

COUNCIL

MEETING HELD AT THE TOWN HALL, SOUTHPORT ON THURSDAY 20TH APRIL, 2023

PRESENT: The Mayor (Councillor Carragher) in the Chair
The Deputy Chair (Councillor June Burns) Vice
Chair

Councillors Atkinson, Bennett, Bradshaw, Brodie -
Browne, Brough, Danny Burns, Byrom, Carlin,
Cluskey, Corcoran, Cummins, D'Albuquerque, Dodd,
Dowd, Doyle, Evans, Fairclough, Grace, Halsall,
Hansen, Hardman, Hardy, Howard, Irving, Jones,
John Kelly, John Joseph Kelly, Sonya Kelly, Killen,
Lappin, Lloyd-Johnson, Lunn-Bates, Chris Maher,
Ian Maher, McKinley, Morris, Murphy, Myers,
O'Brien, Page, Prendergast, Pugh, Richards, Riley,
Roche, Roscoe, Sayers, Shaw, Spencer, Spring,
Thomas, Anne Thompson, Lynne Thompson,
Tweed, Veidman, Waterfield, Sir Ron Watson,
Webster and Wilson

112. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors McGinnity, McKee, Moncur, Robinson and Sathiy.

113. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of any disclosable pecuniary interests or personal interests were received.

114. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the Ordinary meeting held on 2 March 2023 and the Extra-ordinary meeting held on 13 April 2023 be approved as a correct record.

115. MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS

Councillors Not Seeking Re-Election

The Mayor reported that this was the last Council meeting before the Council Elections on 4 May 2023 and that the following Councillors would not be seeking re-election:

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- Councillor Terry Jones who had served on Sefton Council for sixteen years; and
- Councillor Yaso Sathiy who had served on Sefton Council for four years.

On behalf of the Council, The Mayor thanked those Members for their dedicated service to the people of Sefton and extended her best wishes to them for the future.

Mayor of Sefton's Gala Charity Ball 2023

The Mayor reported that her Gala Charity Ball was held on Saturday 1 April 2023, and it was a great success. Over 180 people attended the event in the Waterfront Hotel, Southport, and just over £6,000 was raised on the night for the Mayor's Charity Fund; and the Mayor expressed her thanks to all those Members who attended and supported the event.

HMS Mersey – Freedom of the Borough

The Mayor reported that it was an immense pleasure for her to present the Freedom of the Borough Scroll to the Commanding Officer of HMS Mersey at the Extra-ordinary Council meeting on Thursday 13 April 2023 and to host the Civic Reception for the Ships company in the Assembly Hall that evening. All the Ships company exercised their Freedom of the Borough on Sunday 16 April when they paraded around the nearby streets of Bootle, and they were accompanied by the Corps of Drums from HM Royal Marines Band, Plymouth and local Sea Cadets.

The Mayor indicated that along with other Members of the Council, she had attended a reception held on HMS Mersey on Friday 14 April 2023, while it was berthed at the Princes Landing Stage at the Pier Head, Liverpool; and that it had been an honour and a privilege to be in the company of the men and women who serve on HMS Mersey during the last few days, and that they were very honoured by the award of the Honorary Freedom of the Borough and very grateful for all the kindness and hospitality provided to them by the Council, local residents and local hostellers.

Armed Forces Community Covenant

The Mayor reported that in 2012, representatives of Sefton Council had signed a Armed Forces Community Covenant along with the other Liverpool City Region Authorities, and that earlier evening she had with great pleasure, signed Sefton's own Armed Forces Community Covenant in her role as the Armed Forces Champion in the presence of Major Daniella Aspin (Army), Squadron Leader Mark Barrett (RAF) and Mrs Janice Cox, North West Regional Employer Engagement Director.

The Mayor also reported that the Council had submitted an application for the Armed Forces Silver Employer Recognition Award and hopefully the outcome of the application would be reported at the next Council meeting.

Marine Athletic Football Club – Liverpool Senior Cup

The Mayor reported that on Tuesday 18 April 2023 she had attended the final of the Liverpool Senior Cup held at the DCBL Stadium, Widnes along with the Mayors of other Liverpool City Region local authorities and had the pleasure of watching Marine Athletic Football Club beat Runcorn Linnets 4-3 on penalties after the game ended 0-0 and she extended her congratulations to Marine Athletic Football Club.

