

HAVANT BOROUGH COUNCIL

At a meeting of the Council held on 7 November 2018

Present

Councillor Wade (Mayor)

Councillors Bains, Briggs, Branson, Buckley, Carpenter, Cresswell, Davis, Francis, Hart, Howard, Hughes, Keast, Kennett, Lloyd, Patrick (Deputy Mayor), Pike, Rees, Satchwell, Sceal, Shimbart, Mrs Shimbart, Smith K, Thomas, Turner, Weeks and Wilson

31 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillors Bowerman, Guest and Scott.

32 Declarations of Interests

There were no declarations of interest from any of the members present.

33 Minutes

Proposed by Councillor Smith and seconded by Councillor Branson, it was

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Council be approved as a correct record.

34 Deputations

The Mayor reported that Deputation requests had been received from Mr Bob Comlay, Mrs Anne Skennerton and Mrs Ann Buckley in relation to the Regeneration Strategy to be considered by the Council at this meeting.

35 Mayor's Report

There were no questions from Councillors in relation to the Mayor's published report.

36 Public Questions under Standing Order 13.4(f)

The Council received the following question from Mr Richard Coates:

Council Infrastructure Levy (CIL) money (£20,000) has been given to provide alternative options of transport via the Hayling Ferry for those needing to commute between Hayling and Portsmouth for work, to ease congestion during the rush hour was an innovative action.

However virtually no commuters are using the service and unless changes are made to provide passengers then at the end of the trial period the bus service will cease. Research has clearly shown that both residents and tourists are keen and willing to use the bus, but not at the times currently run under the conditions set out by the council.

Will the council agree to a reschedule of the existing service on weekdays and adding a Saturday service using the CIL and Co-op sponsorship monies that remain?

Response from Councillor Tim Pike

The Hayling Ferry Working Group was established by Mr Mark Coates in January, and has met regularly under Councillor Wilson's chairmanship to examine how the ferry can be enabled to continue as a year round regular service. Since the ferry was re-established the operators have done a great job in providing a good quality service, but the number of users is less than break-even during periods of the year.

Cllr Wilson and I both felt this was an important issue – not only to residents on Hayling Island – but to other users of the A3023 which is already under considerable pressure and the ferry has the potential to reduce that pressure.

The Hayling Travel Survey, published by this Council in December 2017, was used as the evidence base for the trial bus service. The survey showed that the most popular reason for leaving Hayling Island was travel to work, and the post popular destination after Havant is Portsmouth. Half of respondents indicated that they would be prepared to use the ferry more if there were improved connections.

Therefore, the trial bus service was established to meet the highest potential customer base – commuters to Portsmouth who currently drive and contribute to the peak travel flows on and off the Island. I have worked hard to get a joined-up service, and we now have a commuter service on Hayling and an hourly service on the Portsmouth side – with a ferry timetable that makes the journey into Portsmouth as slick as possible. The ticket prices reflect the costs of providing the service – therefore it has the potential to become sustainable without public funding.

Unfortunately, it is becoming clear that the residents of Hayling are not using the service as envisaged – and we are closely monitoring the usage. I need to be clear that the funding was sought in order to alleviate pressure on the A3023, not for the purposes of increasing leisure journeys. Therefore, I welcome the suggestion of additional services initially covered by other sources of funding e.g. sponsorship from businesses, but I do not think our Council should be continuing to subsidise the service without a detailed plan to move to self-financing within an agreed period. The various suggestions to reduce costs will only result in an ongoing public subsidy.

In summary, the working group members which have included two members of the Coates Family, the residents' association, an Eastney Portsmouth City Councillor and the ferry operator have been involved throughout the process of deciding how to direct the initial funding to best effect using published evidence. If Mr Coates feels that changes should be made, he should bring that forward to the working group which is meeting again shortly.

37 Scrutiny Board Recommendations

The Operations and Placeshaping Scrutiny Board had been given an opportunity to review and comment upon the draft Regeneration Strategy at its meeting on 6 November. The draft Strategy had also been considered by the Cabinet at its meeting on 24 October. The Scrutiny Board had endorsed the Cabinet recommendations to Council and the Mayor therefore combined the debate on agenda items 7 and 8A, and this is set out at minute 38 below.

38 Cabinet Recommendations

(A) Opportunity Havant – Draft Regeneration Strategy

The Mayor invited Councillor Pike, as Cabinet Lead for Finance and Regeneration, to present the draft Regeneration Strategy.

In recommending the draft Strategy to Council, Councillor Pike set out the regeneration programme for Havant Borough to 2036 and outlined the key challenges and opportunities ahead in seeking to deliver targeted interventions, either directly or with the support of partners, in five key regeneration areas across the Borough.

