

COUNCIL

**EXTRAORDINARY MEETING HELD AT THE TOWN HALL, BOOTLE
ON THURSDAY 16TH JUNE, 2016**

PRESENT: The Mayor (Councillor Brodie - Browne) in the Chair
The Deputy Chair (Councillor Kevin Cluskey) Vice
Chair

Councillors Ashton, Atkinson, David Barton,
Jo Barton, Bennett, Bliss, Bradshaw, Brennan,
Burns, Byrom, Carragher, Linda Cluskey, Cummins,
Dams, Dawson, Dodd, Dutton, Fairclough, Friel,
Gannon, Grace, Hands, Hardy, Jamieson, Keith,
John Kelly, John Joseph Kelly, Lappin,
Dan T. Lewis, Maher, McCann, McGinnity, McGuire,
McKinley, Moncur, Murphy, Brenda O'Brien,
Michael O'Brien, O'Hanlon, Owens, Page, Pullin,
Pitt, Preece, Robinson, Roche, Roscoe, Sayers,
Shaw, Spencer, Thomas, Anne Thompson,
Lynne Thompson, Veidman, Weavers, Webster,
Bill Welsh and Marianne Welsh

19. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Ball, Booth, Carr,
Jones, Daniel Lewis and Tweed.

20. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of any disclosable pecuniary interest were received.

21. MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS

Death of Jo Cox MP and Citizens in Orlando USA

The Mayor reported on the tragic incident earlier that day when Jo Cox MP
had been shot and killed in Birstall, West Yorkshire.

The Mayor also referred to the incident where a gunman had killed 49
people and injured many other people in a nightclub in Orlando, USA on
12 June 2016 and he indicated that the Sefton flags had been flown at
half-mast on the Town Hall buildings as a mark of respect.

The Council then stood in silence for one minute as a mark of respect for
Jo Cox MP and the citizens of Orlando, USA.

Retirement of Margaret Rawding, Chief Finance Officer

The Mayor reported that this is would be the last Council meeting that Margaret Rawding, the Chief Finance Officer would be attending prior to her retirement on 21 June 2016 after 34 years' service in local government.

He indicated that Margaret had joined the Council in 2011 and she had been a valuable member of the Senior Management Team. She had assisted Members through some very difficult challenges and he knew that they were all very grateful for her endeavour and support.

On behalf of the Council, The Mayor extended best wishes to Margaret for a very happy and healthy retirement.

22. PUBLICATION OF PROPOSED MODIFICATIONS TO THE SEFTON LOCAL PLAN

Further to Minute No. 7 of the Cabinet meeting held on 26 May 2016, the Council considered the report of the Chief Executive which provided details of the key issues arising from the receipt of the Inspector's Initial Findings on the Local Plan, and sought approval to publish the proposed Modifications for 6 weeks consultation, alongside the Sustainability Appraisal and the Habitats Regulations Assessment of the Local Plan (Modifications). Any comments received would be submitted to the Inspector following the conclusion of the consultation period.

The Mayor reported that following the postponement of this Council meeting by one week, the details of the six week consultation period referred to in Paragraph 4.1 of the report were incorrect and they should be amended to read from "22June to 3 August 2016."

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

That:

- (1) the key issues arising from the Inspector's Initial Findings be noted;
- (2) the Inspector's Initial Findings be accepted as the basis for preparing Modifications to the Local Plan;
- (3) approval be given to the publication of the Modifications (both Main and Additional Modifications) for comment, alongside the Sustainability Appraisal and the Habitats Regulations Assessment of the Local Plan (Modifications);
- (4) the Chief Planning Officer be granted delegated powers in consultation with the Cabinet Member - Planning and Building Control, to make minor editorial changes and any changes required by the Planning Inspectorate or as a result of changes to Government guidance to the Modifications before they are published;

- (5) following the end of the consultation period, approval be given to the submission of the proposed Modifications to the Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State to examine the Sefton Local Plan, together with all comments received; and
- (6) the planning policy context relating to the Government decision to close HMP Kennett, referred to in Paragraph 5 of the report be noted.