The Mayor also reported that the Mayor of Sefton Twitter account had over 2,000 followers and the re-tweet of Marine winning the Cup had gone viral on the Internet with over 30,000 views.

116. MATTERS RAISED BY THE PUBLIC

The Mayor reported that no matters had been raised by members of the public.

117. QUESTIONS RAISED BY MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

The Council considered a schedule setting out the written questions submitted by:

1. Councillor Prendergast - question to the Leader of the Council (Councillor Ian Maher);
2. Councillor Prendergast - question to the Leader of the Council (Councillor Ian Maher);
3. Councillor Pugh - question to the Cabinet Member – Locality Services (Councillor Fairclough);
4. Councillor Pugh - question to the Cabinet Member – Locality Services (Councillor Fairclough);
5. Councillor Halsall - question to the Cabinet Member – Regeneration and Skills (Councillor Atkinson);
6. Councillor Lloyd-Johnson - question to the Cabinet Member – Children’s Social Care (Councillor Doyle);
7. Councillor Lloyd-Johnson - to the Cabinet Member – Children’s Social Care (Councillor Doyle);
8. Councillor Shaw - question to the Cabinet Member – Children’s Social Care (Councillor Doyle); and

9. Councillor Shaw - question to the Cabinet Member – Health and Wellbeing (Councillor Moncur).

together with the responses given. Supplementary questions from Councillors Prendergast, Lloyd-Johnson and Shaw were responded to by the Leader of the Council and the Cabinet Member - Children's Social Care.

118. APPOINTMENT OF CHIEF EXECUTIVE

The Council considered the report of the Chief Personnel Officer on the recruitment process approved by the Employment Procedure Committee for the appointment of a new Chief Executive.

The Employment Procedure Committee had interviewed candidates for the post of Chief Executive on 19 April 2023 and the Council was requested to confirm the formal appointment of the recommended candidate from the Employment Procedure Committee as the Council's new Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service, subject to the consideration of any material or well-founded objections by any Member of the Cabinet, and any necessary pre-employment checks.

A copy of a note from the Leader of the Council setting out the details of the recommendation from the Employment Procedure Committee was circulated around the Council Chamber prior to the commencement of the Council meeting.

It was moved by Councillor Ian Maher, seconded by Councillor Fairclough and

RESOLVED:

That the Council confirms the appointment of Philip Porter as the new Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service, on terms and conditions recommended by the Employment Procedure Committee. The salary range of £155,279 to £170,615 is in accordance with the Pay Policy. Confirmation will be subject to the consideration of any material or well-founded objection by any Member of the Cabinet and appropriate standard pre-employment checks.

119. LISTENING TO THE VOICES OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

The Council considered the report of the Chief Executive which provided details of how the Council and partners have involved children and young people in the decision making to improve services, shape their communities for cared for children and care experienced young people on issues that affect their lives.

It was moved by Councillor Ian Maher, seconded by Councillor Fairclough and

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Council reaffirms its commitment to listening to the voices of children, young people and their families in the development of Council and partnership strategies; and
- (2) members of SYMBOL be invited to attend and speak at a future Council meeting on a subject that is important to them.

120. CORPORATE PLAN, WORKFORCE PLAN & EQUALITIES, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION STRATEGY

Further to Minute No. 146 of the Cabinet meeting held on 6 April 2023, the Council considered the report of the Chief Executive which presented the draft Corporate Plan, Workforce Plan and the Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy for consideration and approval.

The report indicated that as part of the Council's response to the feedback to the Local Government Association Peer Challenge Revisit in April 2022, the draft Corporate Plan contains the Council's five priorities for the next three years:

- Children and Young People
- Health and Wellbeing
- Adult Social Care
- Working for Our Communities Every Day
- Inclusive Growth

The Corporate Plan will run for a three-year period and the progress on its delivery will be reported to the Cabinet on an annual basis. Delivery of the plan will be monitored through existing mechanisms and plans such as the Children's Improvement Plan and Service Plans. The next Corporate Peer Challenge is planned for 21 to 24 November 2023.

