

COUNCIL

**MEETING HELD AT THE TOWN HALL, SOUTHPORT
ON THURSDAY 21ST APRIL, 2016**

PRESENT: The Mayor (Councillor Kermode) in the Chair
The Deputy Chair (Councillor Cluskey) Vice Chair

Councillors Ashton, Atkinson, David Barton,
Jo Barton, Maria Bennett, Bliss, Booth, Bradshaw,
Burns, Byrom, Carr, Carragher, Cummins, Dams,
Dawson, Dodd, Dutton, Fairclough, Maureen Fearn,
Lord Fearn, Friel, Gatherer, Grace, Hale, Hands,
Hardy, Hartill, Jamieson, Jones, Keith, John Kelly,
John Joseph Kelly, Killen, Lappin, Daniel Lewis,
Dan T. Lewis, Maher, McGinnity, McGuire,
McKinley, Moncur, Murphy, O'Brien, Owens, Page,
Robinson, Roche, Shaw, Spencer, Thompson,
Tweed, Veidman, Weavers and Welsh

98. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Ball, Veronica Bennett, Brennan, Brodie – Browne, Kerrigan, Mahon, Preece, Sayers and Webster.

99. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of any disclosable pecuniary interest were received.

100. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Council Meeting held on 3 March 2016 be approved as a correct record.

101. MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS

Councillors Not Seeking Re-Election

The Mayor reported that this was the last Council meeting before the Council Elections on 5 May 2016 and that the following Councillors would not be seeking re-election:

Councillors Lord Fearn and Mahon who had both served on Sefton Council for 43 years' since May 1973 when the Council was established, which was a remarkable achievement;

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Councillor Maureen Fearn, who had 33 years' service on the Council;

Councillor Kerrigan who had 20 years' service on the Council; and

Councillors Veronica Bennett, Gatherer, Hartill and the Mayor, himself who had all had 4 years' service on the Council.

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

Councillor Byrom paid tribute to the service given by Councillors Lord Fearn and Mahon.

Councillor Dams paid tribute to the service given by Councillor Veronica Bennett.

Councillor Dawson paid tribute to the service given by Councillors Lord Fearn and Gatherer.

Councillor Fairclough paid tribute to the service given by Councillor Kerrigan.

Councillor Friel paid tribute to the service given by Councillor Kerrigan.

Councillor Hands paid tribute to the service given by Councillors Kerrigan and Mahon.

Councillor Jones paid tribute to the service given by all of the retiring Councillors.

Councillor Maher paid tribute to the service given by all of the retiring Councillors.

Councillor McGuire paid tribute to the service given by Councillors Lord Fearn, Maureen Fearn, Kerrigan and Mahon.

Councillor McKinley paid tribute to the service given by Councillor Gatherer.

Councillor Moncur paid tribute to the service given by Councillor Mahon.

Councillor Weavers paid tribute to the service given by Councillors Maureen Fearn and Gatherer.

Mayor of Sefton's Charity Ball Update

The Mayor reported that the Charity Ball final income figure after expenditure had now been completed and that the total of £10,325 was raised on the night. The Mayor extended his thanks to everyone who contributed or supported in any way to the success of the Charity Ball.

Councillor Ashton

The Mayor indicated that he was pleased to see the return of Councillor Ashton to the Council Chamber following a period of mourning.

Mayoral Engagements

The Mayor reported that he and the Mayoress had attended 270 engagements so far during his Mayoral Year.

Extraordinary Council Meeting – 9 June 2016

The Mayor reported that an Extraordinary Council Meeting would be held on Thursday 9 June 2016 at Bootle Town Hall, commencing at 6.30pm to consider a report on the Inspectors initial findings on the Draft Local Plan and the proposed modifications to the Local Plan to be published for consultation.

Mayor Elect 2016/17

The Mayor reported that Councillor Iain Brodie-Browne had been nominated for the office of the Mayor of Sefton for 2016/17 and the appointment would take place at the Annual Council meeting to be held on 17 May 2016 at Southport Town Hall, commencing at 6.00pm

102. MATTERS RAISED BY THE PUBLIC

The Mayor reported that no matters had been raised by Members of the Council.

