

### EXTRACT FROM THE DRAFT PROCEEDINGS OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON THE 21 OCTOBER 2010

#### BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

4.30pm 21 OCTOBER 2010  
COUNCIL CHAMBER, HOVE TOWN HALL

#### DRAFT MINUTES

**Present:** Councillors: Wells (Chairman), A. Norman (Deputy Chairman), Alford, Allen, Barnett, Bennett, Brown, Carden, Caulfield, Cobb, Deane, Duncan, Elgood, Fallon-Khan, Fryer, Hamilton, Harmer-Strange, Hawkes, Hyde, Janio, Kemble, Kennedy, Kitcat, Lepper, Marsh, McCaffery, Meadows, Mears, Mitchell, Morgan, K. Norman, Older, Oxley, Peltzer Dunn, Phillips, Pidgeon, Randall, Rufus, Simpson, Simson, Smith, Steedman, C. Theobald, G. Theobald, Wakefield-Jarrett, Watkins, West, Wrighton and Young.

#### PART ONE

#### 27(A). STOP THE CLEARANCE

- 27.1 The Mayor noted that under the Council's petition scheme, if a petition contained more than 1,250 signatures it could be debated by the Full Council and such a request had been made in respect of the petition concerning Wild Park.
- 27.2 The Mayor welcomed Ms. Fluendy to the meeting and invited her to present her petition.
- 27.3 Ms. Fluendy thanked the Mayor and outlined the history behind the petition, which had resulted from action being taken by the council to clear areas of Wild Park. She noted that over 1,700 people had signed the petition and were concerned about the lack of consultation over the clearance work and information on why it had taken place. She acknowledged that further consultation was now planned and hoped that this would result in a better understanding of people's expectations for the future of the park. She then read out the petition:
- "We the undersigned petition the council to stop the deforestation and scrub clearance on the hillsides around Wild Park and to stop putting up barbed wire fences in the park. We believe the work is destroying a valuable habitat for wild birds and other flora and fauna. We also believe that barbed wire has no place in a public park and that the work is a waste of public resources."
- 27.4 Councillor Theobald thanked Ms. Fluendy for presenting the petition and stated that the council had not intended to cause any concern over its actions, which were aimed at

preserving the natural chalk environment that existed in the Park. He accepted that the initial consultation process had not been as effective as hoped but noted that the council was working with a number of interested groups to take matters forward. A further consultation exercise was underway with 16,000 newsletters being issued, workshops and walks arranged to inform interested parties of the proposals and get feedback. A Wild Park representative group had been established and it was hoped that this would provide a means for people to have a greater involvement in the management of the Park.

27.5 Councillor Simpson stated that a number of people were concerned about the clearance action and the lack of consultation that had taken place. She believed that there was a need to rebuild the trust between the council and the various communities that had been affected and therefore wished to move an amendment and add a further recommendation at 2.2 of the report as follows:

“That the strength of the public feeling on this issue be taken into account, and in future the Cabinet Member be requested to ensure that:-

- Full and meaningful consultation takes place with local people and adequate environmental impact surveys are carried out before any clearance work is done in areas like the Wild Park;
- Clear explanations are given as to the scale, nature and justification of any such proposed work; and
- Any work carried out should be done with care and precision.”

27.6 Councillor Morgan formally seconded the amendment.

27.7 Councillor West stated that there was a need to protect the park and acknowledged that the need for further consultation had been recognised, which he welcomed. However, he also wished to move an amendment to add a further recommendation to the report as follows:

“That the Cabinet Member be recommended to acknowledge and express support for the new model of consultation that is now underway; and to acknowledge that this presents a fresh and positive opportunity for the aspirations of the different park users and interest groups to be taken on board in shaping a new plan for future work on this project.”

27.8 Councillor Rufus formally seconded the amendment.

27.9 Councillor Caulfield noted that action had been taken to help protect the environment of the park such as the introduction of sheep grazing, however she also agreed that the initial clearance work had appeared to have been rushed. She was aware that the situation had also caused disagreement between the two local communities and hoped that this could be resolved by people working together.

27.10 Councillor Theobald noted the comments and stated that lessons had been learnt and it was hoped that with the new consultation process people would be able to work together to ensure that the park’s best interests were protected.

27.11 The Mayor thanked Ms. Fluendy for attending the meeting and then put each amendment to the vote in turn, which were carried and therefore moved that the report and the recommendations as amended by approved.

27.12 **RESOLVED:**

- (1) That the petition be referred to the Environment Cabinet Member Meeting for consideration;
- (2) That the strength of the public feeling on this issue be taken into account, and in future the Cabinet Member be requested to ensure that:-
  - Full and meaningful consultation takes place with local people and adequate environmental impact surveys are carried out before any clearance work is done in areas like the Wild Park;
  - Clear explanations are given as to the scale, nature and justification of any such proposed work; and
  - Any work carried out should be done with care and precision; and
- (3) That the Cabinet Member be recommended to acknowledge and express support for the new model of consultation that is now underway; and to acknowledge that this presents a fresh and positive opportunity for the aspirations of the different park users and interest groups to be taken on board in shaping a new plan for future work on this project.

