



Chichester City Council

MEETING OF COUNCIL

Minutes

Date 27 September 2023

Time 7.00pm – 8.45pm

Location The Council Chamber - The Council House • North Street • CHICHESTER • West Sussex • PO19 1LQ

PRESENT: The Mayor, Councillor C Gershater, the Deputy Mayor, Councillor Corfield and Councillors Butler, J Gershater, Kondabeka, Loxton, McHale, Moore, Pramas, Quail, Scicluna and Squire

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Town Clerk, Deputy Town Clerk, Council Services and Support Manager, Civic and Council Support Officer, Mayor's Chaplain, West Sussex County Councillor Simon Oakley, Chichester District Councillor Jonathan Brown

42. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

RESOLVED to receive and approve apologies and reasons for absence from the meeting from Councillors Apel, Chant, Hitchman, Knight, Miall and Vivian.

Members also noted apologies from West Sussex County Councillors Joy and Sharp.

43. DISPENSATION REQUESTS

No requests were received.

44. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL IN MATTERS ARISING ON THE AGENDA FOR THIS MEETING

No further declarations of interest were given.

45. MINUTES OF COUNCIL

RESOLVED to approve and adopt the minutes of the Meeting of the City Council held on 28 June 2023 and the Special Meetings of the City Council held on 31 July 2023 and 20 September 2023

46. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor informed Members that, in the future, he would circulate a brief report summarising his announcements for the meeting.

The Mayor reminded Council that Mayor's Sunday would be on Sunday 8 October 2023 and summarised the reasons for the occasion.

Members were informed that Mayor's At Home for Christmas would take place on Wednesday 29 November 2023 and that all Councillors would be welcome to attend.

The Mayor advised that, during the course of his Mayoral appointments, he had been discussing the City Council's Business Plan and that this had been well received. He reported that the Business Plan had been discussed during a recent meeting with the Bishop of Chichester.

He also proposed the creation of a "Chamber of Culture" as well as discussions with the Cathedral, Chichester Festival Theatre and Pallant House Gallery about establishing an arts development group.

Members were informed that the Cathedral were had indicated they were keen to develop projects centred on Cathedral Green and it was suggested that this could be raised with the Business Plan Working Group.

47. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

No questions had been received.

48. UPDATE ON ACTIONS FROM THE PREVIOUS MINUTES NOT COVERED ELSEWHERE ON THE AGENDA

No updates were given.

49. MINUTES OF COMMITTEES

a) **Planning and Conservation Committee**

Councillor Butler, Chairman of the Committee, moved that the minutes of the Ordinary meeting held on 20 July 2023, the Special Meeting held on 27 July 2023 and the Ordinary Meetings held on 17 August 2023 and 14 September 2023; be approved and adopted.

Councillor Butler advised that no recommendations had been made to Council by the Committee and summarised some of the discussions and resolutions contained in the minutes.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Ordinary meeting held on 20 July 2023, the Special Meeting held on 27 July 2023 and the Ordinary Meetings held on 17 August 2023 and 14 September 2023; be approved and adopted.

b) **Community Affairs Committee**

In the absence of Councillor Apel, Councillor Loxton (Vice-Chairman of the Committee) moved that the minutes of the meeting held on 4 September 2023 be approved and adopted.

Councillor Loxton summarised some of the subjects that had been discussed at the meeting and informed Members that it was hoped that a Police Community Support Officer would be able to attend the next meeting to update Councillors on Police activities in Chichester.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Community Affairs Committee held on 4 September 2023 be approved and adopted.

c) **Finance Committee**

Councillor Scicluna, Chairman of the Committee, moved that the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 5 September 2023 be approved and adopted.

Councillor Scicluna highlighted some of the subjects that had been discussed by the Committee, including the proposed portico project.

Further to a question from Councillor McHale, Members discussed the ongoing concerns about the lack of progress with the city centre pavements project and Councillor Pramas outlined the Freedom of Information requests she had been raising regarding the levels of injuries in the city centre.

RESOLVED to approve and adopt the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 5 September 2023.

Members noted the minutes of the Property Sub-Committee meeting held on 4 July 2023.

At this point the Mayor took agenda item 14

50. **REPORTS FROM CHICHESTER DISTRICT AND WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL'S WARD MEMBERS**

Chichester District Councillor Jonathan Brown gave Members a verbal report.

He informed Council that work on the Local Plan was progressing slowly and that the District Council were in the process of incorporating feedback from the recent consultation in the Plan.

Members were also informed that the Evening and Nighttime Economy Group had met recently with the group expressing a strong appetite for improving this aspect of life in Chichester.

Councillor Brown reported that the summer had seen a number of incursions by travellers in the area and that the District Council was investigating ways to minimise the associated risks to their land.

He further reported that meetings had recently been taking place with large local businesses, including Rolls Royce, Goodwood and Medmerry Park regarding environmental concerns.

