

COUNCIL

Date and Time: Thursday 25 April 2024 at 7.00 pm

Place: Council Chamber

Present:

COUNCILLORS -

Wildsmith (Chairman)

Smith	Davies	Oliver
Axam	Delaney	Quarterman
Bailey	Dorn	Radley
Blewett	Farmer	Southern
Butcher	Forster	Thomas
Butler	Hale	Vernon
Clarke	Harward	Woods
Coburn	Kennett	Worlock
Collins	Makepeace-Browne	
Crampton	Neighbour	

Officers Present:

Daryl Phillips - Chief Executive

Emma Evans - Committee and Member Services Officer

Kathy Long – Committee and Member Services Officer

The Chairman announced that a former Chief Executive of HDC Grahame Jelbart had passed away.

The Chairman made a personal statement explaining that he would leave the meeting once the formal business was concluded.

75 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Two points of accuracy had been submitted.

Cllr Smith had advised that the Minutes should be amended to reflect the Chairman of the meeting.

Cllr Quarterman had advised that under Minute 68, an announcement had been omitted and that the minute should be amended as follows:

‘The Portfolio Holder for Climate Change and Corporate Services, Councillor Quarterman informed Members that:

The waste vehicle fleet was being converted to run on Hydrogenated Vegetable Oil, which delivered a 96% reduction in fuel carbon emissions. An allocation of £35,000 had been agreed by Cabinet and was contained in the budget papers.

Regarding provision for the conversion of the boilers in the three largest and costliest buildings to heat, the Hart and Frogmore Leisure Centres and the Civic Offices were currently estimated to cost £2.25 million. An application for a grant under the next phase of the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme would be made. This would aim to reclaim 75% of the total costs of the projects, and reserves had been earmarked to cover the remaining costs. This included the work currently underway to assess the proposal for solar panels in the leisure centre car park. Council was urged to support the budget in relation to Climate Change.'

The amended Minutes of the meeting of 22 February 2024 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

76 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Cockarill. Councillors Hale and Woods would be arriving late.

77 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations made.

78 COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 12 - QUESTIONS BY THE PUBLIC

No questions received.

79 COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 14 - QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS

No questions received.

80 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman thanked the following Members, who were standing down from the Council, for their commitment and wished them well:

Councillor Blewitt having served for 35 years.
Councillor Kennett having served for 16 years.
Councillor Butcher having served for 3 years.

The Chairman also thanked Councillor Engström for her time on the Council and wished her well having resigned due to ill health.

Members were advised that there would be an opportunity for all to speak after the formal business had been concluded.

The Chairman announced that the Vice-Chairman had attended the recent North East Hants Civic Day on his behalf.

Post meeting Note:

The Chairman's engagements since the last meeting were:

2 March: Mayor of Basingstoke's Spring Charity Concert

19 April: Visit to Heatherside Junior School with Cllrs Butcher and Davies

81 CABINET MEMBERS' ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councillors Hale and Woods arrived at 19.06.

The Leader of the Council, and Portfolio Holder for Strategic Direction, and Partnerships, Councillor Neighbour announced that 2024 marked the 50th anniversary of Hart District Council creation in 1974. A 50th anniversary stencil has been added to the Civic Office entrance and officers were using a 50th anniversary Teams background.

The Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Finance, Councillor Radley had nothing to report.

The Portfolio Holder for Communities, Councillor Bailey reported that:

- The Domestic Abuse provision has been mobilised. The 'support and navigation service' was jointly grant-funded with Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council. Two team members had started (employed by You Trust), the teams had established referral arrangements, and the specialist workers were already working with some Hart residents. They have also booked in training on specialist topics such as Stalking.
- A member of the Disabled Facilities Grant team had qualified as a Trusted Assessor. This meant that residents applying for less complex adaptations using the disabled facilities grants scheme would receive a speedier response from the in-house team. They could carry out some of the assessments previously requiring a visit from a Hampshire County Council Occupational Therapist. This model would act as a pilot across Hampshire.

The Portfolio Holder for Digital and Communications, Councillor Clarke had nothing to report.

The Portfolio Holder for Planning Policy and Place, Councillor Cockarill had not submitted a report in his absence.

The Portfolio Holder for Regulatory, Councillor Collins had nothing to report.

The Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Development Management, Councillor Oliver urged Members to read the latest copy of the Community Safety newsletter which featured training on Community-In-Motion. The training was offered to Councillors and community members in how to challenge and act on witnessing domestic abuse or violence in a safe manner. The first training session was planned for 21 May in the Council Offices. Full details were in the newsletter.

