olton Library The Cabinet Member confirmed that a response would be a provided as soon as possible.

Councillor Adeyemo asked what actions were being taken to commemorate Black History Month. The Cabinet Member advised that a written response would be provided.

Councillor Cole queried when local libraries would reopen. The Cabinet Member explained that libraries were being reopened gradually with the bigger ones initially. Local libraries had safety assessments undertaken and a date for Kingshurst would be confirmed.

Councillor Groom asked whether the Crematoria Webcasting Fees would be reviewed, and if Members could be involved in this decision. The Cabinet Member explained that they had not planned to review the decision and a planned review would take place in December. If changes to lockdown rules occurred sooner, a review would take place.

Councillor Mackiewicz – Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Planning and Housing

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The Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Planning and Housing presented the decisions taken at Decision Sessions on 30th June, 28th July and 29th September 2020.

Councillor Kathryn Thomas queried why work to create the rapid electric bus charging infrastructure at Solihull Train station had started, prior to the confirmation of the Sprint rapid transit bus route. The Cabinet Member explained that there were plans to have electric buses use Solihull, and therefore the infrastructure needed to be in place to accommodate this.

Councillor Hawkins – Cabinet Member for Environment and Highways

The Cabinet Member for Environment and Highways presented the decisions taken at the Decision Session on 1st September 2020.

Councillor Williams asked whether Coleshill Heath Road could access the HS2 Road Safety Fund. The Cabinet Member for Environment and Highways explained that he would ask officers to look into this.

Councillor Kathryn Thomas questioned whether there would be a list of the roads covered by the carriageway resurfacing programme. The Cabinet Member for Environment and Highways confirmed this would be circulated.

Councillor Ken Meeson – Cabinet Member for Children, Education and Skills

The Cabinet Member for Children, Education and Skills advised Council of the decisions taken at Decision sessions on 9th July and 7th September 2020.

Councillor Gough asked whether the Council had done enough to educate parents about the implications of taking their children out of school. The Cabinet Member explained that parents were made aware of the ramifications of home schooling a child, and that education would take place at home.

Councillor McCarthy queried what dialogue took place with parents who chose to electively home educate their children. The Cabinet Member responded that there was communication with these parents to ensure they felt supported and that the children received satisfactory education.

Councillor Karen Grinsell – Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health and the minutes of the Solihull Health and Wellbeing Board.

The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health advised Council of the decisions taken at Decision Sessions on 11th August and 3rd September 2020, the Annual Report from Safeguarding Adults Board and the minutes of the Health and Wellbeing Board held on 22nd September.

Councillor Dr Sexton wanted to express thanks to Officers across Adult Social Care and Public Health for all their hard work. Those thanks were echoed by the Cabinet Member.

Councillor Qais asked about the progress on the flu vaccination campaign across the Borough. The Cabinet Member responded that there was a drive in clinics at Solihull College which was a collaboration between GP practices, Solihull College and Shirley Roundtable, and was very successful, with over 2000 people who took part. Other practices used innovative methods to undertake vaccinations.

Councillor Richards – Cabinet Member for Growth and Infrastructure Delivery

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The Cabinet Member for Growth and Infrastructure Delivery presented the decisions made at the Decision Session on 14th July 2020.

Councillor Tildesley – Cabinet Member for Leisure, Tourism and Sport

The Cabinet Member for Leisure, Tourism and Sport presented the decisions made at the Decision Sessions on 30 July and 24th September 2020.

12. MINUTES OF SCRUTINY BOARDS

The minutes of the following Scrutiny Board meetings were presented for information:

- Resources and Delivering Value Scrutiny Board 21st July 2020 and 14th September 2020
- Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Board 15th July 2020 and 28th September 2020
- Economic Development and Managed Growth Scrutiny Board 22nd September 2020
- Children's Services, Education and Skills Scrutiny Board 17th September 2020
- Stronger Communities and Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Board 9th September 2020

13. MINUTES OF COMMITTEES

The minutes of the following Committees were presented for information:

- Call-in Committee 23rd July 2020
- Audit Committee 27th July 2020 and 7th September 2020
 - Re Minute 7 of the minutes of 7th September 2020 - 2020/21 Mid-Year Treasury Management Strategy Review Council **RESOLVED** to Approve the revised forecasts for the 2020/21 Capital financing requirement of £464.510m, Authorised Limit of £481.644m and noted the Operational Boundary and treasury activity to date.
- Licensing Committee 30th July 2020
- HS2 Implementation Advisory Group 27th July 2020
- Governance Committee 23rd September 2020

14. JOINT ARRANGEMENTS AND EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS

The minutes of WMCA Overview and Scrutiny minutes from 20th September 2020 were presented for information.

15. QUESTIONS BY LEADERS OF POLITICAL GROUPS UNDER SO5 (2) (T)

There were no questions received.

16. CHIEF EXECUTIVE REPORT

The Chief Executive invited Council to appoint an independent Member on Audit Committee.

RESOLVED

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That Mr David Page was approved as an Independent Member on the Audit Committee.

17. CHIEF EXECUTIVE URGENT MATTERS

The Chief Executive explained that a report would be brought to Group Leaders to consider the alteration of timings for Full Council meetings.

18. QUESTIONS UNDER STANDING ORDER 8

No questions remained.

19. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

That, in pursuance of Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be now excluded from the meeting for the remainder of the business to be transacted, on the grounds that there would be disclosure to them of exempt information in terms of Schedule 12A to the said Act.

20. PRIVATE MINUTES

The following private minutes were presented for information:

- Resources and Delivering Value Scrutiny Board 21st July 2020
- Audit Committee 27th July 2020 and 7th September 2020

The meeting finished on 7th October at 0.05 am