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## MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD ON 18 OCTOBER 2023 AT 6.00 pm

Attendance:

The Mayor ( Pepper) (in the Chair)

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

Also in attendance: Honorary Alderman Dixon

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### APOLOGIES

Apologies for inability to attend the meeting were received from Councillor Johnston and Honorary Freeman O'Neill and Edgar.

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### DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

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### MAYORS COMMUNICATION

The Mayor advised that there were two presentations to be made, the first was to Wendy Redman, who was leaving her role at the Gosport Museum and Gallery after 25 years. The Mayor thanked her for her work, and it was recognised that she would be sorely missed.

The second presentation was from Mark Smith of Gosport Fairtrade Action who was presenting a certificate recognising the Borough's status as a Fairtrade Borough. He spoke about the things the Borough and the Council were undertaking and sought support for additional measures and support in enhancing the Fairtrade actions of the Borough.

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### TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL HELD ON 19 JULY 2023

RESOLVED: That, subject to a small amendment, the minutes of the meeting on the 19<sup>th</sup> July 2023 be signed as a true and correct record.

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### DEPUTATIONS AND PUBLIC QUESTIONS

The Council was advised that there was one deputation, but that it would be heard alongside the appropriate motion at agenda item 7.

## MEMBERS QUESTIONS

There were no public questions.

There were four Members questions

A question in the name of Councillor Casey to the Chairman of the Community and Environment Board.

Could the Chair of the C&E Board please give an update on where we are with the work and the finances for the Stokes Bay Sea Defences at the Alverbank East car park and when can we expect to see these essential sea coastal repairs completed and the car park brought back into use?

Answer: A replacement seawall has been designed. However due to the impact of inflation, the forecast cost for these works was estimated to exceed the available funding. Hampshire County Council (Highways) and Gosport Borough Council have submitted a joint local levy funding bid to the Southern RFCC, to seek the required funds to close the current funding gap. This is being considered by the Southern RFCC committee on the 26<sup>th</sup> October 2023. To maintain progress with the project, a planning application for these works has been submitted and is currently under consideration. A Marine License has also been submitted to the Marine Management Organisation for their consideration. We cannot move the project forwards until both the funding gap is closed and these consents are secured

Supplementary question: Given that the Borough Council has committed £60,000 to the project, will this be presented to Community and Environment Board or the Policy and Organisation Board given the significant spend involved.

Answer: Yes, it would be.

A question in the name of Councillor Philpott to the Leader of the Council.

Since 2014 a Joint Museum and Cultural Hub Committee (JMC) comprising of three Gosport Borough Councillors and three Hampshire County Councillors has met regularly to review and scrutinise how the two councils use funding from both authorities in running the Gosport Museum and Art Gallery. On 10<sup>th</sup> October 2023 Members of the JMC received a letter from GBC's Corporate Project Manager informing them that, following consultation with the current JMC Chairman, the Leader of GBC and the Hampshire Cultural Trust, the JMC was to be dissolved with immediate effect.

What were the reasons for this decision and why has the democratic oversight in the spending of public money been removed?

Answer: The Council was advised that the JMC had been in place since 1992 and the County Council Members had all been Conservative Members reducing the Democratic equality. The Committee was established as both Gosport Borough Council and Hampshire County Council contributed financially to the Museum. Hampshire County Council no longer contributed or managed the museum and were cutting funding to the Cultural trust, and there was therefore no need for County Council Members to be involved.

Moving forward the Museum would be invited to present annually to the Council, similarly to the Citizens Advice to present a summary of activity to the Members.

Supplementary question: What did Hampshire County Council say when they were advised of the changes by the Leader?

Answer: I did not advise Hampshire County Council, Council Officers did.

A question in the name of Councillor Hammond to the Leader of the Council.

In light of the huge success of this summer's programme of free entry events supported by the Council, what plans are there for a repeat of the free entry events next summer?

Answer: The summer events were a huge success with thousands of people attending them. Events included Arts in the Park, supported by Hampshire Cultural Trust, and had also included events on the High Street.

The sunset festival had attracted over 15000 across three days and the Stoke Road festival had ended the season successfully. Tribute was paid to the traders of Stoke Road for delivering such a successful event.

