

MINUTES OF COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS

At a Meeting of the Council for the Borough of Slough held at the Council Chamber - Observatory House, 25 Windsor Road, SL1 2EL on Thursday, 25th April, 2024 at 7.00 pm

Present:- The Worshipful the Mayor (Councillor Abbasi), in the chair; Councillors E. Ahmed, I. Ahmed, Akram, Anderson, Bedi, Carter, Chahal, Dar, Dauti, Dhillon, Escott, Gahir, Gill (until 8.24pm), Hulme, Iftakhar, Instone, Kelly (from 7.33pm), Khawar, Manku, Mann, Matloob, Mohammad, Mohindra, Muvvala, Nazir, O'Kelly, D. Parmar, Rana, W. Sabah, Satti, Shah, Shaik, Smith, Stedmond, Tomar, Wright and Zarait

Apologies for Absence:- Councillors Ajaib, Naveed and J. Sabah

61. Declarations of Interest

None received.

62. To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the Council held on 25th January 2024 and 7th March 2024

Resolved – That the minutes of the meetings held on 25th January 2024 and 7th March 2024 be approved as a correct record.

63. To receive the Mayor's Communications.

Will Tuckley, Interim Chief Executive, was welcomed to the meeting.

The Mayor informed Members that he had had a busy Mayoral year from attending community engagements, visiting schools, opening businesses, meeting the amazing volunteers in Slough and hosting 24 British Citizenship Ceremonies, welcoming approximately 1200 new citizens to Slough.

The Mayor thanked his Iman and Chaplain for their support with prayers at the start of each meeting. Recognition and thanks was also given to all staff involved in facilitating council meetings and the Mayor's Executive Assistant for providing support in the Mayor's office. Councillors from all parties were also thanked for their guidance and support to the Mayor in his first year as a Councillor.

The Mayor placed on record his thanks and best wishes to the outgoing Monitoring Officer, Stephen Taylor, for his guidance and support which had been invaluable to him during his term as Mayor.

64. Questions from Electors under Procedure Rule 9.

Three elector questions had been received. Two electors were present and asked supplementary questions. Written replies would be sent to the electors.

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65. Recommendation of the Cabinet from its meetings held on 15th April 2024

It was moved by Councillor Smith,
Seconded by Councillor Chahal,

“That the Council’s current performance and mitigating actions as measured by the key performance indicators within the corporate management information report and scorecard be noted.”

The recommendation was put to the vote and agreed with 36 votes for and 1 abstention.

Resolved - That the Council’s current performance and mitigating actions as measured by the key performance indicators within the corporate management information report and scorecard be noted.

66. Recommendation of the Employment Committee from its meeting held on 16th April 2024

It was moved by Councillor Zarait,
Seconded by Councillor Smith,

- a) “That the appointment of Will Tuckley as interim Head of Paid Service with effect from 15 April 2024 be noted
- b) That the appointment of Christopher Holme as interim Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services – S151 Officer for the period 26 April 2024 to the 6 May 2024 be noted.
- c) That the appointment of Annabel Scholes as interim Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services – S151 Officer with effect from 7 May 2024 be noted.
- d) That the updated organisation chart at Appendix A, together with revisions to Article 12 of the Constitution and the Scheme of Delegation at Appendix B be approved.
- e) That the designation of the statutory post of Returning Officer, Acting Returning Officer, Local Returning Officer, and Electoral Registration Officer to the role of Monitoring Officer be approved.
- f) Authorise the Monitoring Officer be authorised to update the Constitution, as necessary.”

The recommendations were put to the vote and agreed with 37 votes for and 1 abstention.

Resolved -

- a) That the appointment of Will Tuckley as interim Head of Paid Service with effect from 15 April 2024 be noted

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- b) That the appointment of Christopher Holme as interim Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services – S151 Officer for the period 26 April 2024 to the 6 May 2024 be noted.
- c) That the appointment of Annabel Scholes as interim Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services – S151 Officer with effect from 7 May 2024 be noted.
- d) That the updated organisation chart at Appendix A, together with revisions to Article 12 of the Constitution and the Scheme of Delegation at Appendix B be approved.
- e) That the designation of the statutory post of Returning Officer, Acting Returning Officer, Local Returning Officer, and Electoral Registration Officer to the role of Monitoring Officer be approved.
- f) Authorise the Monitoring Officer be authorised to update the Constitution, as necessary.

67. Review of the Membership of SACRE

It was moved by Councillor Smith,
Seconded by Councillor Chahal,

“That having regard to the views of SACRE, the terms of reference of SACRE not be amended at this time but that SACRE be asked to review the membership of SACRE during the 2024/25 Municipal Year.”

The recommendation was put to the vote and agreed with 37 votes for and 1 abstention.

Resolved - That having regard to the views of SACRE, the terms of reference of SACRE not be amended at this time but that SACRE be asked to review the membership of SACRE during the 2024/25 Municipal Year.

68. Quarterly Update on Urgent Key Decisions

It was moved by Councillor Smith,
Seconded by Councillor Chahal,

“That the use of special urgency provisions used for key decisions as set out in Appendix 1 of the report be noted.”

The recommendation was put to the vote and agreed with 37 votes for and 1 abstention.

Resolved - That the use of special urgency provisions used for key decisions as set out in Appendix 1 of the report be noted.

69. Calendar of Meetings 2024/2025

It was moved by Councillor Smith,
Seconded by Councillor Chahal,

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- a) "That the Annual Calendar of Meetings for the period May 2024 to May 2025, as set out in Appendix A of this report, be approved.
- b) That the Director of Law and Governance (Monitoring Officer) be authorised to make amendments to the Calendar throughout the year, including from those resulting from any constitutional changes that may be agreed, in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution."