103. QUESTIONS RAISED BY MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

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

- Councillor Dawson to the Cabinet Member – Regulation, Compliance and Corporate Services (Councillor Lappin); and
- Councillor Dawson to the Cabinet Member - Locality Services (Councillor Fairclough).

together with the responses given. A supplementary question was responded to by the Cabinet Member – Locality Services.

104. SEFTON MENTAL HEALTH : A STRATEGIC PLAN FOR SEFTON 2015-2020

Further to Minute No. 128 of the Cabinet meeting held on 7 April 2016, the Council considered the report of the Head of Adult Social Care on the Sefton Mental Health Strategic Plan for 2015-2020 which provided a framework to develop an overarching action plan for the delivery of the strategy in the context of the Strategic Objectives in the Sefton Health and Wellbeing Strategy and the priorities within the Sefton Carers Strategy 2014 – 2019, Clinical Commissioning Groups Plan for Mental Health in Sefton, Sefton Strategy for Older Citizens 2014 – 2019 and the Children and Young People Joint Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2014-17.

The content of the Strategic Plan as described in the report had been approved by the Cabinet and due to the importance of Mental Health within the Borough, it had been referred to the Council for noting.

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

RESOLVED:

That the Sefton Mental Health Strategic Plan for 2015 - 2020 be noted.

105. MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES 2015/16

No changes to the membership of Committees were made.

106. MOTION SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR KEITH

It was moved by Councillor Keith and seconded by Councillor Hands:

Government proposals to enforce all state schools to become 'Academies' by 2020.

“The Council notes that the present proposals:

- (a) remove the requirement for there to be parent governors, thus taking away the crucial voice of parents in the running of schools and the welfare of their children.
- (b) are undemocratic, since they require schools to become academies without consulting the parents of each school concerned as to whether they would wish their children's schools to have their management arrangements altered in this manner.
- (c) require a transfer of the process of monitoring and funding schools from local authorities from local education authorities to central government which will be remote and unfamiliar with the environment within which local schools operate.

- (d) include an unprecedented land grab by central government in confiscating school land presently owned by councils and churches.

The Council notes the recent remarks by the Chief Inspector of Schools, who was previously an executive principal of an academy, that a number of multi-academy trusts have “manifested the same weaknesses” as the worst-performing local authorities and “offer the same excuses” while paying their Chief Executives monumental salaries as reward for manifest failure.

The Council expresses particular concern at the inability of the proposals to demonstrate an appropriate or adequate means of co-ordinating the provision of Special Needs education within any local area.

The Council instructs the Chief Executive to write on the Council's behalf to the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for Education, with a copy to local MPs representing constituencies within the Borough, expressing the Council's deep reservations about the proposals and requesting that the Government should think again on the matter.”

An **amendment** was moved by Councillor Roche, seconded by Councillor O'Brien that the Motion be amended by the addition of the following text after Paragraph (d):

- “(e) include the ending of the teacher education in Higher and Further education initiating the closure of departments and faculties of education. It will lead to a downgrading of the teaching profession and an assault on the standards of education offered to future generations.”

Councillor Keith indicated that she accepted the amendment and following further debate on the Substantive Motion, it was

RESOLVED:

Government proposals to enforce all state schools to become 'Academies' by 2020.

The Council notes that the present proposals:

- (a) remove the requirement for there to be parent governors, thus taking away the crucial voice of parents in the running of schools and the welfare of their children.
- (b) are undemocratic, since they require schools to become academies without consulting the parents of each school concerned as to whether they would wish their children's schools to have their management arrangements altered in this manner.
- (c) require a transfer of the process of monitoring and funding schools from local authorities from local education authorities to central

government which will be remote and unfamiliar with the environment within which local schools operate.

- (d) include an unprecedented land grab by central government in confiscating school land presently owned by councils and churches.
- (e) include the ending of the teacher education in Higher and Further education initiating the closure of departments and faculties of education. It will lead to a downgrading of the teaching profession and an assault on the standards of education offered to future generations.