It was intended to hold free entry events again in 2024 including events on Walpole Park for the end of July and beginning of September, party in the park and sunset festival.

Supplementary question: When land bookings are made, do events supported or organised by Gosport Borough Council take priority.

Answer: Yes, as the land owners we would have priority as the Council is committed to providing free, quality events for residents of the Borough.

A Question in the name of Councillor Hammond to the Leader of the Council?

Could I ask the leader to give members an update on how the Gosport Tuesday and Saturday markets are doing now Anchored has been brought in to run it? And can he also give members feedback on Government funds to regenerate Gosport High Street?

Nest and Anchor have been brought in to revitalise a decaying and dying market bringing in new ideas. The first market has taken place and had doubled the stall holders from 4 to 8 with reports of the butchers being sold out by lunchtime and as a result booking through until spring.

The first specialist market was being planned for November with 35 stalls interested in attending. The recent events in Stoke Road had shown that there was interest in such events.

Disappointment was expressed that funding had not been awarded from central government to enhance the High Street.

Supplementary question: Why do you think the Conservative Party is not interested in regenerating Gosport High Street?

Answer: It is disappointing that they don't wish to, when the High Street is dying, choosing to invest in areas with more marginal seats, but the Leader was pleased to report that he was meeting with a major investor to discuss the High Street next week.

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## NOTICE OF MOTION

Two notices of motion were received in the name of Councillors Huggins and Beavis, as detailed in the agenda.

A deputation had been received from the Lee on the Solent Royal British Legion with regard to the motion on Lee on the Solent Remembrance Service, read by Mr Watt as follows.

The local Branch of the Royal British Legion have been asked for their views on this motion as we were unaware that it had been submitted and since the Branch formed on 12<sup>th</sup> December 1932 it has been intricately involved with the Service.

Until the mid-2000s the Branch co-ordinated with some of the local Councillors and the local Community and the Parade commenced from the Branch's premises in the High Street culminating at the Memorial.

The route then changed and the Parade now commences at Beach Road Car Park.

Prior to Covid this was the norm and no costs for road closures were incurred.

Hampshire County Council then introduced the ruling that road closures had to be organised by a Traffic Management Company.

This brought slight problems as the RBL cannot use its charitable donations to fund road closures and in 2021 and 2022 funding was obtained locally to ensure that both Services at the Memorial in the Sunken Garden and FAA Memorial could go ahead.

It is acknowledged that GBC is meeting the request of the LGA's letter dated August 2023 in that it is facilitating the Civic event at the War Memorial Hospital on 12<sup>th</sup> November.

It is further acknowledged that although the Deputy Mayor attends the Service at the Sunken Garden it is not a Civic event.

Funding has once again been obtained to cover the costs of the road closures for both services this year.

Again, as previously stated we were unaware of this motion until recently and as future costs for the Services will be sourced from local community grants cannot understand the need for it.

We have a good rapport and support from some of the local Councillors who diligently promote the work of the RBL both publicly and in the giving of their time during the local Poppy Appeal and long may this continue.

Members sought clarification as it was believed that the RBL were not permitted to use their fundraised funds to pay for road closures and traffic management, which is why support had previously been gained by local Councillors.

This also highlighted a concern from other Members that the traffic management and road closures for the 2023 service had been organised without consultation with the RBL.

A Member advised that the LGA guidance was that the Local Authority should fund the Civic Remembrance event, and in Gosport, this was held at the War Memorial.

Members recognised the importance of Remembrance activities within the Borough and it was acknowledged that the Lord Lieutenant attended the event at the War Memorial, but there was also attendees from the military at the other events and all were considered important.

It was acknowledged that changes to traffic management were instigated by Hampshire County Council meaning that road closures now had to be undertaken by traffic management companies, volunteers could no longer be used, and this came at a cost. The events in Lee on the Solent had need to find funding for this.

Members expressed concern that arrangements for the traffic management for the event in Lee on the Solent had been made without consulting the RBL, with proposals to make it into a larger scale, day long event, rather than the service of reflection it currently was.

Members questioned whether investigation could be undertaken into Gosport Borough Council staff undertaking training to ensure the correct accreditation for traffic management were available. It was clarified that the officers of the Council could produce traffic orders, but not supervise road closures.