Members were advised that the District Council had submitted its response to the West Sussex County Council Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) consultation, including support for separation of cycle and motor traffic lanes.

Councillor Brown further advised that the District Council were also looking at food waste collections but that, as this required guidance from Central Government, it was felt that progress would be unlikely until after the next election.

He also reported that the District Council's shoreline management plan was currently being reviewed and that the "Trees Outside Woodland" project was being extended to encourage more tree planting in the area and look at how to improve tree survival rates.

The City Councillors present discussed the last point with concerns being raised about the tree survival rates on the Minerva Heights development.

The Deputy Mayor asked about community orchard projects and Councillor Kondabeka commented on the importance of these projects and food partnerships.

West Sussex County Councillor Simon Oakley gave a verbal update on his report that had been circulated prior to the meeting and informed Members that the access path between Story Road and LIDL had been completed earlier that day.

He reported that the changes to the controlled parking zone had now been approved but that a number of minor changes to the scheme were currently being considered.

Further to the earlier discussion about the city centre pavements, Councillor Oakley commented on the request for joint funding of the most recently proposed feasibility study and emphasised that it was an essential element of the public realm development scheme and should be seen as a critical piece of work.

He urged Members to review the quarterly performance report issued by the County Council and to note the significant budgetary challenges being faced in the current climate.

Members discussed the pavements issue further. It was generally agreed that it was important that something was done and that pressure should be maintained to move the project forward.

The meeting returned to the published agenda order.

51. CONCLUSION OF THE EXTERNAL AUDIT 2022-2023

RESOLVED to note the signed report, circulated with the agenda, confirming the conclusion of the annual external audit for the financial year 2022-2023.

52. STANDING COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE AND SCHEME OF DELEGATION

The Town Clerk explained the background to the item and summarised her report that had been circulated before the meeting. She emphasised the need to ensure that comprehensive terms of reference were in place for all Committees and Sub-Committees as well as the importance of an effective scheme of delegation for the Committees to ensure that Council work could proceed efficiently.

Members discussed the report and agreed that a Terms of Reference Working Group was an essential first step and that the Working Group should report back to the December Full Council meeting.

It was then proposed, seconded and RESOLVED that a Committee Terms of Reference Working Group should be created and that the members of the group should be the Town Clerk, the Deputy Town Clerk, the Chairs of the Finance, Community Affairs and Planning and Conservation Committees and the Chairs of the Property and Personnel Sub-Committees.

Councillor Corfield abstained and Councillor Squire voted against.

53. MEMBERSHIP OF OUTSIDE BODIES AND ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS

The Town Clerk gave a brief outline of the report that had been circulated prior to the meeting.

RESOLVED to approve the current lists of Outside Bodies memberships and the annual subscriptions as listed.

54. CHICHESTER CITY COUNCIL BUSINESS PLAN WORKING GROUP

The Mayor and Town Clerk explained the background reasons for the proposal to delegate authority to the Finance Committee to approve the Business Plan Working Group's draft Business Plan.

Members were advised that, for the momentum to be maintained and for the plan to go to consultation by the end of the year, it would be necessary for it to be approved at the earliest opportunity.

RESOLVED to accept the recommendation to delegate authority to the Finance Committee to agree the draft Business Plan for public consultation.

Councillor Squire voted against.

55. REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

Councillor Squire summarised his report that had been circulated prior to the meeting, highlighting increases in parking charges, wider use of the MiPermit parking app and proposals to encourage more use of the Avenue de Chartres carpark.

56. WARD REPORTS FROM CHICHESTER CITY COUNCILLORS

Councillor Quail summarised her report that had been circulated prior to the meeting.

She reiterated the point about traveller incursions made earlier in the meeting and emphasised that it was important that District Council Officers undertook any clear-up after the incursions due to the possible presence of hazardous materials and the need to wear appropriate protective equipment.

Members were advised that an update on the Southern Access Route to Whitehouse Farm was still awaited and that the works currently taking place on Westgate were part of the phase 1 mitigation for Whitehouse Farm and would include the installation of a Dutch Roundabout at the Westgate/Orchard Street/Via Ravenna/West Street junction, starting in late October.

Councillor Quail also commented on the LCWIP summary in her report as well as the controversy surrounding asylum seekers and the Chichester Park Hotel.

At this point, Councillor Squire proposed that the Business Plan Working Group be changed to a Committee for its work going forward.

After further explanation by the Mayor and Town Clerk about the reasons for the current structure, the proposal was restated.

The proposal was not seconded and no vote was called.

57. ITEMS FOR INCLUSION ON THE AGENDA FOR THE NEXT MEETING

No items were received.

58. COMMON SEAL

RESOLVED that the Common Seal be affixed to any documents necessary to give effect to the resolutions passed at this meeting.

DATE OF NEXT ORDINARY MEETING: Wednesday 20 December 2023 at 7.00pm

The meeting closed at 8.45pm