In thanking the Operations and Place Shaping Scrutiny Board for having addressed issues of importance to the wider Council membership, Councillor Pike gave an assurance that affordable and social rented housing would be provided within the overall housing developments in the Regeneration Strategy, in accordance with the overall Local Plan policy.

Councillor Pike also took the opportunity to thank the officers for their work to develop the draft Strategy now before the Council.

The Mayor then invited the following members of the public to make their Deputations to Council (the text of the Deputations are published on the Council's website alongside these minutes):

Mr Bob Comlay
Mrs Anne Skennerton
Mrs Ann Buckley

The Mayor then invited Councillor Dianne Lloyd to address the Council as Chairman of the Operations and Place Shaping Scrutiny Board before opening the matter to debate by the Council.

At the conclusion of the debate, the Leader outlined the holistic approach to delivering the regeneration programme in the context of the new Local Plan, the emerging Corporate Strategy and the Medium Term Financial Strategy. The Leader thanked the deputees for their contribution to the debate and looked forward to continued dialogue with all stakeholders in taking forward this ambitious vision for Havant Borough.

Proposed by Councillor Pike and seconded by Councillor Wilson, it was

RESOLVED that

- (1) the ***Opportunity Havant*** Regeneration Strategy for Havant Borough 2018-2036 be approved and adopted; and
- (2) the Council notes the prioritisation and phasing of the initial projects set out in the accompanying exempt Regeneration Programme Report. These projects are prioritised on the basis that:
 - They have potential for the generation of income that can be re-invested in the delivery of other projects within the Regeneration Programme
 - They are on land owned by the Council
 - They are allocated/identified in the Adopted and the emerging Local Plan
 - They attract external grant funding
 - There are no significant barriers to development and therefore are potential quick wins.

(B) Council Tax Support Scheme 2019-20

Councillor Wilson presented a recommendation from Cabinet seeking approval of the Council Tax Support Scheme for 2019-20.

Proposed by Councillor Wilson and seconded by Pike, it was:

RESOLVED that

- (1) 2018/19 Council Tax Support Scheme be retained for 2019/20 but with the following amendments:
 - (i) the Allowances and Premiums used in determining entitlement for working age claims are changed as set out in paragraph 5.3 of the report to Cabinet on 24 October 2018;
 - (ii) the Non-Dependant deductions used in determining entitlement for working age claims are changed as set out in paragraph 5.4 of the report to Cabinet on 24 October 2018.
- (2) that the necessary amendments be made to the Council Tax Support Scheme document and that it is then published in accordance with Local Government Finance Act 1992 Section 13A(2)

There were no matters the Leader wished to add to his published report.

40 Cabinet Lead Reports

The Mayor invited the Cabinet Leads to provide updates to their published reports as appropriate:

Councillor Bains took the opportunity to thank Chief Inspector Clare Jenkins for her support to the Council and to wish her well in her future career.

Councillor Gary Hughes encouraged all councillors to complete the survey circulated by the Business and Commercial Services Board to inform its scrutiny review of Littering in the Borough. Councillor Hughes also reported that he had asked NORSE SE to investigate a recent flooding episode in West Street, Havant, and had been assured that the drains had been cleared of leaves and that there was no particular problem affecting this area other than seasonal leaf-fall.

Councillor Pike took the opportunity to thank the Facilities team for their continued support for the Mayor at a time of reduced staffing resources.

41 Cabinet Leads and Chairmen's Question Time

The Mayor gave Councillors an opportunity to ask questions of the Cabinet Leads in connection with their published reports.

There were no questions of the Committee Chairmen.

42 Questions Under Standing Order 23

(1) Question from Councillor Carpenter to Councillor Pike:

Upon my weekly walks around my ward, Battins, I have noticed two Electric Vehicle Charge points in process of installation at Tidworth Road Car Park. This is an area earmarked for future regeneration. Could not a more suitable location have been sought, such as behind Greywell shopping centre, larger car park with toilet facilities?

Response:

The viability appraisal for the redevelopment ideas around Tidworth car park demonstrated that the initial ideas were not viable. Further work is required to understand what will be possible and any new ideas will be able to accommodate the EV charging points.

(2) Question from Councillor Carpenter to Councillor Bowerman:

I understand the 'A Cllr Can' campaign has reached over 6,770 people. Can I enquire if plans are in place for more events to extend the programme as only two were held in Havant Town Centre in September?

Response from Cllr Wilson on behalf of Councillor Bowerman:

Following the success of the pilot 'A Cllr Can' campaign events held this year, we do intend to hold more events in a variety of locations across the Borough. The plans for future events will be considered and implemented by the Councillor Development Panel.

(3) Question from Councillor Davis to Councillor Pike:

Ref. Regeneration.