The recommendations were put to the vote and agreed with 37 votes for and 1 abstention.

Resolved -

- a) That the Annual Calendar of Meetings for the period May 2024 to May 2025, as set out in Appendix A of this report, be approved.
- b) That the Director of Law and Governance (Monitoring Officer) be authorised to make amendments to the Calendar throughout the year, including from those resulting from any constitutional changes that may be agreed, in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution.

70. To consider Motions submitted under procedure Rule 14.

A) Local Rivers and Waterways

It was moved by Councillor O'Kelly
Seconded by Councillor Smith,

"According to data from the environment agency Slough Waste Water Treatment Works released untreated sewage 32 times in 2023 - lasting a total of 363 hours. 2024 is on track to have the same or worse levels of sewage discharges. In 2020 there were no recorded discharges in Slough.

This motion is designed to help protect our local rivers and waterways by considering and addressing the cumulative impact of sewage discharge.

This Council resolves to:

1. Recognise this Council's wish to protect its residents, rivers and waterways from harm caused by the cumulative effects of excessive sewage discharge.
2. Recognise that deterioration of water quality occurs due to the cumulative impact of multiple sewage discharge events, or "sewage overload".
3. The Local Planning Authority will engage with the Local Water Company as part of the development of the Local Plan to ensure they are made aware of the potential scale of development they will need to mitigate for in the future.
4. Request the Chair of the Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee to invite a senior representative of Thames Water, the Environment Agency,

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and volunteer waterways representatives to attend a meeting to explore the current state of sewage discharge and its impact on the environment.”

The motion was put to the vote and agreed with 37 votes for and 1 abstention.

Resolved -

According to data from the environment agency Slough Waste Water Treatment Works released untreated sewage 32 times in 2023 - lasting a total of 363 hours. 2024 is on track to have the same or worse levels of sewage discharges. In 2020 there were no recorded discharges in Slough.

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2. Recognise that deterioration of water quality occurs due to the cumulative impact of multiple sewage discharge events, or "sewage overload".
3. The Local Planning Authority will engage with the Local Water Company as part of the development of the Local Plan to ensure they are made aware of the potential scale of development they will need to mitigate for in the future.
4. Request the Chair of the Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee to invite a senior representative of Thames Water, the Environment Agency, and volunteer waterways representatives to attend a meeting to explore the current state of sewage discharge and its impact on the environment.

B) Arms Sales and Councils Ethical Investment Policy

It was moved by Councillor Mann,
Seconded by Councillor Hulme,

“The Council notes;

- a) The ongoing devastation and humanitarian crisis resulting from the ongoing war in Gaza;
- b) The ruling of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) on 26 January 2024, which found that it is ‘plausible’ that Israel’s ongoing attacks in Gaza are in breach of the Genocide Convention;
- c) The appalling attack on a registered aid convoy, operated by World Central Kitchen, which caused the death of seven aid workers, including three British civilians;
- d) That whilst other governments have banned the sale of weaponry to Israel, the Conservative Government continues to permit such exports and has repeatedly failed to stop selling arms to rule breaking regimes;

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- e) UK law provides for the suspension and halting of arms sales where there is a risk of breaking international law over a plausible risk of genocide;
- f) That over half a billion pounds of council pension funds across the country have been invested in companies involved in the arms trade.

As such, the Council resolves to;

- a) Instruct the Leader of the Council to write to the Foreign Secretary making it clear that the will of Slough's residents is behind an immediate ceasefire;
- b) Lobby the foreign secretary demanding full transparency in respect to the legal advice received over the legality of ongoing arms exports to Israel;
- c) Should the legal advice show that the UK is risking its international obligations by continuing to export weaponry to Israel, to immediately halt doing so;
- d) Call on the Conservative Government to support the ICJ's provisional findings;
- e) Continue calling for an immediate return of all hostages;
- f) Take steps to ensure that none of Slough's pension investments are made in UK defence manufacturers, by reviewing and adopting a new responsible investment policy that meets a high ethical framework and dis-invests in any company that derives more than 20% of their revenue from weaponry."

The motion was put to the vote and agreed unanimously.

Resolved -

The Council notes;

- a) The ongoing devastation and humanitarian crisis resulting from the ongoing war in Gaza;
- b) The ruling of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) on 26 January 2024, which found that it is 'plausible' that Israel's ongoing attacks in Gaza are in breach of the Genocide Convention;
- c) The appalling attack on a registered aid convoy, operated by World Central Kitchen, which caused the death of seven aid workers, including three British civilians;
- d) That whilst other governments have banned the sale of weaponry to Israel, the Conservative Government continues to permit such exports and has repeatedly failed to stop selling arms to rule breaking regimes;
- e) UK law provides for the suspension and halting of arms sales where there is a risk of breaking international law over a plausible risk of genocide;
- f) That over half a billion pounds of council pension funds across the country have been invested in companies involved in the arms trade.

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- b) Lobby the foreign secretary demanding full transparency in respect to the legal advice received over the legality of ongoing arms exports to Israel;
- c) Should the legal advice show that the UK is risking its international obligations by continuing to export weaponry to Israel, to immediately halt doing so;
- d) Call on the Conservative Government to support the ICJ's provisional findings;
- e) Continue calling for an immediate return of all hostages;
- f) Take steps to ensure that none of Slough's pension investments are made in UK defence manufacturers, by reviewing and adopting a new responsible investment policy that meets a high ethical framework and dis-invests in any company that derives more than 20% of their revenue from weaponry.

71. To note Questions from Members under Procedure Rule 10.

Member questions received and replies to them, as published in the supplementary agenda, were noted.

Chair

(Note: The Meeting opened at 7.00 pm and closed at 8.48 pm)