

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL
HELD ON 29 MARCH 2023 AT 6.00 pm**

Attendance:

The Mayor (Councillor Hutchison) (in the Chair)

Councillors Ms Ballard, Beavis, Bradley, Burgess, Casey, Chegwyn, Hammond, Herridge, Mrs Huggins, Hutchison, Hylands, Jessop, Johnston, Miss Kelly, Mrs Morgan, Pepper, Philpott, Raffaelli, Scard, Westerby, Durrant, Gledhill, Marshall, Bradley and Cox

Also in attendance: Honorary Alderman Dickson.

TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR MEMBERS FOR THEIR INABILITY TO ATTEND THE MEETING.

Apologies for non attendance were received from Councillor Cully, Councillor Earle, and Councillor Maynard and Honorary Alderman Searle.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS

The Mayor advised that he was approaching the end of a wonderful year in which he been involved in the Falklands Commemorations, Jubilee Celebrations, the Proclamation, the Coronation and Gosport 100 and had met some wonderful people in the community.

The Mayor advised that presentations would be given by the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Integrated Care Board on the challenges in health care provision in Gosport and by Chris Donnithorne on the protection of Portsmouth Harbour.

Slides from these are attached to these meetings as appendix A and B.

TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETINGS HELD ON 10 FEBRUARY 2023.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on the 10 February 2023 be signed as a true and correct record.

**TO RECEIVE DEPUTATIONS IN ACCORDANCE WITH STANDING ORDER NO. 3.4
AND PUBLIC QUESTIONS PURSUANT TO STANDING ORDER NO.3.5.**

There were no public questions and there were no deputations.

QUESTIONS (IF ANY) PURSUANT TO STANDING ORDER NO. 3.3

There were three Members questions.

Question in the name of Councillor Hammond

Can the Leader give an update on events being held on Council land this summer.

Answer: The Leader advised that there were a number of exciting events planned and that some were being organised by GBC and others by Hampshire Cultural Trust, in addition there were a number of community and charity events. Arts in the Parks programmes would be returning and there would also be an event with large puppets all at no cost to residents.

Charges for events over 500 people had been waived for charity events but there needed to be a cost for events that were commercial.

The events held would be bigger and better than before. Funding has been secured for a carnival, one of only six in the country. There was to be an event at the boating lake and a number of other events for the public. Concern was expressed that misinformation had been spread and that it was the organisers of the Gosport Waterfront Festival that had chosen to cancel it.

Contact had been made with the organisers following the implementation of charges to engage and discuss the charges, including the consideration that previously water and electric had been provided at the expense of the Council Tax payer.

The process of land hire would be open and transparent and the organiser had been advised they would need to pay for four days hire at £1400 per day.

Question in the name of Councillor Burgess to the Leader of the Council

It has been announced that the Gosport Waterfront Festival has been cancelled due to the significant charges now being imposed by the Council under this administration. This festival has been very popular over many years and brings vital much needed revenue to the traders in Gosport. Could consideration be given to waiving the charges this year to enable the festival to go ahead?

Answer: No, a full answer has already been given.

Supplementary question: Are any other festivals in Gosport not paying?

Answer: I refer to the answer already given.

Question in the name of Councillor Casey to the Leader of the Council

The play park on Stokes Bay has been closed for the last 3 weeks. With Easter fast approaching, can you confirm the required resources will be made available to have it open in time for the holidays?

Answer: I am grateful to Councillor Casey for raising this as I was unaware of the issue. Some areas of the play park were reopened with immediate effect, and this would be

checked, however other parts would remain closed for a little longer whilst the grass areas regrew and that the park would return to full use asap.

Supplementary: Is there an update on the splash park

Answer: Money had been allocated to allow for a total refurbishment of the parts needed, this was in progress, but an opening date was as yet unavailable.

TO RECEIVE THE FOLLOWING PART II MINUTES OF THE BOARDS OF THE COUNCIL

RESOLVED: That the following Part II Minutes of the Boards of the Council be agreed.

Community and Environment – 1 March 2023.

Members expressed concern at the continued deterioration of the sea wall at Stokes Bay. This had been reported and it was acknowledged that work would require significant funding, a planning application and a marine license.

It was acknowledged that the funding was such it would need to come from central government.

Policy and Organisation Board – 15 March 2023

Members expressed concern that the proposal for the bus station site was not as promised in election leaflets and that £800,000 had been allocated for redevelopment of the site that offered little improvement to the site.

CAPITAL STRATEGY REPORT 2023/24

Consideration was given to a report of the Borough Solicitor seeking approval of the Capital Strategy for 2023/24.

A Member thanked the Borough Treasurer for his report, and welcomed that it detailed that full business cases were required for capital projects to ensure good governance. Concern was expressed that in practice this was not happening, particularly as the Standards and Governance Committee had been amended to be a Standards and Audit Sub-Board, with significant decision making on such matters being reverted to the Policy and Organisation Board.

There was no business plans for the criterion project, for the skips, and for the development of the bus station site. Concern was expressed that the mechanism for Full Council discussion had been removed from the standing orders preventing discussion further.

Concern was expressed that the removal of the residential element of the waterfront proposal would impact on the Council's ability to meet their Housing targets and would also impact on the funding for the redevelopment. It was felt that there was a great need for housing within the Borough. There was the potential for 40% of a residential development

to be affordable housing and the inclusion of restaurants and bistros, as well as a TIC facility would be welcome. The proposals in the plan had the potential to cost £800,000 and deliver little if any of this.

A residential element would bring in much needed capital revenue, as well S106 money and increased rate revenue.

It was reiterated that there was no business plan for any of these and that the Council was in breach of its own requirements.

The Council was advised that the Criterion was being seen as a sign of hope for people in the Borough and showing progress in the Borough.

RESOLVED:

That the Council approve the Capital Strategy for 2023/24

INVESTMENT STRATEGY REPORT 2023/24

Consideration was given to a report of the Borough Treasurer detailing the Council's investment strategy.

Members complimented the finance team on their work.

RESOLVED: That the Investment Strategy as detailed in this report be approved.

ALVERSTOKE TRUST

RESOLVED: That Councillor Zoe Huggins be nominated to sit on the Alverstoke Trust.

ANY OTHER ITEMS

There were none.

The Meeting concluded at 8.10 pm

The Mayor.