

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL
ENVIRONMENT CABINET MEMBER MEETING

4.00PM 3 FEBRUARY 2011

COUNCIL CHAMBER, HOVE TOWN HALL

MINUTES

Present: Councillor G Theobald (Cabinet Member)

Also in attendance: Councillors Mitchell (Opposition Spokesperson, Labour) and West (Opposition Spokesperson)

Other Members present: Councillors Davis, A Norman and K Norman

PART ONE

82. PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

82(a) Declarations of Interests

82a.1 There were none.

82(b) Exclusion of Press and Public

82b.1 In accordance with section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 ("the Act"), the Cabinet Member considered whether the press and public should be excluded from the meeting during an item of business on the grounds that it was likely, in view of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the press and public were present during that item, there would be disclosure to them of confidential information (as defined in section 100A(3) of the Act) or exempt information (as defined in section 100I(1) of the Act).

82b.2 **RESOLVED** - That the press and public be not excluded from the meeting.

83. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

83.1 **RESOLVED** – That the minutes of the Environment Cabinet Member Meeting held on 23 December 2010 be agreed and signed by the Cabinet Member.

84. CABINET MEMBER'S COMMUNICATIONS

84.1 There were none.

85. ITEMS RESERVED FOR DISCUSSION

85.1 **RESOLVED** – That all items be reserved for discussion.

86. PETITIONS**(i) Petition – Central reservation – Brunswick Place**

86.1 Councillor Elgood presented a petition signed by 19 people concerning a dangerous kerb on the central reservation of Brunswick Place and calling for the council to implement better lighting, warning signage or white paint to alleviate the problem.

86.2 Councillor Elgood was unable to attend the meeting.

86.3 **RESOLVED** – That the petition be noted and a written response be provided.

87. PETITIONS DEBATED AT COUNCIL**87A Eco-Friendly Lights for St Ann's Wells Gardens**

87a.1 The Cabinet Member considered a petition referred following a Full Council debate on 16 December 2010 concerning a request for the council to provide financial support and help to install wildlife-friendly lighting along the main paths and entrance of St Ann's Well Gardens to make the park safer at night for. The petition had been signed by 1476 people. The Full Council had recommended that previously identified s106 monies be used to provide the requested lighting.

87a.2 The Cabinet Member advised that, while he appreciated the desire to increase lighting in the park, he was concerned whether it was the best way to proceed. The council was conscious of the need to make improvements to the park, however lighting was not listed in the report from the Green Flag judges, which instead included improvements to the play area, landscape planting, signage, fencing and better user and wildlife monitoring; there was also a need to address the sensory garden and shelter and properly consider safety issues.

The council was committed to reducing its carbon footprint and protecting and enhancing wildlife, and lighting in parks worked against those objectives. In addition, the ongoing costs of energy and maintenance for the lighting could not be funded from the s106 monies and would have to be funded from the council taxpayer; it was necessary to consider whether, in the challenging financial climate, it represented the best use of available money.

The Cabinet Member advised that further work was necessary, including consulting with the Friends Group and other users of the park to assess the options, costs and pros and cons to ensure that the improvements made were the best for the park, the environment and tax payers money. He stated that work would begin in the Spring when more people would be using the park.

87a.3 Councillor Mitchell reported that the request for lighting was put forward by the Friends Group in the work plan for the park, which had been fully costed, including £10,000

identified for the lighting, and drawn up in conjunction with council officers prior to the loss of the Green Flag. She stated that the requested eco-lights took account of the potential effect on wildlife while also providing increased safety for park users.

87a.4 Councillor West suggested that more information was required for the Cabinet Member to make an informed decision and that a report was required.

87a.5 The Cabinet Member stated that the s106 monies was not specifically allocated to use on lighting. He added that low lighting, which was preferable for the wildlife, could create a false sense of security for park users.

87a.6 The Head of City Infrastructure explained that management plans were in place for all city parks and that actions had to be prioritised according to Green Flag reports. Discussions would take place with park users in the Spring to determine how the s106 should be spent.

87a.7 Councillor Mitchell stated that the s106 monies should be used to implement the measures put forward by the Friends Group, not replace core funding.

87a.4 **RESOLVED** – That the petition be noted.

88. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

88.1 There were none.

89. DEPUTATIONS

89.1 The Cabinet Member considered a deputation from Mr Will Scoular concerning the Anston House site on Preston Road, Brighton.