The Leader of the Council (Councillor Maher) indicated that:

- The Inspector had overwhelmingly supported the Local Plan in all key respects, and his main findings were outlined in section 2 of the report.
- Councillor Tweed had submitted a Motion to the Council meeting held on 1 September 2011 raising concerns over the negative effect that the National Planning Policy Framework would have on the Planning decision making processes and lead to development on greenbelt and green space at an increased rate, to the extent that would be unacceptable to the people of Sefton. The Motion had been carried by 24 votes to 19 at the Council meeting.
- As the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Tourism, he had requested the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regeneration and Environmental Services) to undertake a scrutiny review on the infrastructure issues arising from the preparation of the Local Plan and the Infrastructure Working Group chaired by an Opposition Member had submitted a detailed report, which was approved at the Cabinet meeting held on 15 January 2015. The Labour Group would ensure that the recommendations in that report are robustly implemented.
- The implications of the proposed closure of HMP Kennett in July 2017 had been examined by officers and at this stage it is considered that no further action is required in relation to that site within the Local Plan.

The Leader of the Council referred to allegations made by FRAG that the Labour Group had agreed to additional green field development within the Local Plan and stated that it was simply not true. The Inspector had considered the proposal put forward by the Council that the Local Plan should be the subject of an early review, due to the publication of the 2012-based household projections by the Department for Communities and Local Government in February 2016 and whilst he had marginally increased the housing requirement in Sefton during the plan period from 615 to 640 each year, he did 'not believe that other factors warrant a further increase of this figure'.

The Leader of the Council also indicated that the Labour Group do not support Shale Gas Fracking.

At this point, it was moved by Councillor Bennett and seconded by Councillor Gannon:

“That the decision on the recommendations set out in the report be adjourned until after the outcome of the European Referendum is known.”

Thereafter, on a show of hands, the Mayor declared that the procedural Motion was **lost** by 41 votes to 4 with 15 abstentions.

The debate on the original Motion commenced and a number of Councillors expressed concern that the Inspector’s Initial Findings had:

- not addressed the concerns raised by members of the local community about housing developments taking place on greenfield sites, the amount of economic development, the erosion of sites and the impact of developments on town centre accommodation;
- not deleted the proposed Moss Lane development site from the Local Plan;
- not deleted the proposed Ainsdale Playing Fields development site from the Local Plan; and
- not addressed the concerns raised by members of the local community about the disproportionate amount of housing development proposed to take place in Lydiate.

A number of Councillors made the following comments:

- the Cabinet Member – Planning and Building Control, Planning Officers and Inspector be thanked for all their hard work during the Local Plan Examination Hearings;
- Maghull Town Council had conducted a survey of local residents in connection with the Local Plan and commenced the process of implementing a Neighbourhood Plan for Maghull.
- The Labour Group does not support any further development on green field sites.
- The Infrastructure Working Group recommendations approved by the Cabinet on 15 January 2015 would be robustly implemented by the Labour Group.
- the Motion submitted by Councillor Tweed and approved at the Council meeting held on 1 September 2011 relating to the National Planning Policy Framework had not been supported by Opposition Members at that Council meeting.

- A number of FRAG supporters live on housing estates which were previously green field sites and do not want to see new houses being built with good facilities and services for the local community.
- The Inspector's key findings set out in the report indicate that he is likely to find the Sefton Local Plan sound (paragraph 2.2); that the Council was right to choose the 'meeting identified needs' strategy (paragraph 2.4) and the selection of housing allocations and safeguarded land had been rigorous, objective and robust (paragraph 2.5).
- No one wants to see development on green belt land but new housing allocations are required. Any infrastructure concerns would be dealt with robustly and all planning applications for new developments would still be dealt with through the planning process where we have checks and balances in place.
- We need to ensure that low cost starter homes are provided by developers.

Following a lengthy debate, on a show of hands, the Mayor declared that the Motion was carried by 39 votes to 17 with 2 abstentions and it was

RESOLVED:

That:

- (1) the key issues arising from the Inspector's Initial Findings be noted;
- (2) the Inspector's Initial Findings be accepted as the basis for preparing Modifications to the Local Plan;
- (3) approval be given to the publication of the Modifications (both Main and Additional Modifications) for comment, alongside the Sustainability Appraisal and the Habitats Regulations Assessment of the Local Plan (Modifications);
- (4) the Chief Planning Officer be granted delegated powers in consultation with the Cabinet Member - Planning and Building Control, to make minor editorial changes and any changes required by the Planning Inspectorate or as a result of changes to Government guidance to the Modifications before they are published;
- (5) following the end of the consultation period, approval be given to the submission of the proposed Modifications to the Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State to examine the Sefton Local Plan, together with all comments received; and
- (6) the planning policy context relating to the Government decision to close HMP Kennett, referred to in Paragraph 5 of the report be noted.

