

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENT CABINET MEMBER MEETING

4.00PM 11 MAY 2010

COUNCIL CHAMBER, HOVE TOWN HALL

MINUTES

Present: Councillor G Theobald (Cabinet Member)

Also in attendance: Councillors Mitchell (Opposition Spokesperson, Labour), Davey (Opposition Spokesperson, Green) and Watkins (Opposition Spokesperson, Liberal Democrat)

Other Members present: Councillors Allen, Bennett, Hamilton, Harmer-Strange and Oxley

PART ONE

115. PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

115a Declarations of Interests

115a.1 There were none.

115b Exclusion of Press and Public

115b.1 In accordance with section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 ('the Act'), the Cabinet Member for Environment considered whether the press and public should be excluded from the meeting during an item of business on the grounds that it was likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the press or public were present during that item, there would be disclosure to them of confidential information (as defined in section 100A(3) of the Act) or exempt information (as defined in section 100I(1) of the Act).

115b.2 **RESOLVED** – That the press and public be not excluded from the meeting.

116. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

116.1 **RESOLVED** – The minutes of the meeting held on 25 March 2010 were approved and signed by the Cabinet Member as a correct record.

117. CABINET MEMBER'S COMMUNICATIONS

117.1 The Cabinet Member reported that the council had won a number of awards for work within the Environment directorate, including one for its Parking Annual Report.

118. ITEMS RESERVED FOR DISCUSSION

118.1 **RESOLVED** - That all the items be reserved.

119. PETITIONS**119(i) E-Petition – on street parking contract**

119.1 Councillor Elgood had submitted an e-petition signed by 40 people requesting that the council to bring the on-street parking contract back in-house when the contract came up for renewal in two year's time.

119.2 Councillor Watkins presented the e-petition on behalf of Councillor Elgood who was unable to attend the meeting and requested that the council set up a Members monitoring group to be involved in the process of agreeing a new contract.

119.3 The Cabinet Member advised that the current on-street parking enforcement contract would expire in December 2012 and that a full assessment of the future needs and delivery options would be carried out in advance of this. As part of the assessment the option to deliver services in-house would be considered.

119.4 **RESOLVED** – That the petition be noted.

119(ii) Petition – broken street light, Waterloo Street

119.5 Councillor Elgood had submitted a petition signed by 12 people requesting that the council replace a broken street light in Waterloo Street with a historic copy.

119.6 Councillor Watkins presented the petition on behalf of Councillor Elgood who was unable to attend the meeting.

119.7 The Cabinet Member advised that there were two columns in Waterloo Street of slightly different historical design and that the most recent replacement had been selected and painted black in order to blend in with the original design. An exact match was no longer available and would therefore require manufacture of a new mould, followed by the making up of a new lighting column at significant additional cost. The Cabinet Member confirmed that he would meet with colleagues to discuss future budget possibilities.

119.8 **RESOLVED** – That the petition be noted.

119(iii) E-Petition – provision of salt/grit bins

119.9 Mr Roy Pennington presented an e-petition signed by 9 people calling for the council to provide more salt/grit bins throughout the city in time for the next severe weather spell.

119.10 Mr Pennington was unable to attend the meeting.

119.11 **RESOLVED** – That the petition be noted and a written response be provided.

119(iv) Petition – parking problems, Hayes Close, Portslade

119.12 Councillor Harmer-Strange presented a petition signed by 26 people concerning problems of parking and access to homes and driveways in Hayes Close, Portslade.

119.13 The Cabinet Member advised that, although the existing footway was structurally sound, it was crazed and pitted, therefore he had instructed officers to place the site on a programme to resurface it later in the year to smooth out any irregularities; the area would be covered with a thin asphalt overlay to create a smoother waterproofed surface. The Cabinet Member explained that resolving the parking issues was more challenging, but that he had instructed officers to investigate the issues in Hayes Close and report back to himself and to Councillor Harmer-Strange.

119.14 **RESOLVED** – That the petition be noted.

119(v) Petition – withdrawal of 27A bus service

119.15 Councillor Bennett presented a petition signed by 110 asking the council to reconsider the withdrawal of the 27A evening and Sunday bus service and to continue subsidising it. Councillor Bennett submitted an additional 90 signatures, bringing the total number of signatures to 200.

