

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL
ENVIRONMENT CABINET MEMBER MEETING

4.00pm 5 NOVEMBER 2009

COUNCIL CHAMBER, HOVE TOWN HALL

MINUTES

Present: Councillor G Theobald (Cabinet Member)

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

Other Members present: Councillors Bennett, Davis and Kennedy

PART ONE

50. PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

50a Declarations of Interests

50a.1 There were none.

50b Exclusion of Press and Public

50b.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).

50b.2 **RESOLVED** – That the press and public be not excluded from the meeting.

51. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

51.1 **RESOLVED** – The minutes of the meeting held on 24 September 2009 were approved and signed by the Cabinet Member as a correct record.

52. CABINET MEMBER'S COMMUNICATIONS

52.1 There were none.

53. ITEMS RESERVED FOR DISCUSSION

53.1 **RESOLVED** – That all the items be reserved for discussion.

54. PETITIONS**54(i) Petition – Pedestrian safety, Davigdor and Osmond Roads**

54.1 Councillor Davis had submitted a petition signed by 289 people concerning pedestrian safety in Davigdor and Osmond Roads.

54.2 Ms B Hewlett, local resident, presented the petition.

54.3 The Cabinet Member thanked Ms Hewlett for raising the petition. The Cabinet Member stated that the Council took road safety very seriously, and alongside other local authorities followed strict national guidelines in determining the suitability of interventions such as traffic calming or speed restrictions. A number of 20 mph zones had been introduced as part of the Safer Routes to School Programme and the question of 20 mph zones had been referred to the Environment and Community Safety Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

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

54(ii) Petition – Safeguard Chalfont Green

54.5 Councillor Brown had submitted a petition signed by 59 people concerning safeguarding Chalfont Green from development.

54.6 Councillor Brown was unable to attend the meeting.

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

54(iii) Petition – Pedestrian crossing, Happy Valley Park

54.8 Councillor Wells had submitted a petition signed by 333 people requesting a pedestrian crossing for those wishing to access Happy Valley Park.

54.9 Councillor Wells was unable to attend the meeting.

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

54(iv) Petition – Parking in Regency Square

54.11 Councillor Kitcat had submitted a petition signed by 92 people concerning parking problems experienced by residents of Regency Square.

54.12 Councillor Kitcat was unable to attend the meeting.

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

54(v) Petition – Parking restrictions at Stone/Castle Street junction

54.14 Councillor Kitcat submitted a petition signed by 14 people requesting an extension to existing parking restrictions in the zone at the Stone/Castle Street junction.

54.15 Councillor Kitcat was unable to attend the meeting.

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

54(vi) Petition – Parking problems in Elrington Road and The Droveaway

54.17 Councillor Bennett presented a petition signed by 34 people requesting the Council to consult with residents on the use of parking restrictions in Elrington Road and The Droveaway on safety grounds.

54.18 The Cabinet Member thanked Councillor Bennett for the petition. It was confirmed that a section of double yellow lines was being investigated in The Droveaway following requests from residents, and it was proposed to advertise restrictions next month in the overall traffic amendment order. Ward Councillors would be fully consulted on any proposals. The double yellow lines on Elrington Road could be investigated as part of the next traffic amendment order due to be advertised next spring.

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

54(vii) Petition – parking problems in Hove Park Way and Onslow Road

54.20 Councillor Bennett presented a petition signed by 18 requesting the Council to consider the use of parking restrictions around the junctions of Hove Park Way and Onslow Road.

54.21 The Cabinet Member thanked Councillor Bennett for the petition. The Cabinet Member was pleased to confirm that the possibility of extending the double yellow lines on the junction of Onslow Road and Dyke Road had been investigated, and it was proposed to advertise this restriction in the overall traffic management order next month. Ward Councillors would be fully consulted on any proposals. It was confirmed that officers would also be investigating double yellow lines on other junctions on Onslow Road, The Droveaway and Hove Park Way as part of the next traffic amendment order to be advertised next spring.

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

54(viii) Petition – New tennis club house, Hove Park

54.23 Councillor Bennett presented a petition signed by 142 people in support of a new club house for the tennis clubs of Hove Park.

54.24 The Cabinet Member thanked Councillor Bennett for presenting the petition. The Cabinet Member confirmed that the provision of sports facilities was important to the council, as well as the need to keep parks as green spaces where the few buildings that were needed were well used. The Cabinet Member would ask officers to look into

how best to use existing buildings and to look at options such as sharing the Bowls Pavilion or improving the current tennis changing rooms. The council worked with clubs who were bidding for funds from the relevant sporting facilities for better facilities. The Cabinet Member emphasised that the council did not want too many buildings in the parks taking up valuable green space.

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

55. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

55.1 There were none.

56. DEPUTATIONS

56.1 The Cabinet Member reported that two deputations had been received.

56(a) Deputation – Traffic flows in Carlyle Street, Brighton

56.2 The Cabinet Member considered a deputation from Mr Gerry Kassab concerning problems caused by traffic flows in Carlyle Street Brighton (for copy see minute book).