I refer to an article in "First" Magazine for local Government, November Edition - No.629

On page 5 an article refers to the "European Social Fund". Of the £3.1Billion allocated to the UK, £1.6Billion has yet to be applied for. If it is not allocated it will be returned to EU coffers. These funds can be used; to create jobs; support S.M.E.'s; deliver skills training; Invest in Critical Transport and Digital Infrastructure.

Q1. Have you applied for any of this fund to help with the regeneration of our borough and provide the Critical transport infrastructure we desperately need?

Q2. Could we not plan for a Rapid Transport System (i.e. a Tram system) to help reduce our dependancy on cars, reduce our rush hour traffic and its consequent pollution? This would be a very positive and visible attraction to the people and businesses we hope to bring to our borough.

Response:

As you will be aware the Council has been successful in attracting government grant funding recent projects include the £1.2m funding for the new facilities at Front Lawn, the current £200k refurbishment of the Bartons Green changing facilities and the £3.3m Accelerated Construction Fund grant for the Civic Plaza housing proposals. The (ESF) European Social Fund remains open to appropriate bids and the Government has confirmed that access to the fund is likely to remain open until 2023 when the programme ends.

ESF projects are proposed through Local Enterprise Partnerships(LEP). Our own Solent LEP does not currently have any ESF bids in place. The nearest bids are three in the Enterprise M3 LEP area focused on skills

The idea of a bus rapid transit system is already being pursued and Havant are working in partnership with Portsmouth, Fareham, Gosport and Hampshire County Council on the Transforming Cities Funding. The proposal involves the creation of bus priority infrastructure to make the bus a premium mode of travel that is better and faster than the car between Havant, Waterlooville and Portsmouth. Transport infrastructure improvements are fundamental to improving our area both for existing communities and attracting new investment. The Prime Minister recently announced that our initial bid has been shortlisted along with nine other regions to bid for a share of the £840m fund and officers are working in partnership to take that forward.

The question does raise an important point in relation to our regeneration ambitions. With our limited resources we do need to create a new focus on bidding for appropriate grant funding, including ESF. That must include working on our relationship with Solent LEP who are the gatekeepers for a wide range of infrastructure funds.

(4) Question from Councillor Davis to Councillor Turner:

Q1. Would you explain what income we receive from the " Havant Sport and Leisure Trust" contract.?

Q2. As Havant Borough Council owns this land should we not be receiving rent.?

Q3. Will this be shown in the next Budget?

Q4. How much has the Council received since this Contract was signed?

Response:

Q1 and Q4

The Council has a Partnering Agreement with Horizon Leisure Trust (HLT) for the delivery of leisure activity in both of the borough's leisure centres. The purpose of the partnership is to provide and continuously improve leisure facilities for our residents.

We have seen significant investment in both of our leisure centres, including an extension and refurbishment of the dry side at Waterlooville leisure centre, and extension of the gym at Havant leisure centre.

The Council's relationship with the Leisure Trust as set out in a Partnering Agreement has evolved over time. Historically, the Council paid the Trust a management fee as well as taking responsibility for all maintenance costs. Due to the success of the Trust in running the facilities the Council no longer pays a management fee and the maintenance costs are shared with the Trust.

We are continuing to discuss with the Trust the future of our partnership to continue the provision of excellent leisure facilities for our communities.

Q2

The leases for both leisure centres were established to provide for a peppercorn rent.

Q3

The capital value of the leisure centres is reflected in the Council's balance sheet. The next revenue budget will reflect the outcomes of the discussions with the Trust.

(5) Question from Councillor Carpenter to Councillor Wilson:

I note from your report you attended PUSH joint committee recently.

Could you please indicate the highlighted 'hot spots' in our region, and the follow up work planned to mitigate this worrying aspect?

Did the study raise any concerns of air quality near schools and if so will these areas be treated as a priority with health of our children potentially being placed at risk?

Response:

The PUSH Sub-Regional Air Quality Study highlighted one area where Nitrogen Dioxide levels are predicted to exceed the annual average limit; on the South side of the A27 road junction for Havant & Hayling Island. The Council was already aware that this area was at risk, and monitors several locations nearby, including Bosmere Junior School. In response to the PUSH study one additional monitoring position has been established with the specific aim of verifying the result for this region. Measured data has greater certainty than the concentration predictions, and so it is not appropriate to take action without first confirming that the prediction is accurate. The relevant standard is an averaged value, so it will be several months before sufficient data is available to establish whether there is significant concern with air quality in this area. Appropriate action will be taken if measurements confirm the predictions. Air quality elsewhere across the Borough was shown to be acceptable.

43 Urgent Questions Under Standing Order 23

There were no urgent questions.

44 Notices of Motion

There were no Motions to Council.

45 Acceptance of Minutes

Proposed by Councillor Keast and seconded by Councillor Lloyd, it was

RESOLVED that the minutes of committees held since the last meeting of the Council be received.

The meeting commenced at 5.00 pm and concluded at 6.10 pm

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