119.16 The Cabinet Member explained that the council had never provided financial support for the 27A bus service; the decision to reduce its frequency was a commercial decision by Brighton & Hove Buses, because of the very low usage on the part of the route between Dyke Road and Hangleton. The Cabinet Member agreed to forward the petition to the bus company at the request of Councillor Bennett.

119.17 **RESOLVED** – That the petition be noted and forwarded to Brighton & Hove Buses.

119(vi) Petition – pedestrian safety, York Place

119.18 Councillor Davey presented a petition signed by 497 requesting that the council take steps to improve pedestrian safety in York Place.

119.19 The Cabinet Member explained that it was only possible to introduce zebra crossings where traffic conditions allowed pedestrians to cross safely. Officers had advised that a zebra crossing could not be introduced where there were two lanes of traffic going in the same direction because vehicles could be stationary in one lane, but moving freely in the other, confusing both drivers and pedestrians. The railings were needed to help to direct pedestrians, and guide vulnerable pedestrians to the designated crossing points and were important for safety reasons. The Cabinet Member confirmed that it would therefore not be possible to implement the requested measures.

119.20 **RESOLVED** – That the petition be noted.

119(vii) Petition – parking problems for tradesmen working in Camelford Street

119.21 Councillor Mitchell presented a petition signed by 29 concerning parking problems experienced by tradesmen working in Camelford Street.

119.22 The Cabinet Member explained that Camelford Street was very narrow and the double yellow lines, which had been in place for many years, were necessary to prevent dangerous parking, particularly on the pavements. The Cabinet Member agreed that there would be occasions when essential works needed to be undertaken and officers had therefore been instructed to consider issuing one waiver per day if it was proven to be for essential works in the street.

119.23 **RESOLVED** – That the petition be noted.

119(viii)Petition – parking issues, Poets’ Corner, Hove

119.24 Councillor Oxley presented a petition signed by 76 people concerning the effect of parking restrictions on those using Hove Methodist Church premises.

119.25 The Cabinet Member explained that there were over 100 churches in Brighton and Hove, in addition to mosques, synagogues and other organizations provide valuable services to the community. The council provided flexibility within the current system of permits and parking concessions and also provided a service for suspending parking bays that enabled wedding and funeral cars to be parked close to the venue. The Cabinet Member advised that introducing a new permit scheme would be administratively complex and contrary to the council’s sustainable transport policies, but that he would consider the written suggestions made by residents and report back to Councillor Oxley.

119.26 **RESOLVED** – That the petition be noted.

120. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

120.1 There were none.

121. DEPUTATIONS

121.1 The Cabinet Member reported that two deputations had been submitted.

121(a) Deputation – parking in Tivoli Crescent

121.2 The Cabinet Member considered a deputation from Mr Mark Dyson concerning parking Zone A and a proposal to extend it to include Tivoli Crescent. Mr Dyson explained that the residents of Tivoli Crescent had previously voted against being included in a controlled parking scheme, but that problems of displacement parking by commuters using Preston Park Station had caused residents to change their mind; it was hoped that the council would be able to take steps to include Tivoli Crescent in Parking Zone A as soon as possible.

121.3 The Cabinet Member explained that he understood that displacement parking was a serious concern for residents in Tivoli Crescent. He advised that he was aware residents had spoken with officers and that there was consensus that the approach suggested by residents seemed sensible. He confirmed that the proposal would be seriously considered due to the amount of support from residents in the road.

A report was currently being prepared by officers through discussions with Members and the aim was to present a report to an Environment Cabinet Member Meeting later in the year to discuss the way forward for future parking proposals. The request from Tivoli Crescent residents would be considered within the report.

121.4 **RESOLVED** – That the deputation be noted.

121(b) Deputation – 137-147 Preston Road

121.5 The Cabinet Member considered a deputation from Ms Hengameh Dadkhah concerning problems in relation to the occupants of 137-147 Preston Road. Ms Dadkhah reported that travellers had moved on to the unoccupied site in March 2010 and had been causing ongoing problems for residents living in the area. She advised that the travellers appeared to have keys to the site. She stated that the site was not suitable for travellers, particularly as there was no sanitation.

Ms Dadkhah reported that the travellers regularly burned materials and that rubbish was accumulating on site, and that residents were concerned about the potential health risks. She highlighted incidents involving joy riders and uncontrolled dogs and stated that the police had been called on a number of occasions; tensions were building between residents and the travellers and residents no longer felt safe in their homes and gardens.