The draft Workforce Plan outlined the vision for the Council, values and behaviours, and the priorities to be focused upon to achieve the vision. It demonstrated the value, skills and flexibility of the Council's workforce; and highlighted that the next few years will present a different set of challenges and opportunities for Sefton and the Council's workforce, and set out how the Council is planning to respond to the following seven key objectives:

- Increased awareness and engagement across the whole organisation
- Increased engagement with our partners and communities
- Consistent and targeted training and development
- Strengthened support for staff
- Maximise effectiveness and inclusivity in our HR processes and procedures.

- Improved monitoring and measurement of progress
- Establish and strengthen monitoring and governance structures

The draft Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy aims to make the Council a more inclusive and diverse place for people to work, recognises the need to work with partners to remove barriers for under-represented groups across Sefton and demonstrates the Council's commitment to improve inclusivity in Sefton. The draft Strategy reaffirms the Council's commitment to recognising care experience as a protected characteristic and it recognises the work the Council needs to prioritise internally. The Strategy would also help to deliver the seven key objectives set out in the draft Workforce Plan.

It was moved by Councillor Ian Maher, seconded by Councillor Fairclough and

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Corporate Plan 2023-2026 be approved;
- (2) it be noted that the next Corporate Peer Challenge is planned for 21 to 24 November 2023;
- (3) the Workforce Plan 2022-2026 be approved; and
- (4) the Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2023-2027 be approved.

121. SUPPLEMENTARY REVENUE REPORT DOMESTIC ABUSE NEW BURDENS FUNDING

Further to Minute No. 149 of the Cabinet meeting held on 6 April 2023, the Council considered the report of the Assistant Director of People (Communities) which set out the supplementary revenue grant funding received by the Council from the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities in respect of Domestic Abuse New Burdens funding for the period of 2021/22, 2022/23 and 2023/24 to 31 March 2024.

It was moved by Councillor Ian Maher, seconded by Councillor Fairclough and

RESOLVED: That

- (1) approval be given to a supplementary revenue estimate of £1.832m to be funded by Domestic Abuse New Burdens funding; and
- (2) the Assistant Director of People (Communities) in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Communities and Housing be granted delegated authority for the future acceptance of the same grant funding and the allocation of the funding in line with the grant conditions.

122. CLIMATE EMERGENCY UPDATE

Further to Minute No. 150 of the Cabinet meeting held on 6 April 2023, the Council considered the report of the Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services which indicated that Sefton Council had declared a climate emergency in 2019 and it had a target to achieve net zero carbon by 2030 for Council operations which is set out in the Climate Change Emergency Strategy to achieve that goal.

The report indicated that the Council is coming to the end of the Phase 1 delivery (2020 –2023) of the strategy / action plan, and as Phase 2 begins, the strategy highlighted the challenges and opportunities associated with the next stage of implementing this challenging commitment.

The Liverpool City Region climate emergency target, to reach net zero by 2040 for all sectors, requires input and collaboration on housing, energy, transport, land use and climate resilience.

It was moved by Councillor Ian Maher, seconded by Councillor Fairclough and

RESOLVED:

That approval be given to the implementation of Phase 2 of the Climate Change Emergency strategy / action plan and the interim targets and the work required to meet the committed net zero targets over the next three years be noted.

123. ICT ACCEPTABLE USAGE POLICY

Further to Minute No. 51 of the meeting of the Audit and Governance Committee held on 15 March 2023, the Council considered the report of the Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services which sought approval for the revised security policy documentation relating to the Authority's ICT estate. The ICT Acceptable Usage Policy was reviewed on an annual basis by the Audit and Governance Committee and the Council.

The report indicated that changes to the ICT Acceptable Usage Policy included explicit guidance for SharePoint data owners as well as the Council's ICT Monitoring capabilities. It also indicated that the Audit and Governance Committee had requested that the policy in relation to the use of email (key principles) should be reworded with regard to elected Members and the policy had subsequently been amended as requested by the Committee.

It was moved by Councillor Ian Maher, seconded by Councillor Fairclough and

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the revised security policy documentation relating to the Authority's ICT estate be approved; and
- (2) approval be given to the internal publication of the Acceptable Use Policy.

124. COUNCILLOR DAVID IRVING - LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 – SECTION 85 - ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS

The Mayor reported that this item had been withdrawn from consideration at the meeting due to the attendance of Councillor Irving at the meeting, and she extended a warm welcome to Councillor Irving upon his return to the Council Chamber following his major surgery earlier this year.

