

CITY COUNCIL – SPECIAL MEETING

TUESDAY 25 JUNE 2019 AT 6.45 PM

PRESENT: The Mayor (Councillor Mrs Bowman), Councillors Alcroft, Allison, Mrs Atkinson, Bainbridge, Betton, Birks, Bomford, Mrs Bradley, Brown, Christian, Collier, Dr Davison, Denholm, Ellis, Ms Ellis-Williams, Mrs Finlayson, Mrs Glendinning, Glover, Higgs, Mrs McKerrell, McNulty, Mrs Mallinson, Mallinson (J), Mitchelson, Morton, Nedved, Patrick, Robinson, Robson, Rodgerson, Shepherd, Miss Sherriff, Southward, Tarbitt, Dr Tickner and Tinnion

ALSO

PRESENT: Town Clerk and Chief Executive
Corporate Director of Governance and Regulatory Services

C.93/19 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Meller and Paton.

C.94/19 PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED – That the Agenda be agreed as circulated.

C.95/19 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Glover noted that an element of The Sands Centre Redevelopment Project (submission of the 'S73' planning application for 'events' temporary facilities) had yet to be considered by the Council's Development Control Committee. He sought guidance, on behalf of Members of that Committee, as to how they should approach the matter.

In response, the Corporate Director of Governance and Regulatory Services explained the law regarding predisposition/predetermination in respect of planning matters and the necessity for Development Control Committee Members to retain an open mind in order that they were able to properly exercise their discretion when the matter came before them for decision; it was perfectly acceptable to have a predisposition as opposed to a predetermination.

Each Member must come to a view on that aspect.

Councillor Tinnion declared an interest in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct in respect of The Sands Centre Redevelopment Project. The interest related to the fact that Councillor Tinnion is Chairman of the Development Control Committee and he would not therefore take part in voting on the matter tonight.

C.96/19 ANNOUNCEMENTS

(i) The Mayor

The Mayor extended a very warm welcome to Councillors Mrs Atkinson, Mrs Bradley, Dr Davison, Denholm, Robinson, Rodgerson and Tarbitt on the occasion of their first City Council meeting.

(ii) The Leader of the Council

The Leader echoed The Mayor's sentiments and congratulated the new Members upon their election to this Council.

The Leader indicated that he had two announcements:

Firstly, following the Climate Change Motion passed by the Council earlier in the year and the Conservative administration's commitment to that agenda, he was pleased to announce that he had asked Councillor Christian (Environment and Transport Portfolio Holder) to form a Member Working Group to further that agenda.

Membership of the Working Group would be drawn from across the Council and Members would shortly be asked for expressions of interest. Should the Working Group be oversubscribed the Group Leaders would be asked for nominations.

Secondly, the Leader moved changes to membership of the undernoted Committees / Panels:

1. Business and Transformation Scrutiny Panel

Councillor Robson to replace Councillor Mrs Bowman (as a full Member)

2. Economic Growth Scrutiny Panel

Councillor Mrs Bowman to replace Councillor Robson (as a full Member)

Councillor Mrs Atkinson to replace Councillor Birks (as a full Member)

3. Audit Committee

Councillor Dr Tickner to replace Councillor Brown (as a full Member)

4. Development Control Committee

Councillor Rodgerson to replace Councillor Mrs Atkinson (as a full Member)

Councillor Glover to replace Councillor Rodgerson (as a substitute Member)

RESOLVED – That the changes to Membership on the above Committees / Panels be noted and agreed.

(iii) Members of the Executive

There were no announcements from Members of the Executive.

(iv) Town Clerk and Chief Executive

There were no announcements from the Town Clerk and Chief Executive.

C.97/19 THE SANDS CENTRE REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT

Councillor Tinnion, having declared an interest, took no part in voting on this item of business.

Pursuant to Minute EX.47/19, there was submitted report of the Deputy Chief Executive (CS.17/19), the purpose of which was for Council to consider the comments, advice and recommendations put forward by the Executive (10 June 2019) concerning the development of The Sands Centre Redevelopment Project. Those Executive recommendations were made in the light of the Scrutiny Panel meetings held on 6 June 2019. The Report would enable the Council to determine an appropriate future course of action for this major project.

Extracts from the Minutes of the Executive, the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Panel (HWSP.38/19) and the Business and Transformation Scrutiny Panel (BTSP.49/19) alluded to above were also submitted.

In view of the work undertaken by Members across the Council, Councillor Mallinson (J) (Leader) extended an invitation to Councillor Glover (Leader of the Opposition) to second the proposals.

Councillor Glover replied that he would be pleased so to do.

Councillor Mallinson (J) rose to present the final report on The Sands Centre Redevelopment Project (CS.17/19) which provided a full account of the design and development process of that major project.

In so doing Councillor Mallinson (J) provided a detailed overview of the redevelopment which had been a long-term aspiration of the City Council, and which would provide modern, attractive and efficient sport and leisure facilities for our residents and visitors. He summarised for Members the health and wellbeing opportunities; financial arrangements; design features; the range of challenges which had arisen and been overcome; together with the consideration afforded to the matter by Scrutiny Panel Members and the Executive.

Councillor Mallinson (J) expressed thanks to the Deputy Chief Executive and the Project Team who had worked so hard to bring the proposal to the point where Council could make a well-informed decision. He also thanked Members who had contributed in any way to the project.

The City Council then debated the matter. A number of concerns/observations were raised by Members during the debate, including and in relation to the removal of the climbing wall from the centre; financial implications / uncertainty / running costs; the limited contribution to City Centre footfall; the lack of clarity regarding the NHS contribution; the potential for further delays; the 'do nothing option'; the redevelopment of a site prone to flooding, potential for future flooding events, associated costs and displacement of water elsewhere; the public engagement / consultation undertaken; availability of car parking for users; disappointment that a 50m pool would not be provided; and that every effort is made to keep disruption caused by the temporary leisure facilities at Newman School to a minimum.

A number of guarantees to be taken on board during the project were also sought.

Having spoken to Officers and given consideration to the documentation presented, other Members were reassured and excited by the redevelopment project.

Councillor Mallinson (J) responded to some of the issues raised, before moving the recommendations set out in the report.

Councillor Glover seconded the recommendations.

Councillor Glover further wished to place on record appreciation to the Deputy Chief Executive, Officers and the entire Project Team for their diligence which had ensured that the democratic / consultation processes were undertaken comprehensively. He also thanked the Scrutiny Panels for their thorough scrutiny of this transformational project.

Following voting it was:

RESOLVED – That the City Council:

- (a) Approved the redevelopment of the Sands Centre (including any temporary arrangements), including funding thereof, as detailed in Report CS.17/19, and for the avoidance of doubt this included the release of any relevant funds from Council budgets and reserves.
- (b) Approved the re-profiling and increasing of the capital budget to £25.5 million as set out in Section 3 of the report.

Councillors Allison and Davison abstained from voting.

C.98/19 COMMUNICATIONS

There were no communications or items of business brought forward by the Mayor as a matter of urgency to be dealt with at the meeting.

[The meeting ended at 7.30 pm]