Ms Dadkhah called upon the council to take action to remove the travellers from the site and consider a longer term solution to the ongoing problems arising in relation to the site.

121.6 The Cabinet Member advised that he fully understood and sympathised with the residents. He explained that the site was privately owned and that action needed to be taken by the owners in relation to the travellers, however the ownership situation was extremely complicated. He reported that the council was working jointly with the Police and other agencies to assess the most effective way of resolving the situation as quickly as possible. A multi-agency approach was required and the council would play a full and active part in pulling this together. The Cabinet Member advised that the council would continue put pressure on the owners to find a resolution.

121.7 The Director of Environment confirmed that meetings were taking place at the highest level with the Chief Executive of the council, the Police and other agencies to resolve the situation. The council was also monitoring the ongoing environmental health issues. A long term resolution would take time, but residents could be assured that the council was investigating ownership of the site and all of the legal powers at its disposal.

121.8 **RESOLVED** – That the deputation be noted.

122. LETTERS FROM COUNCILLORS

122.1 There were none.

123. WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

123.1 The Cabinet Member reported that one written question had been received from a councillor.

123.2 Councillor Hamilton had submitted the following question:

"In a small area of the South Portslade there are 28 streetlights that have been on 24/7 since well before Christmas. On the other hand the lights on a path from Old Shoreham Road to Locks Hill have been off 24/7 since well before Christmas. Please can you get the contractors to rectify these defects, which local residents find unacceptable?"

123.3 The following response had been circulated by the Cabinet Member:

"Thank you for your question Councillor Hamilton.

I do know that you have been discussing these matters with officers. Unfortunately, the day-burning streetlights and those that are not working are not straightforward maintenance issues for the Streetlighting service. Indeed, both these issues require significant and additional resources.

I will instruct officers to estimate the extent of additional investment required and then respond to you in writing."

123.4 Councillor Hamilton asked the following supplementary question:

"Has the council investigated the possibility that recent work by contractors has caused the problem?"

123.5 The Assistant Director for Sustainable Transport advised that officers were understood that it was a condition of the existing cable, which could not easily be rectified. He explained that the issue relating to day-burning streetlights was a citywide problem and that officers were developing a programme to begin dealing with it.

124. NOTICES OF MOTION

124.1 There were none.

125. PORTSLADE OLD VILLAGE CONSERVATION AREA REVIEW

125.1 The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Director of Environment seeking approval to consult on a revised character statement for the Portslade Old Village Conservation Area and on changes to the boundary.

125.2 Councillor Mitchell welcomed the report and stated that it was good practice to regularly review conservation areas. She requested that as part of such reviews steps be taken to repair council-owned infrastructure.

- 125.3 Councillor Watkins echoed Councillor Mitchell's remarks and welcomed the inclusion of a public consultation; he added that it was important that residents were kept aware of the implications of living in a conservation area.
- 125.4 **RESOLVED** - That having considered the information and the reasons set out in the report, the Cabinet Member accepted the following recommendation:
- (1) That the draft Portslade Old Village Conservation Area character statement and the boundary changes be approved for public consultation.

126. OFF STREET PARKING PLACES ORDER

- 126.1 The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Director of Environment concerning proposed changes to Norton Road Car Park.
- 126.2 The Cabinet Member explained that the report addressed an objection to changes in the tariff structure at Norton Road Car Park and that an operational oversight led to implementation before the objection was resolved. He advised that the changes aimed to simplify the structure, reflect on-street charges, and encourage more sustainable modes of transport.
- 126.3 In response to questions from Councillor Mitchell the Cabinet Member confirmed that due to budgetary constraints there were no immediate plans to refurbish Norton Road Car Park.
- 126.4 The Assistant Director for Sustainable Transport confirmed that, despite comments by the objector, annual passes were in fact available for the car park.
- 126.5 **RESOLVED** - That having considered the information and the reasons set out in the report, the Cabinet Member accepted the following recommendation:
- (1) That having taken account of the objection, the following order be approved as advertised,
- (a) Brighton & Hove (Off street Parking Places) Order 2008 Amendment Order No* 20**.
- (b) The advertisement of a Notice of Overpayment of Off Street Car Parking Charges.

The meeting concluded at 4.47pm

Signed

Cabinet Member

Dated this

day of

