

MINUTES OF COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS

At a Meeting of the Council for the Borough of Slough held at the Council Chamber - Observatory House, 25 Windsor Road, SL1 2EL on Tuesday, 22nd November, 2022 at 7.00 pm

Present:- The Worshipful the Mayor (Councillor D.Parmar), in the chair; Councillors Ajaib, Akbar, Akram, Anderson, Bal, Basra, P. Bedi, Begum, Brooker, Cheema, Dar, Gahir, Grewal, Hulme, Kaur, Kelly, M. Malik, S. Malik, Mann, Matloob, Minhas, Mohammad, Muvvala, Nazir, S. Parmar, Qaseem (until 8.21pm), Sabah, Sandhu, Smith, Strutton (until 8.01pm), Swindlehurst and Wright.

Apologies for Absence:- Councillors Ali, Bains, M. Bedi, Carter, Gill and Pantelic.

33. **Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Bal declared that his daughters worked for the Council. He remained and participated in the meeting.

34. **To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the Council held on 22 September 2022**

Resolved - That the minutes of the meeting held on 22nd September 2022 be approved as a correct record.

35. **To receive the Mayor's Communications.**

The Mayor thanked those Members who attended the events arranged throughout the Borough for Armistice Day and Remembrance Sunday. The efforts made to mark these important occasions were very well received by both the organisations involved and the public.

Members were reminded to show their support for the Mayor's chosen charities, Slough Foodbank and Thames Hospice by donating via the Mayor's Just Giving page.

36. **Questions from Electors under Procedure Rule 9.**

Six elector questions had been received. Five questioners were present and four asked a supplementary question. A written reply would be sent to all six questioners.

37. **Recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee from its meeting held on 17th November 2022**

It was moved by Councillor Gahir,
Seconded by Councillor Swindlehurst,

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- a) "That the actions to date and next steps in the Scrutiny Improvement Action Plan at Appendix B be noted.
- b) That the findings of the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny's Scrutiny Improvement Review at Appendix A be noted.
- c) That the recommendations found in section 3 of the Scrutiny Improvement Review Feedback Report Letter be endorsed.
- d) That a Scrutiny Working Group be reconvened in order to make recommendations to council, as soon as practicable, about the detailed changes to Overview and Scrutiny, plus associated constitutional changes, and that consideration be given to recommending a second committee in addition to the proposed Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee."

The recommendations were put to the vote and carried with 25 votes for and 8 abstentions.

Resolved -

- a) That the actions to date and next steps in the Scrutiny Improvement Action Plan at Appendix B be noted.
- b) That the findings of the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny's Scrutiny Improvement Review at Appendix A be noted.
- c) That the recommendations found in section 3 of the Scrutiny Improvement Review Feedback Report Letter be endorsed.
- d) That a Scrutiny Working Group be reconvened in order to make recommendations to council, as soon as practicable, about the detailed changes to Overview and Scrutiny, plus associated constitutional changes, and that consideration be given to recommending a second committee in addition to the proposed Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee.

38. Recommendations of the Cabinet from its meetings held on 2nd November 2022 and 21st November 2022

Montem Appropriation Site

It was moved by Councillor Swindlehurst,
Seconded by Councillor Mann,

- (a) "That it be noted that at a Special Meeting held on 2nd November 2022 the Cabinet resolved as follows:

1.1 Noted that the plan of the land to be appropriated for development attached to both the Cabinet and the Council reports mistakenly referred to the land shown edged red on the plan, whereas in fact the proper extent of the land to be appropriated is the land shown

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edged orange on the plan attached at Appendix B of this report. The land shown edged red on the plan attached to the earlier reports is the footprint of the larger Montem site, and includes land that is not being appropriated.

- 1.2 *Agreed to appropriate the Montem site to planning (shown edged orange on the plan attached at Appendix B of this report) under section 226 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 on the grounds that the acquisition will facilitate the carrying out of development, redevelopment or improvement on or in relation to the land, and the proposed development, redevelopment or improvement is likely to contribute to achieving the promotion or improvement of the economic, social or environmental well-being of the whole, or any part, of their area*
- 1.3 *Agreed that officers be authorised to take all necessary steps to appropriate the site (shown edged orange on the plan attached at Appendix B of this report) for planning purposes to facilitate the carrying out of development, redevelopment or improvement on or in relation to that land.*

(b) That the Council resolution of 22 September 2022 be revoked.”

The recommendations were put to the vote and carried with 31 votes for and 2 abstentions.