56.3 As the deputation had recently been received at a meeting of the Full Council, the Cabinet Member referred those present to the response he gave at that meeting. The Cabinet Member thanked Mr Kassab again for raising the matter and for offering to work with the council to try and find a solution.

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

56(b) Deputation – London Road Controlled Parking Zone Consultation

56.5 The Cabinet Member considered a deputation, accompanied by a petition signed by 43 people, presented by Mr Robert Rosenthal concerning the consultation on the proposed London Road Controlled Parking Zone (for copy see minute book).

56.6 The Cabinet Member thanked Mr Rosenthal for the deputation and stated that he was sorry that Mr Rosenthal did not consider the consultation to be adequate, but confirmed that all the residents in the area were sent a very clear consultation document in June 2009. It was stated in this document that all comments received would be carefully considered to decide whether there was enough support to proceed to the next stage of the scheme development. There were well attended public meetings staffed by council officers where residents were able to discuss detailed aspects of the proposals. The Cabinet Member pointed out that Springfield Road, Florence Road and Rugby Road voted against a scheme during the consultation. In accordance with the agreed procedure residents would be notified of the way forward through a further letter drop later this month. Officers would provide a full written response to the issues raised in the deputation. The Director of Environment agreed to meet to look at the concerns and to clarify what can and can't now be done.

56.7 **RESOLVED** – That the deputation and petition be noted.

57. LETTERS FROM COUNCILLORS

57.1 The Cabinet Member reported that two letters had been received.

57(a) Letter – Cycle to Work Guarantee

57.2 A letter was received from Councillor Mitchell asking whether the Council would be signing up to the Cycle to Work Guarantee and what steps would be taken to promote the initiative (for copy see minute book).

57.3 The Cabinet Member stated that Councillor Mears had replied positively to the Cycle to Work guarantee letter from Lord Adonis, and a copy of this letter had been forwarded to Councillor Mitchell. The council had been improving the offer to those who already cycled and were encouraging staff to take up cycling through a number of co-ordinated measures. The council first developed a Staff Travel Plan in 2005, this plan included clear objectives and policies for increasing cycle use among Brighton and Hove City Council staff. Over 300 cycle parking spaces had added at council buildings and lockers, showers and changing facilities had been provided. Free cycle training to all council staff was on offer and a tax free bike school was provided which 400 staff had taken advantage of. Cycling information was abundant and regular access to cycle maintenance was made available through associated events and promotion. It was considered that the council were already meeting the criteria detailed in the guarantee and would be happy to work with Department of Transport, and other relevant agencies, to further build on the excellent cycle to work offer provided for council staff.

57.4 Councillor Mitchell stated that she had not yet received a copy of the letter which Councillor Mears had sent to Lord Adonis. It was agreed that another copy would be sent to Councillor Mitchell

57.5 **RESOLVED** – That the letter be noted.

57(b) Letter – Parking at Stanmer Park

57.6 A letter was received from Councillor Caulfield concerning difficulties associated with parking at Stanmer Park and requesting that parking bays be marked and existing parking areas be made larger (for copy see minute book).

57.7 Councillor Caulfield was not able to attend the meeting. A written response would be sent to Councillor Caulfield.

57.8 **RESOLVED** – That the letter be noted.

58. WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

58.1 There were none.

59. NOTICES OF MOTION

59.1 There were none.

60. CITYPARKS DOWNLAND MANAGEMENT - CALL-IN OF 24 SEPTEMBER ENVIRONMENT CMM DECISION

60.1 The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Director of Strategy & Governance requesting reconsideration of his decision of 24 September 2009 concerning Cityparks Downland Management (for copy see minute book).

60.2 The Cabinet Member stated that the Environment and Community Safety Overview & Scrutiny Committee had requested that the decision to introduce sheep grazing on the council's chalk grassland be reconsidered. The information report from the Assistant Director of City Services, that accompanied the Call-In report, sought to address the issues raised by scrutiny. The Cabinet Member considered the issues. The first concern was that there was a lack of consultation with local conservation and wildlife groups. The Cabinet Member stated that this had been addressed in paragraph 4.2 of the report. There would be consultation with conservation and wildlife groups, friends groups, residents, users of the sites and ward councillors on the feasibility of sheep grazing for each site. Officers had been asked to establish a consultation process before Christmas. The other concern was that there had been a lack of information in the Cabinet Member Meeting report relating to the cutting and compositing of sites not being grazed, and that there had been a lack of analysis in the report on the impact of the downland mowing policy on a site by site basis. The Cabinet Member stated that this had been addressed in paragraphs 3.14 and 3.16, and in Appendix 2 of the report, where further information had been provided on the implication of moving from conservation mowing, and removal of the grass to sheep grazing, and the consequences where conservation mowing would only take place. The introduction of sheep grazing was a much improved means of managing the chalk grassland. The Cabinet Member stated that having considered the scrutiny report, he was satisfied that the original decision should stand and the decision would not be amended or changed.

