

Salisbury City Council

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Minutes

Meeting of : Full Council
Date : 3 March 2025
Meeting held : The Guildhall
Commencing at : 6:30pm

Present:

Chair: S Hocking

Vice Chair: E Rimmer

Cllrs: S Charleston, V Charleston, C Corbin, T Corbin, C Hibbert, A Hoque, C McGrath, A Riddle, S Rideout, R Rogers, P Sample, C Stanway, I Tomes, and J Wells

Officers: Asa Thorpe, Steve Bishop, Sarah Gregson, Marc Read, and Beth George

There were 11 members of the public present and 0 members of the press in attendance.

1. Apologies:

Apologies were received from J Bolwell, B Dalton, and T Last.

2. Public Questions/Statement Time:

Three public questions/statements were received.

Matthew Vass presented to the council regarding a petition into the price increase of allotments. He expressed his appreciation for agreeing to not raise allotment fees. Mr Vass voiced some concerns around the running of the allotments.

Asa Thorpe, Chief Executive Officer responded that he would welcome discussions with Mr Vass and The Allotment Association to ensure the rule of law is being abided to.

Simon Turner presented to the council regarding the agreed closure of the Central Car Park toilets and the Market Square underground toilets.

He asked SCC to reconsider the decision to close them and cited the opinions of the residents that had signed his petition.

Cllr V Charleston responded with the following statements and welcomed Mr Turner's input on future proposals for facilities in the Square.

- The Accessible toilet (above ground in the Square) will be made available for all to use.
- The underground toilets will be made available for traders only when events are on.
- The council is exploring other funding streams for facilities in the city.
- The Coach station toilets and the other 6 sets of toilets the Council provides are unaffected by the changes.
- The Central Park toilets are being handed back to Wiltshire Council, who own the building.

Margart Wilmott (COGS) provided a statement of support for Item 21. This can be viewed under the relevant item.

3. Councillor Questions/Statement Time:

Cllr T Corbin read a statement regarding community cohesion. It can be viewed by following this [link](#).

4. Minutes of Previous Meeting:

The Chairman approved and signed the minutes of the last meeting of Full Council on 13 January 2025.

5. Declaration of Interest:

Cllr J Nettle declared a non-pecuniary interest on Item 16: Broken Bridges CIC. However, it was noted he would be providing an update.

6. Dispensations:

There were no Dispensations requested.

7. Chairman's Announcements:

The order of the committee will be different than that indicated on the agenda. The minutes will still read in that order.

The Chairman spoke about some of his most recent engagements as Mayor including Desert Island Discs at The Medieval Hall for the Friends of the Cathedral, unveiling of Billy Whitelegg's Showman's Guild plaque at the Guildhall, the Broad Chalke Community Hub's Kings Award for Voluntary Services, Charter Sunday, and the Armed Forces Breakfast Club Burns Night.

He concluded with the words: 'Barring the handover in May, this will be my last meeting as Chair of this Council. It has been a great honour and privilege to have been so. I have attended over a hundred thirty official engagement and "Chained up" for many more, including any number market and City "walkabouts" and it has been the most

amazing experience. Thank you to all of you around the table this evening for allowing me to represent, you, the city and most importantly our residents, you have my sincere gratitude and heartfelt thanks.'

8. Administration Leaders Report:

Cllr V Charleston provided an update on behalf of the Administration Leaders. She thanked Cllr S Hocking for his successful year as Mayor.

The committee was invited to watch a video highlighting the accomplishments of the council over the last year. Councillors thanked SCC for producing the video and their continued hard work throughout the year.

Cllr V Charleston expressed her delight over the Neighbourhood Plan Referendum result.

9. Referral of Minutes:

Minutes taken since the Full Council meeting on 04 November 2024 were considered. It was noted that the minutes for last week's Finance and Governance Committee (6th January) are still being reviewed by the Committee Chair.

Finance and Governance 6 January 2025
Planning and Development 16 January 2025
Events, Markets and Grants 27 January 2025
Planning and Development 17 February 2025

These were taken as read and **approved by all**.

10. Committee Reports:

The Committees' Chairmen provided updates as follows.

Cllr J Wells, Chairman of Environmental & Climate informed the council that the final committee of Environment and Climate will be held next week, 10 March, in the Guildhall.

Cllr C Corbin, Chairman of the Community Services Committee led a thank you for Sarah Gregson, Head of Communities who is leaving her role at SCC. Council members echoed Cllr Corbin's words and are very grateful for everything Sarah has done for the community. She will be missed.

Cllr T Corbin, Chairman of the Planning & Development Committee thanked all involved with their hard work on the Neighbourhood Development Plan. He extended special thanks to Cllr A Riddle who took a leading role on producing the plan.

Cllr B Dalton, Chairman of Personnel was not present so there was no report.

Cllr A Bayliss, Chairman of Finance & Governance had no report to make.

Cllr S Charleston, Chairman of the Events, Markets, & Grants Subcommittee updated the committee that there were no available grants left this year but some new Lottery Good Causes had been approved. He praised the excellent progress of the Business Team despite recent staff changes.

Cllr Riddle updated the committee on the Neighbourhood Development Plan. She wanted to get the plan finalised before the elections and was pleased it was completed in time and got voted through. The result of the referendum entitles Salisbury to more money from developments.

She added that the inquiry into the development on Old Sarum Airfield is continuing in the Guildhall, with closing remarks on 7 March.

11. Outside Representatives:

There were no outside representative reports.

12. Afghan Families Presentation:

The Council received a [presentation](#) from Jane Ebel regarding Afghan Refugees.