Resolved -

(a) That it be noted that at a Special Meeting held on 2nd November 2022 the Cabinet resolved as follows:

- 1.4 *Noted that the plan of the land to be appropriated for development attached to both the Cabinet and the Council reports mistakenly referred to the land shown edged red on the plan, whereas in fact the proper extent of the land to be appropriated is the land shown edged orange on the plan attached at Appendix B of this report. The land shown edged red on the plan attached to the earlier reports is the footprint of the larger Montem site, and includes land that is not being appropriated.*
- 1.5 *Agreed to appropriate the Montem site to planning (shown edged orange on the plan attached at Appendix B of this report) under section 226 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 on the grounds that the acquisition will facilitate the carrying out of development, redevelopment or improvement on or in relation to the land, and the proposed development, redevelopment or improvement is likely to contribute to achieving the promotion or improvement of the economic, social or environmental well-being of the whole, or any part, of their area*
- 1.6 *Agreed that officers be authorised to take all necessary steps to appropriate the site (shown edged orange on the plan attached at Appendix B of this report) for planning purposes to facilitate the*

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carrying out of development, redevelopment or improvement on or in relation to that land.

(b) That the Council resolution of 22 September 2022 be revoked.

Financial Action Plan Update

It was moved by Councillor Anderson,
Seconded by Councillor Swindlehurst,

“That the progress and issues arising from the continued work on the Financial Action Plan Update be noted.”

The recommendation was put to the vote and carried with 30 votes for and 2 abstentions.

Resolved – That the progress and issues arising from the continued work on the Financial Action Plan Update be noted.

Improvement and Recovery Update

It was moved by Councillor Swindlehurst,
Seconded by Councillor Mann,

“That progress made by the Council in addressing the Directions of the Secretary of State be noted.”

The recommendation was put to the vote and carried with 30 votes for and 2 abstentions.

Resolved - That progress made by the Council in addressing the Directions of the Secretary of State be noted.

(Stephen Brown left the meeting)

39. Appointment of Chief Executive

It was moved by Councillor Swindlehurst,
Seconded by Councillor Mann,

“That Council welcomes the appointment by the Commissioners on 26 October 2022 of Stephen Brown as Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service.”

The recommendation was put to the vote and carried with 29 votes for and 2 abstentions.

Resolved – That Council welcomes the appointment by the Commissioners on 26 October 2022 of Stephen Brown as Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service.

(Stephen Brown returned to the meeting)

40. Revisions to the Constitution

Contract Procedure Rules

It was moved by Councillor Ajaib,
Seconded by Councillor Swindlehurst,

- a) "That the amendments to Part 4.6.1 of the Constitution, Contract Procedure Rules as set out in Appendix A to the report, be approved.
- b) That the amendments to the Constitution will come into effect on the day following the Council meeting."

The recommendations were put to the vote and carried with 28 votes for and 2 abstentions.

Resolved -

- a) That the amendments to Part 4.6.1 of the Constitution, Contract Procedure Rules as set out in Appendix A to the report, be approved.
- b) That the amendments to the Constitution will come into effect on the day following the Council meeting.

Finance Procedure Rules

It was moved by Councillor Anderson,
Seconded by Councillor Mann,

- a) "That the amendments to Part 4.6 of the constitution, Financial Procedure Rules as set out in Appendix A to the report, be approved.
- b) That the amendments to the Constitution will come into effect on the day following the Council meeting."

The recommendations were put to the vote and carried with 29 votes for and 2 abstentions.

Resolved -

- a) That the amendments to Part 4.6 of the constitution, Financial Procedure Rules as set out in Appendix A to the report, be approved.
- b) That the amendments to the Constitution will come into effect on the day following the Council meeting.

41. To consider Motions submitted under procedure Rule 14.

Cost of Living Crisis

It was moved by Councillor Brooker,
Seconded by Councillor Hulme,

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“This Council recognises that cost of living pressures have risen to such an extent that some residents are struggling to manage and, for many, the situation has now effectively become an emergency.

Slough Borough Council, using what resources are available to us to provide assistance, will prioritise support for our residents to those who need it most. We resolve to:

- Prepare a formal 'state of Slough' report to better understand and fully assess the impacts of the current crisis.
- Arrange meetings with partner organisations to ensure we co-ordinate staff, volunteers, and operational tasks between our organisations to assist residents through our responses to the cost-of living crisis as fully and efficiently as we can and to ensure that all those involved in response activity are well-trained and aware of risks faced by individuals.
- Refresh the 'One Slough' Voluntary Sector Partnership and equip it to lead in providing help to residents in tackling issues arising from the cost-of-living crisis.
- Provide £15 food vouchers, per week per child, to households in receipt of free school meals (under tranche three of the Housing Support Fund) to cover school holidays from Christmas 2022 until February 2023.
- Compile a list of public buildings locally that during this winter will be regularly open, staffed, heated and warm - where residents who can't afford to heat their homes can safely and comfortably spend time at no cost.

This Council also resolves to write to the UK Government calling on them to:

- Convene an emergency response committee to tackle cost of living pressures with urgent measures
- Immediately reduce VAT on home energy bills and produce a sustainable plan to rapidly invest in insulating homes that have poor energy efficiency/performance.
- Review the legislation, method and calculations used to set Local Housing Allowance to ensure that rates are more responsive to areas with high and increasing market rents, so that LHA can better respond to housing cost pressures
- Announce a medium-term financial settlement for Local Authorities so they can plan and prepare budgets over a medium-term financial cycle, ensure through this settlement that local Authorities are adequately resourced for the life of their MTFSSs, and use the settlement to help local Councils provide proper support for residents during the cost-of-living crisis.