The Council notes the recent remarks by the Chief Inspector of Schools, who was previously an executive principal of an academy, that a number of multi-academy trusts have “manifested the same weaknesses” as the worst-performing local authorities and “offer the same excuses” while paying their Chief Executives monumental salaries as reward for manifest failure.

The Council expresses particular concern at the inability of the proposals to demonstrate an appropriate or adequate means of co-ordinating the provision of Special Needs education within any local area.

The Council instructs the Chief Executive to write on the Council's behalf to the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for Education, with a copy to local MPs representing constituencies within the Borough, expressing the Council's deep reservations about the proposals and requesting that the Government should think again on the matter.

107. MOTION SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR WELSH

It was moved by Councillor Welsh and seconded by Councillor Dodd:

“The Council notes the proposal by Arriva Rail North to end the direct rail service between Southport and Manchester Piccadilly and Manchester Airport, leaving the only direct service to Manchester going to Manchester Victoria.

The Council is aware that surveys have revealed that the majority of commuters travelling to Manchester from Southport and Formby use the direct service to Manchester Piccadilly as the Manchester stations on this line (including Deansgate and Oxford Road) are located nearer to their places of work than is Manchester Victoria.

The Council believes that the removal of this service will be detrimental to commuters from the north of the Borough and could discourage people from continuing to live in the Borough as well as discouraging people who work in south central Manchester from choosing to live in the Borough.

The Council also believes that the removal of the direct service to Manchester Airport would be detrimental to the economic interests of the

Borough of Sefton. It will disadvantage the tourism and conference sectors for whom easy links from Manchester Piccadilly and Manchester Airport are a vital competitive asset. It will also disadvantage businesses in target sectors such as digital technology. Direct access to Manchester universities and the Airport are essential for the development of these businesses.

The Council therefore instructs the Chief Executive to write on the Council's behalf to Arriva Rail North, Liverpool City Region Combined Authority, Transport for Greater Manchester, Rail North and Department for Transport, with a copy to local MPs representing constituencies within the Borough strongly urging that these proposals are reconsidered."

An **amendment** was moved by Councillor Friel and seconded by Councillor Maher that the Motion be amended as follows:

In the first paragraph after the words "notes the", add the following text:

"investment that sees the removal of the awful Pacers and improved passenger facilities. However, spoiling this is the"

After the third Paragraph: Add the following new Paragraph:

"The Sefton Council's Merseytravel Committee Spokesperson put this directly to the Arriva Rail North Managing Director at their meeting held on 7 April 2016, supporting the case for the retention of the Oxford Road and Piccadilly stops."

After the fourth Paragraph: Add the following new Paragraph:

"Also, we call on Rail North to push with us for further enhancements on the line including speed enhancements to get the journey from Southport to Manchester under one hour and furthermore, call on the Government to complete business case work on the electrification of the line, as pledged by Andrew Jones MP, when he chaired the All -Party North of England Electrification Task Force, pointing out that he is now the responsible Minister in the Department for Transport for this."

In the fifth Paragraph: after the word "reconsidered" at the end of the paragraph, add the words "as above".

Councillor Welsh indicated that she accepted the amendment and following further debate on the Substantive Motion, it was

RESOLVED:

"The Council notes the investment that sees the removal of the awful Pacers and improved passenger facilities. However, spoiling this is the proposal by Arriva Rail North to end the direct rail service between Southport and Manchester Piccadilly and Manchester Airport, leaving the only direct service to Manchester going to Manchester Victoria.

The Council is aware that surveys have revealed that the majority of commuters travelling to Manchester from Southport and Formby use the direct service to Manchester Piccadilly as the Manchester stations on this line (including Deansgate and Oxford Road) are located nearer to their places of work than is Manchester Victoria.

The Council believes that the removal of this service will be detrimental to commuters from the north of the Borough and could discourage people from continuing to live in the Borough as well as discouraging people who work in south central Manchester from choosing to live in the Borough.

The Sefton Council's Merseytravel Committee Spokesperson put this directly to the Arriva Rail North Managing Director at their meeting held on 7 April 2016, supporting the case for the retention of the Oxford Road and Piccadilly stops.