89.2 Mr Scoular explained that he represented the bank in control of the site and that the sentiments expressed in a e-petition about the site were, in part, shared by the site owner. He reported that significant progress had been made since the e-petition had been started and that architects had been appointed to develop a suitable scheme for the site. He stated that the planning application was being developing by working closely with council officers and that it was therefore unnecessary to pursue compulsory purchase of the site.

89.3 The Cabinet Member welcomed the considerable progress been made at the Anston House site. Development of the site, at a neighbourly scale, remained a top priority and urged the developer to work closely with local residents. The Cabinet Member explained that he expected to receive the petition at his next meeting in March, but assured the petitioners that officers were meeting regularly with those involved in the development of the site and that and proposals were progressing. In addition, the council's enforcement officer had served notices that required improvement to the condition of the office building and land by April 2012.

The Cabinet Member stated that, given the long history of the site, there remained issues still to be resolved, but added that the progress made to date provided a strong basis for any further action that may be required.

89.4 Councillor West reported that the e-petition had been initiated by Councillor Kennedy prior to the progress detailed in the deputation, which had taken place in a relatively short period of time and was welcomed.

89.5 The Cabinet Member reiterated that the petition would be received at his next meeting and that he would respond in full at that time.

89.6 **RESOLVED** – That the deputation be noted.

90. LETTERS FROM COUNCILLORS

90.1 A letter had been received from Councillors Norman and Mrs Norman concerning problems experienced by residents of Tivoli Crescent North, Tivoli Road, Matlock Road and Maldon Road in finding parking spaces near to their homes and calling for consideration to be given to re-consulting those residents on whether they wish to be included as an extension to Zone A and what steps could be taken to review the currently underused parking scheme in Woodside Avenue.

90.2 Councillor Mrs Norman reported that the Withdean ward councillors had undertaken a survey to determine whether the affected roads wished to be re-consulted and found that, with the exception of Maldon Road, the majority of residents would support re-consultation. She requested that the information be taken into account and that assurances be given to residents that the council was aware of the problems they were experiencing. She also requested that Matlock Road be given special consideration due to the severity of the displacement problems there.

90.3 The Cabinet Member advised that he understood the parking issues in the area and that he received one or two letters of concern from residents, including one from Withdean Road about possible displacement effects as existing schemes were extended. The council was working to resolve such issues and a city-wide parking review would come forward to look at many aspects of existing controlled parking schemes, including those raised in the letter, and other areas of the city where residents had requested parking controls.

90.4 **RESOLVED** – That the letter be noted.

91. WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

91.1 There were none.

92. NOTICES OF MOTION

92.1 There were none.

93. PRESTON ROAD JUNCTION IMPROVEMENTS

93.1 The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Strategic Director, Place concerning the results of the public consultation carried out on the Preston Road junction improvements and seeking approval to commence detailed design and preparation of the Traffic Regulation Orders and begin implementation.

- 93.2 Councillor Mitchell welcomed the proposals and thanked officers for incorporating the views of the ward councillors.
- 93.3 Councillor West welcomed the proposals in the report overall, but queried the decision not to implement a shared space for pedestrians and cyclists at Argyle Road. He also requested clarification on the use of Cycle Town funding for the scheme when larger schemes would not be going ahead.
- 93.4 The Lead Commissioner for City Regulation & Infrastructure advised that a shared space was considered, but that the pavement was too narrow to accommodate it. He explained that all of the Cycle Town funding had been allocated; where larger schemes did not go ahead, the money was spent on smaller schemes to good effect.
- 93.5 **RESOLVED** - That having considered the information and the reasons set out in the report, the Cabinet Member accepted the following recommendations:
- (1) That the consultation results, which indicate an overall support for the scheme as consulted, be noted.
 - (2) That Officers be instructed to implement the scheme (as shown on the Plan in Appendix 1), to include advertising any associated Traffic Regulation Orders and Notices under the Road Traffic Act 1984 and associated shared footway areas.(see Appendix 3).

94. FEES & CHARGES 2011-12

- 94.1 The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Strategic Director, Place concerning fees and charges for 2011-12 which were not presented in the December 2010 report.
- 94.2 **RESOLVED** - That having considered the information and the reasons set out in the report, the Cabinet Member accepted the following recommendations:
- (1) That the additional fees and charges for 2011- 12, as set out in the report, be agreed.

The meeting concluded at 4.33pm

Signed

Cabinet Member

Dated this

day of