The Portfolio Holder for Climate Change and Corporate Services, Councillor Quarterman announced the following:

- In July 2023, a motion had been passed to investigate the feasibility of a solar voltaic electricity installation and regenerative waste heat recovery plant packaged as a data centre linked to the swimming pool at the Hart Leisure Centre. This had been inspired by a scheme implemented in Exmouth, Devon which attracted significant national media attention.
- Hart had already engaged a consultancy to explore options for reducing carbon emissions from our Leisure Centres, and these consultants had successfully assisted us in securing a grant of £201,500 from the Sport England Swimming Pool Support Fund to install further solar PV on the roof of the Hart Leisure Centre in Fleet. This was estimated to reduce carbon emissions by approximately 27 tonnes per year.
- The consultants had been in dialogue with the providers of the data centre technology provider responsible for the Exmouth installation. Not surprisingly, they had been overrun with enquiries of interest and were prioritising schemes of more significant value, so progress has been slow. Indicative data suggested that a data centre would require additional electricity to run, but that, when implemented, in conjunction with additional solar panels, an overall saving in carbon emissions was possible. However, implementation would require significant additional investment in the electrical infrastructure and potentially further solar that would need to be funded by the Council. The Council was continuing to meet with the technology providers in order to further explore the long-term commercial and environmental benefits of this scheme, which had required the signing of a Non-Disclosure Agreement between the participating companies and would limit the amount of detailed data that could be placed in the public domain. Therefore, the conclusion was that we should press ahead with the significant gains from the solar panels on the roof, while continuing to explore the options for the data centre concept.
- The consultants' report on this had been circulated to the Members who had proposed the motion and is available on request from the Sustainability and Climate Change Officer.

- In April, Cabinet had agreed some changes to the governance arrangements for Butterwood Homes, which included the replacement of the independent Director with one of the Council's Finance Officers. Councillor Quarterman expressed thanks to the outgoing independent Director John Swinney for his support over the last three years and wished him well.
- Phase 2 of the roll out of kerbside collection of Waste Electrical and Electronical Equipment has been completed. This service had now offered to approximately 50% of households in Hart. There have been few problems or complaints, and in the first 10 weeks, 3.4 tonnes of electrical equipment had been collected. Phase 3 would roll out at the end of May, completing during the summer.
- Following the installation of HVO (Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil) tanks in March, 38 vehicles the combined waste fleet had now been converted to run on this low-carbon fuel, which represented about 30% of the Council's collection vehicles.
- There had been a second instance of a fire on a waste collection vehicle. The principal cause of these types of fires was volatile and inflammable material such as batteries or disposable vapes being placed in regular household waste bins. The Waste client team would be working with the communications team to further reinforce this message. Members were urged to remind residents of the importance of not placing batteries or disposable vapes in their household waste.

82 CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chief Executive confirmed that on 2 May 2024 all election ballot boxes would be verified on the night. The District Council ballot papers will be counted on Thursday, 2 May. The Police Crime Commissioner (PCC) ballot papers would be placed in safe storage and counted on Friday, 3 May.

A Member asked if parking arrangements had been made for the new polling station at All Saints Church, Fleet. The Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Development Management confirmed that free parking for electors will be available in Church Road Car Park directly opposite the polling station.

83 MINUTES OF COMMITTEES

The Minutes of the following Committees, which had met on the dates shown, were received by Council.

Meeting	Date
Licensing (draft)	6 February 2024

Planning	14 February 2024
Overview and Scrutiny	20 February 2024
Staffing (draft)	6 March 2024
Cabinet	7 March 2024
Planning	13 March 2024
Overview and Scrutiny	19 March 2024
Audit (draft)	26 March 2024
Cabinet (draft)	4 April 2024
Planning (draft)	10 April 2024

Staffing Committee

Councillor Makepeace-Browne introduced Minute No. 41 the Pay Policy Statement 2024-25.

Proposed: Makepeace-Browne
Seconded: Butler

Decision Minute No. 41

Council unanimously agreed the Pay Policy Statement 2024-25

Planning (10 April)

A Member raised a question about the Minutes. He asked that consideration be given to preparing a Supplementary Planning Document on fire safety in relation to battery storage facilities.

It was agreed that a written response would be provided to Members as this was a matter of public interest.

Cabinet (4 April)

A Member requested the Cabinet Minutes be amended to reflect the attendance of Councillors Butler and Smith.

84 OUTSIDE BODIES - FEEDBACK FROM MEMBERS

Councillor Wildsmith informed Members that the Basingstoke Canal Joint Management Committee had been disbanded. Levy-paying authorities will be invited to one meeting a year but will have no voting rights.

Councillor Dorn explained that he had written to Members reflecting the concerns of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, encouraging them to submit reports on the work undertaken with Outside Bodies this year for inclusion in a report to Cabinet.

Councillor Dorn stated that the application for Silver Status for the Military Covenant had been submitted, and an announcement was expected in June.

The meeting closed at 7.22 pm