60.3 Councillor Mitchell was not at the meeting when this item was considered and so provided the following written comments:

"I thank the officers for producing this report that goes some way to clarifying the council's approach to the management of the chalk grasslands that are not being grazed. However, I feel that the report does not sufficiently make clear what is meant by 'conservation mowing'. It is generally accepted, including by the several wildlife conservation groups in the city, that conservation mowing includes the removal of the cut grasses and this needs to be clarified.

There is a contradiction at point 3.16 which states that "conservation mowing is to be continued without the collection of cut grass."

The report is helpful in that it makes reference to a 'ranking order' of sites but there is no indication in the report that this has been compiled in consultation with the wildlife groups. This goes some way, but not nearly far enough, to getting the proper biodiversity management plans for these individual sites that has long been called for.

One of the key recommendations of the scrutiny call-in was for better consultation with the wildlife conservation groups and I made a very strong request for them to be consulted before this report came back before the Cabinet Member.

This request has been ignored and the only mention in the report of consultation with the groups was a meeting back in May 2009. This is simply not acceptable.

Finally, I see that this report is just for noting and therefore no decision is being taken. This just serves to further add confusion to this issue and I would urge the Cabinet Member to meet again with representatives from the conservation groups to properly spell out his policies in relation to this important issue.”

60.4 **RESOLVED** - That, having taken into account the recommendations of the Environment & Community Safety Overview & Scrutiny Committee and the additional information provided by the Director of Environment, the Cabinet Member confirmed his decision of 24 September 2009 in relation to Cityparks Downland Management.

61. **CONSULTATION RESPONSE TO THE GOVERNMENT’S DRAFT PLANNING POLICY ‘DEVELOPMENT AND COASTAL CHANGE’**

61.1 The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Director of Environment seeking endorsement of the officer response to Government consultation on the draft planning policy - planning for development and coastal change (a supplement to PPS25 Development and Flood Risk) (for copy see minute book).

61.2 The Cabinet Member stated that he was pleased to present the proposed council response to consultation on the government’s new policy on planning for development and coastal damage. Subject to some areas where further guidance was requested, the draft policy was welcomed as it provided a strategic approach to managing coastal change and would ensure a long term approach to managing future development of coastal communities. It very much reflected the work that was already prioritised within the council of protecting the environment and adapting to the challenges of climate change. Having considered the information in the report, the recommendations would be accepted.

61.3 **RESOLVED** - That having considered the information and the reasons set out in the report, the Cabinet Member accepted the following recommendation:

- (1) That the officer response to the draft policy on Planning for Development and Coastal Change, sent out to meet the 12 October deadline, be endorsed.

62. **LONDON ROAD STATION AREA RESIDENT PARKING SCHEME CONSULTATION**

62.1 The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Director of Environment concerning the public consultation undertaken regarding a proposed Residents Parking Scheme for the London Road Station area (for copy see minute book)

62.2 The Cabinet Member stated that he was pleased to see this report as it included the consultation results of the resident parking scheme proposed for the London Road Station area. Consultation had been requested by members of the public and ward councillors at a

number of previous meetings. The purpose of the report was to consider the outcome of the public consultation and to agree a way forward. This area was the next scheme to be looked at as part of the resident parking scheme timetable agreed at the Environment Committee on 24 January 2008.

62.3 Councillor Kennedy attended the meeting and stated that she was speaking on behalf of the residents of Preston Park. There was grave concern that there would be no further consultation until 2011; a number of residents stated that if they had known there was a vote they would have responded differently. Councillor Kennedy stated that she would pass on information from the residents. Councillor Kennedy stated that there needed to be greater clarity in the future, and suggested that the way that the proposals were worded should be looked at. It was encouraging that the Director of Environment had agreed to meet with residents and asked to be kept informed.

62.4 Councillor Davey asked what the next step in the process would be. The Assistant Director for Sustainable Transport confirmed that a detailed design would be provided next.

62.5 **RESOLVED** - That having considered the information and the reasons set out in the report, the Cabinet Member accepted the following recommendations:

(1) That the London Road Station Area Residents Parking Scheme be progressed to final design and the Traffic Regulation Order advertised, subject to the amendments outlined in this cabinet report.

(2) That an order be placed for all required pay and display equipment to ensure implementation of the proposed parking schemes are undertaken as programmed.

63. **BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL'S WINTER SERVICE PLAN 2009-10**

62.6 The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Director of Environment concerning the council's highway Winter Service Plan for 2009/10 (for copy see minute book)

62.7 The Cabinet Member stated that he was pleased to present the council's winter service plan for this coming winter. The plan outlines what the council does during cold weather and how the service was carried out. The plan had been formulated over the years by officers with experience and dedication to providing the best possible winter service.

62.8 **RESOLVED** - That having considered the information and the reasons set out in the report, the Cabinet Member accepted the following recommendation:

(1) That the Brighton & Hove City Council Winter Service Plan 2009/10 be approved.

The meeting concluded at 5.10pm

Signed

Cabinet Member

Dated this

day of