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- Recognise the particular needs of the urban authorities, with high levels of deprivation, and prioritise these within the government's refreshed commitment to 'Levelling Up' activity."

It was moved by Councillor Smith, as an amendment,
Seconded by Councillor Kelly,

"This Council recognises that cost of living pressures have risen due to such an extent that some residents are struggling to manage money, and for many, the situation has now effectively become an emergency.

The Council acknowledges that the Government has implemented a number of measures including:

- 47,000 Slough households have received £150 energy rebate through their Council Tax accounts in the summer.
- That 19,700 Slough residents are receiving this month their second means-tested cost of living payments this year; this is worth £324 per benefit claimant.
- All households are current receiving a £400 discount on their autumn energy bills. This support is part of the Government's £37 billion package of cost of living support, which also includes up to £1,200 worth of direct help for vulnerable families across the country in this financial year.

Slough Borough Council, using what resources are available to us to provide assistance, will prioritise support for our residents to those who need it most. We resolve to:

- Prepare a formal 'state of Slough' report to better understand and fully assess the impacts of the current crisis.
- Arrange meetings with partner organisations to ensure we coordinate staff, volunteers, and operational tasks between our organisations to assist residents through our responses to the cost of living crisis as fully and efficiently as we can and to ensure that all those involved in response activity are well-trained and aware of risks faced by individuals.
- Refresh the 'One Slough' Voluntary Sector Partnership and equip it to lead in providing help to residents in tackling issues arising from the cost-of-living crisis.
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- Compile a list of public buildings locally that during this winter will be regularly open, staffed, heated and warm where residents who can't afford to heat their homes can safely and comfortably spend time at no cost.

This Council also resolves to write to the UK Government calling on them to:

- Convene an emergency response committee to tackle cost of living pressures on an evolving basis as needed, with urgent measures which might include a reduction in VAT on home energy bills and a sustainable

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investment plan to insulate homes that have poor energy efficiency/performance.

- Review the legislation, method and calculations used to set Local Housing Allowance to ensure that rates are more responsive to areas with high and increasing market rents, so that LHA can better respond to housing cost pressures
- Announce a medium-term financial settlement for Local Authorities so they can plan and prepare budgets over a medium-term financial cycle, ensure through this settlement that local Authorities are adequately resourced for the life of their MTFs, and use the settlement to help local Councils provide proper support for residents during the cost-of-living crisis.
- Recognise the particular needs of the urban authorities, with high levels of deprivation, and prioritise these within the government's refreshed commitment to 'Levelling Up' activity."

The meeting signified its consent to the amendment to the motion and the amended motion became the substantive motion.

The substantive motion was put to the vote and carried with 29 votes for and 2 abstentions.

Resolved -

This Council recognises that cost of living pressures have risen due to such an extent that some residents are struggling to manage money, and for many, the situation has now effectively become an emergency.

The Council acknowledges that the Government has implemented a number of measures including:

- 47,000 Slough households have received £150 energy rebate through their Council Tax accounts in the summer.
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Slough Borough Council, using what resources are available to us to provide assistance, will prioritise support for our residents to those who need it most. We resolve to:

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- Arrange meetings with partner organisations to ensure we coordinate staff, volunteers, and operational tasks between our organisations to assist residents through our responses to the cost of living crisis as fully

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and efficiently as we can and to ensure that all those involved in response activity are well-trained and aware of risks faced by individuals.

- Refresh the 'One Slough' Voluntary Sector Partnership and equip it to lead in providing help to residents in tackling issues arising from the cost-of-living crisis.
- Provide £15 food vouchers, per week per child, to households in receipt of free school meals (under tranche three of the Housing Support Fund) to cover school holidays from Christmas 2022 until February 2023.
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This Council also resolves to write to the UK Government calling on them to:

- Convene an emergency response committee to tackle cost of living pressures on an evolving basis as needed, with urgent measures which might include a reduction in VAT on home energy bills and a sustainable investment plan to insulate homes that have poor energy efficiency/performance.
- Review the legislation, method and calculations used to set Local Housing Allowance to ensure that rates are more responsive to areas with high and increasing market rents, so that LHA can better respond to housing cost pressures
- Announce a medium-term financial settlement for Local Authorities so they can plan and prepare budgets over a medium-term financial cycle, ensure through this settlement that local Authorities are adequately resourced for the life of their MTFs, and use the settlement to help local Councils provide proper support for residents during the cost-of-living crisis.
- Recognise the particular needs of the urban authorities, with high levels of deprivation, and prioritise these within the government's refreshed commitment to 'Levelling Up' activity.

42. To note Questions from Members under Procedure Rule 10

None received.

Chair

(Note: The Meeting opened at 7.00 pm and closed at 9.02 pm)