Members congratulated the RBL on securing funding previously.

A Member advised that they had undertaken some research into the RBL's governance arrangement documents and it stated that the local branches were not in any way to be involved in, procure or pay for traffic management and road closures associated with services and questioned that in facilitating the event the RBL were at risk of breaking their own rules.

The Council reiterated the importance of such events and felt that it was not appropriate to play politics with it and acknowledged there were a number of events across the Borough that took place, all of which were important.

It was requested that a named vote on the motion be undertaken.

The motion was presented to the Council

It is hereby requested that all acts of Remembrance within the Borough of Gosport be treated with equal consideration and support from the Council and that the costs associated with all Road Closures for Remembrance Services be covered by the Council. This request is made in alignment with the letter jointly signed by the Chair of the Local Government Association (LGA), the Director General of the Royal British Legion (RBL) and the Chair of the National Associations of Local Councils and addressed to the Leader of Gosport Borough Council.

With voting as follows:

FOR the motion: Councillors Beavis, Burgess, Gledhill, Huggins, Jessop, Morgan, Philpott, Raffaelli, Scard. (9)

AGAINST the motion: Councillors Ballard, M Bradley, K Bradley, Chegwyn, Cox, Durrant, Earle, Hammond, Herridge, Hutchison, Hylands, Kelly, Marshall, Maynard, Westerby. (15)

ABSTAINED: Councillor Cully, The Mayor.

The Motion was lost.

A motion was received in the name of Councillor Huggins

The motion was introduced to the Council noting the decline in the ocean environment and that as a peninsula the protection of it should be of paramount importance. It was felt that more should be undertaken to educate, and improve the oceans conditions to allow them to be enjoyed for generations to come.

Members acknowledged that education was important but also acknowledged there were significant demands on schools already.

An amendment was proposed to the Council as follows.

Addition of item 13

We censure and condemn the Tory Government for failing to regulate the water/wastewater companies, effectively turning a blind eye to raw sewerage dumping. This was allowed to happen on their watch without let or hindrance on at least 301091 occasions in 2022. Moreover the Tory Government has sent the wrong signal relating to the urgent need to significantly reduce our carbon footprint by putting back legislation on vehicle carbon emissions and domestic gas boiler emissions. This contributes to global warming, raising ocean temperatures, and melting Arctic and Antarctic ice sheets and caps. The Tory Government has also introduced yet another consultation on banning plasticised wet wipes that, when disposed of, break down into micro plastics which have already polluted all the oceans and seas. They first laid out this intention to ban in 2018. We regret that it is another example of Tory Party dither and delay that typifies its approach to governing without decisive leadership.

Members expressed concern that the political nature of the proposed amendment and felt that the motion in its proposed form presented an opportunity for a unified approach.

Members recognised there were many local charities promoting better ocean health.

A vote was taken on the proposed amendment that which was carried.

A named vote was taken on the substantive motion as follows

### **From the Rivers to the Seas: The Urgent Need for Ocean & River Recovery**

We recognise that we need ocean recovery to meet our net zero carbon targets, and we need net zero carbon to recover our ocean.

This Council pledges to:

1. Report to the Full Council within 12 months on the pledges that will begin an ocean recovery in the Borough of Gosport.