She thanked the community for support they have shown of the Ukrainian community who are now mostly independently running their own groups.

Attention has now turned to supporting Afghan families in Wiltshire with integrating and finding work through English lessons, help with CV writing, and IT classes.

She would like the help of the community to raise awareness on who they are and why they are here and to help eliminate the fears some have of the Afghan community that stems from lack of knowledge.

The council thanked Jane.

13. Wiltshire Creative Update:

The Council received a [presentation](#) from Rosa Corbishley, Wiltshire Creative.

She thanked Salisbury City Council for their support and explained how support from the Local Authority increases leverage with the Arts Council when it comes to funding. Councillors asked for more information on this which Rosa has agreed to provide.

Councillors thanked Wiltshire Creative for their work and there was a consensus on the importance of the arts for people in the community of all ages.

14. Presentation on the River Park:

The Council received a [presentation](#) from Andy Wallis. He thanked the council for their support since 2019, in particular Marc Read and Mostyn Coombes.

Councillors praised the work on the River Park project, especially considering the unprecedented level of water and the difficulties that arose during Covid-19.

15. Broken Bridges CIC Update:

The Council received a verbal update from Cllr Nettle. He informed the committee that the publicity from SCC supporting Broken Bridges CIC has led to further support from other sources including Wiltshire Council and some generous individuals. Solicitors have

been engaged to begin the purchase of the land. Cllr Nettle extended his thanks to councillors for their support.

16. Budget Monitoring Report:

The Council received a Budget Monitoring [report](#) to the end of January. There was a short explanation by the Responsible Finance Officer on the projected outcomes shown in Appendix A. The council congratulated the RFO and CEO on the turnaround in the finances and all officers for the work involved.

It was, agreed that:

16.1. The Council notes the financial position at the end of January 2025 and officers' explanations of the significant variances.

16.2. The Council notes the General Reserve and other receipts position which are compliant with Financial Regulations.

16.3. The Council notes officers predicted year-end outturn surplus position which is significantly better than assumed in the 2025/26 budget and medium-term financial plan.

17. Annual Risk Management Policy:

The Council received an annual [report](#) on the Annual Risk Management Policy.

It was, agreed that they would:

17.1. Note the Risk Management Strategy.

17.2. Note SCC's Strategic Risk Register Summary for 2025/2026 at Annex A.

18. Rent Reduction Policy:

The Council received the Rent Reduction Policy from Sarah Gregson. This policy has been seen twice already at committee and is at the end of the consultation process.

It was, agreed that:

18.1 This policy redraft is approved for publication by this council.

Proposed By: S Charleston

Seconded By: C Corbin

A vote was taken and was **carried**.

19. Motion – Cllr Chris Taylor:

The Council consider a Notice of Motion from Cllr Chris Taylor.

“Reverse the decision to close the Central Car Park Toilets and keep them open.”

This council agrees to:

1) Withdraw the Cessation of Use notice sent to Wiltshire Council on 11th February 2025 relating to the closure of the Central Car Park toilets.

2) Postpone any decision on the Central Car Park toilets until after the City Council election on 1st May.

Councillors acknowledged that there is a strength of feeling around the toilets, keeping in mind the cost constraints. There were discussions around a Community Toilet Scheme and hiring in toilets for events, as necessary.

After a recorded vote it was, agreed that:

19.1 The motion is **defeated**.

Proposed By: C Taylor

Seconded By: C McGrath

Those in Favour:

Cllr A Hoque, Cllr C McGrath, Cllr C Hibbert, Cllr J Nettle, Cllr J King, Cllr J Broom, Cllr C Taylor, Cllr E Rimmer

Those Against:

Cllr A Riddle, Cllr C Stanway, Cllr A Bayliss, Cllr C Charleston, Cllr V Charleston, Cllr P Sample, Cllr T Corbin, Cllr C Corbin, Cllr R Rogers, Cllr I Tomes, Cllr J Wells, Cllr S Rideout

20. Motion – Cllr Chris Taylor:

The Council consider a Notice of Motion from Cllr Chris Taylor.

This Council agrees to:

1) Commission a Feasibility Study and Scope of Works to investigate the possibility of upgrading an existing SCC path/track connecting Kensington Road with Devizes Road in the vicinity of India Avenue to be completed and reported upon by the next Full Council Meeting.

2) Allocate appropriate resources (£2850 Feasibility Study and £3750 Scope of Works).
SCC/FC/Agenda/03.03.2025 3) Investigate external funding availability, including government grants and private partnerships

It was, agreed that:

20.1 The motion will be **deferred** until June.

Cllr C Taylor thanked COGS for their support.

21. Motion – Cllr Victoria Charleston:

The Council consider a Notice of Motion from Cllr Victoria Charleston.

“For Salisbury City Council to support the Designation of the Footpath Along the River Around Churchfields Industrial Estate as a Public Right of Way.”

Margaret Willmot (COGS) spoke in her support of the motion. You can view the statement by following this [link](#).

Multiple members of the council spoke in support of the motion. Cllr V Charleston clarified that there was no intention of an additional cost to the council.

There were discussions around the specific details of the land ownership and what the law will dictate is the responsibility of SCC if it is to be made a public right of way.

And it was, agreed that:

21.1 SCC support the motion.

Proposed By: V Charleston

Seconded By: A Bayliss

A vote was taken and was **carried**.

22. Exempt item

23. Matters, if any, which by reason of special circumstances the Chairman decides should be discussed as a matter of urgency for information only. Please note that the Council cannot lawfully consider or determine any matter which is not specified on the Agenda of this summons

The meeting closed at 21:14.

Cllr A Hoque left the meeting at 20:30.