The Council also believes that the removal of the direct service to Manchester Airport would be detrimental to the economic interests of the Borough of Sefton. It will disadvantage the tourism and conference sectors for whom easy links from Manchester Piccadilly and Manchester Airport are a vital competitive asset. It will also disadvantage businesses in target sectors such as digital technology. Direct access to Manchester universities and the Airport are essential for the development of these businesses.

Also, we call on Rail North to push with us for further enhancements on the line including speed enhancements to get the journey from Southport to Manchester under one hour and furthermore, call on the Government to complete business case work on the electrification of the line, as pledged by Andrew Jones MP, when he chaired the All -Party North of England Electrification Task Force, pointing out that he is now the responsible Minister in the Department for Transport for this.

The Council therefore instructs the Chief Executive to write on the Council's behalf to Arriva Rail North, Liverpool City Region Combined Authority, Transport for Greater Manchester, Rail North and the Department for Transport, with a copy to the local MPs representing constituencies within the Borough strongly urging that these proposals are reconsidered as above."

108. MOTION SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR KILLEN

It was moved by Councillor Killen and seconded by Councillor Burns and

RESOLVED:

The Council calls on the Government to make fair transitional arrangements for all women born on or after 6th April 1951 who have unfairly borne the burden of the increase to the State Pension Age (SPA).

Hundreds of thousands of women had significant pension changes imposed on them by the Pensions Acts of 1995 and 2011 but were not notified of the changes until relatively recently. Some women were not notified until two years ago of a six-year increase in pension age. Women born in the 1950s are bearing a disproportionate cost of Conservative plans to reduce state spending.

Many women born in the 1950s are living in hardship. Retirement plans have been shattered with devastating consequences. Many of these women are caring for elderly relatives, providing childcare for grandchildren, or suffer discrimination in the workplace so struggle to find employment. Women born in this decade are suffering financially due to the Tories' ideological drive to reduce the cost of the state. These women have worked hard, raised families and paid their tax and national insurance with the expectation that they would be financially secure after finishing work. It is not the pension age itself that is disputed - it is widely accepted that women and men should retire at the same time. The issue is that the rise in the women's state pension age has been too rapid and has happened without sufficient notice being given to the women affected.

The Council calls upon the Government to reconsider transitional arrangements for women born after 1951 so that women do not live in hardship due to pension changes they were not told about until it was too late to make alternative arrangements.

109. MOTION SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR MCKINLEY

It was moved by Councillor McKinley and seconded by Councillor Gatherer:

“Sefton Council calls on the Government to do all in its power to prevent loss of revenue to the UK through illegal tax evasion and highlight the immoral nature of aggressive tax avoidance schemes that are a drain on our national resource. Measures should include closing tax loopholes wherever possible and working toward preventing Crown Dependencies and overseas territories from acting as ‘offshore tax havens.’ ”

Following debate and in accordance with Rule 93 in 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 Ashton, Atkinson, Maria Bennett, Booth, Bradshaw, Burns, Byrom, Carr, Carragher, Cluskey, Cummins, Dams, Dawson, Dodd, Fairclough, Lord Fearn, Maureen Fearn, Friel, Gatherer, Grace, Hale, Hands, Hardy, Keith, John Kelly, John Joseph Kelly, Killen, Lappin, Daniel Lewis, Dan T. Lewis, Maher, McGinnity, McGuire, McKinley, Moncur, Murphy, O'Brien, Owens, Page, Robinson, Roche, Shaw, Spencer, Thompson, Tweed, Veidman, Weavers, Welsh and The Mayor (Councillor Kermodé).

AGAINST THE MOTION:

None.

ABSTENTIONS:

None.

The Mayor declare that the Motion was carried by 49 votes to none and it was

RESOLVED:

Sefton Council calls on the Government to do all in its power to prevent loss of revenue to the UK through illegal tax evasion and highlight the immoral nature of aggressive tax avoidance schemes that are a drain on our national resource. Measures should include closing tax loopholes wherever possible and working toward preventing Crown Dependencies and overseas territories from acting as 'offshore tax havens.