Councillor Irving thanked Members of the Council for the cards, letters and telephone calls he had received from them during his stay in hospital and following his return home after his operation.

125. COUNCIL CONSTITUTION - RULE 46 (WAIVING CALL-IN) PROVISIONS

The Council considered the report of the Leader of the Council in relation to a matter that was dealt with in accordance with Rule 46 (waiving call-in) of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules of the Council Constitution, whereby "call in" was waived.

It was moved by Councillor Grace, seconded by Councillor Fairclough and

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

126. MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES 2022/23

No changes to the memberships of Committees were made.

127. MOTION SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR PRENDERGAST - OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND SAFEGUARDING)

It was moved by Councillor Prendergast, seconded by Councillor Brough:

Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Children's Services and Safeguarding)

Following the most recent OFSTED report, which sets out the serious issues that still remain within the Children's Services Department, it is absolutely imperative that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Children's Services and Safeguarding) is reviewed to ensure that it is functioning correctly and is providing the oversight that is required.

Therefore, this Council resolves:

- To consider appointing Opposition Members as the Chair and Vice Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Children's Services and Safeguarding); and
- To ask the Cabinet Member for Children's Social Care to liaise with the Government Commissioner as to whether he believes it would be a good idea for a review of overview and scrutiny to be undertaken in relation to Children's Services and Safeguarding.

An **amendment** was moved by Councillor Evans, seconded by Councillor Lloyd-Johnson that the Motion be amended as follows:

That the following text be added after point one in the section headed "Therefore this Council resolves:"

- To take steps to ensure all future meetings of Overview and Scrutiny (Children's Services and Safeguarding) are video recorded and available for members of the public to view online; and

Following a debate on the amendment, the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer officiated a vote and the Mayor declared that the **amendment was lost** by 16 votes to 45.

Following a debate on the Motion and in accordance with Rule 95 of Chapter 4 in the Constitution, the voting on the Motion was recorded and the Members of the Council present at the time, voted as follows:

FOR THE MOTION - Councillors Bennett, Brodie-Browne, Brough, D'Albuquerque, Dodd, Evans, Irving, Jones, Lloyd-Johnson, Morris, Prendergast, Pugh, Riley, Shaw, Lynne Thompson and Sir Ron Watson.

AGAINST THE MOTION – Councillors Atkinson, Bradshaw, Danny Burns, June Burns, Byrom, Carlin, Cluskey, Corcoran, Cummins, Dowd, Doyle, Fairclough, Grace, Halsall, Hansen, Hardman, Hardy, Howard, John Kelly, John Joseph Kelly, Sonya Kelly, Killen, Lappin, Lunn-Bates, Chris Maher, Ian Maher, McKinley, Murphy, Myers, O'Brien, Page, Richards, Roche, Roscoe, Sayers, Spencer, Spring, Thomas, Anne Thompson, Tweed, Veidman, Waterfield, Webster, Wilson and The Mayor.

The Mayor declared that the **Motion was lost** by 16 votes to 45.

**128. MOTION SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR PRENDERGAST -
SUPPORTING SEFTON BUSINESSES**

It was moved by Councillor Prendergast, seconded by Councillor Morris:

Supporting Sefton Businesses

At the January full council meeting, it was unfortunate to note that the term “leeches” was used to describe business owners, including those in Sefton, by a Member of the Labour Group.

There are around 5.5 million different businesses in the UK, with around 513,000 located here in the North West. Most people in the UK are employed in the private sector, working for business owners who care passionately about their staff and industries.

Business owners contribute to the generation of wealth, create jobs and contribute billions of pounds in tax revenue to help fund our vital public services.

To describe hard working business owners as “leeches” displays a shocking lack of economic and commercial acumen as well as being deeply offensive to those it was aimed at.

This Council therefore:

- Recognises the valuable contribution of all business owners, large and small, to the economic vibrancy of Sefton;
- Resolves to encourage enterprise and support those individuals who want to improve their own situation by setting up their own business with practical support and training where appropriate;
- Does not recognise the term “leeches” to describe business owners; and
- Resolves to continue to engage with our business community in a constructive manner to encourage investment.

Following a debate on the Motion, the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer officiated a vote and the Mayor declared that the **Motion was lost** by 12 votes to 45 with 2 abstentions.