2. Include Ocean and River recovery and water conservation in the Borough Climate Change action plan.
3. Consider ocean-based solutions in our journey towards a carbon-neutral and climate-resilient future and include them in the Borough Climate Change Strategy.
4. Embed ocean recovery and the blue economy in all strategic decisions, plans, budgets, procurement, and approaches to decisions by the Council (particularly in planning, regeneration, skills, and economic policy).
5. Call for improved water quality in our seas and rivers, and that water companies and Environmental Agency are held accountable. Including water testing, regulation, investment into facilities, and reporting of self-monitoring (OSM).
6. Support water conservation through local and community initiatives e.g. education & awareness, plant native, collect grey water, community water butts, and ensure water-efficient fixtures in all GBC buildings.
7. Support the government's new initiative to use money from fines for water pollution to benefit the natural environment and the steps the government is taking towards a 'polluter pays' principle when it comes to tackling river pollution.
8. Ensure that local planning supports ocean recovery, working closely with the Marine Management Organisation to embed strong links between the Local Plan and the local Marine Plan to support ocean recovery.
9. Ensure that the Local Nature Recovery Strategy strives to support ocean recovery.
10. Work with partners locally and nationally to deliver increased sustainability in marine industries and develop a sustainable and equitable blue economy that delivers ocean recovery and local prosperity, including the local marine and fishing industry.
11. Grow ocean literacy and marine citizenship across the Borough of Gosport, working with Hampshire County Council and other stakeholder, ensuring all pupils are given the opportunity to experience the ocean first-hand before leaving primary school - striving to include home-schooled children - and promote sustainable and equitable access to the ocean through physical and digital experiences for all residents.
12. Write to the Government asking them to put the ocean into net recovery by 2030 by:
  - a) Call for reduction of sewage leaks and ensure water companies are held accountable if illegal dry spilling is practiced.
  - b) Increase regular water quality sampling and accountability and review the effectiveness of OSM.
  - c) Call for water companies to act quicker in repairing and locating water leaks and ensure water conservation is a priority. Investing in resources.
  - d) Ensuring Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities have the resources they need to effectively research and monitor our growing number of marine

- protected areas and to set and enforce appropriate fishing levels that support local economies and deliver environmental sustainability.
- e) Work with other coastal communities to co-develop marine policy to ensure it delivers equitable and sustainable outcomes in local placemaking.
  - f) Appoint a dedicated Minister for Coastal Communities.
  - g) Call for better support for farmers to help reduce runoff from agricultural use impacting waterways, especially through the Environmental Land Management scheme.
  - h) Stop plastic pollution at source by strengthening the regulations around single-use plastics and set standards for microfibre-catching filters to ensure that all new domestic and commercial washing machines are fitted with a filter that captures a high percentage of microfibres produced in the wash cycle.
  - i) And by listening to marine and social scientific advice to update the Marine Policy Statement and produce a national Ocean Recovery Strategy which will:
    - i. Enable the recovery of marine ecosystems rather than managing degraded or altered habitats in their reduced state.
    - ii. Consider levelling up, marine conservation, energy, industrial growth, flood, and coastal erosion risk management, climate adaptation and fisheries policy holistically rather than as competing interests.
    - iii. Develop a smarter approach to managing the health of the entire ocean that moves beyond Marine Protected Areas and enables links to be made across sectors towards sustainability.
    - iv. Establish improved processes for understanding the benefits of ocean recovery, leaving no doubt about the links between this and human lives, livelihoods, and well-being

13) We censure and condemn the Tory Government for failing to regulate the water/wastewater companies, effectively turning a blind eye to raw sewerage dumping. This was allowed to happen on their watch without let or hindrance on at least 301091 occasions in 2022. Moreover the Tory Government has sent the wrong signal relating to the urgent need to significantly reduce our carbon footprint by putting back legislation on vehicle carbon emissions and domestic gas boiler emissions. This contributes to global warming, raising ocean temperatures, and melting Arctic and Antarctic ice sheets and caps. The Tory Government has also introduced yet another consultation on banning plasticised wet wipes that, when disposed of, break down into micro plastics which have already polluted all the oceans and seas. They first laid out this intention to ban in 2018. We regret that it is another example of Tory Party dither and delay that typifies its approach to governing without decisive leadership.

FOR the substantive motion: Councillor Ballard; M Bradley, K Bradley, Chegwyn, Cox, Cully, Durrant, Earle, Hammond, Herridge, Hutchison, Hylands, Marshall, Maynard, Westerby,

AGAINST the substantive motion: Councillor Beavis, Burgess, Casey, Gledhill, Huggins, Jessop, Morgan, Philpott, Raffaelli, Scard.

ABSTAIN: Councillors Kelly, The Mayor.

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## **PART II MINUTES OF THE BOARDS OF THE COUNCIL**

RESOLVED: That the Part II Minutes of the following Boards



Community and Environment – 20 September 2023  
Housing Board – 27 September 2023  
Policy and Organisation Board – 4 October 2023

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**ANY OTHER ITEMS**

RESOLVED: That Roy Gillett be appointed to the Alverstoke Trust until October 2027.

The Meeting concluded at 8.08 pm

The Mayor.

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