

ST HELENS BOROUGH COUNCIL

At a meeting of the St Helens Borough Council held on
12 July 2022

(Present) **The Mayor (Councillor Murphy) (Chair)**
Councillors Baines, Banks, Begum, Bell, Betts, Bond, Bowden,
Burns, Campbell, Case, Clarke, Collier, Dickinson, Gomez-
Aspron MBE, Greaves, Groucutt, Hattersley, Haw, Hawley,
Hodkinson, Hooton, Laird, D Long, T Long, Maguire, Makin,
Maloney MBE, McCauley, McCormack, McQuade, Mussell,
O'Connor, Osundeko, Peers, Quinn, Richards, Sheldon,
Spencer, Stevenson, Sweeney, Tasker, Uddin and van der Burg.

(Not Present) **Councillors Charlton, Johnson, Pearl and Sims**

15 **MINUTES**

* **Resolved that the Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 25 May 2022 be approved.**

16 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillors Charlton, Johnson, Pearl and Sims.

17 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM MEMBERS**

Item	Title	Member(s)	Declaration
10	Report of Cabinet – St Helens Borough Local Plan	Councillor Baines	Personal and non-prejudicial.
12	Community Governance Review	Councillor Gomez-Aspron MBE	Personal and prejudicial.

18 **MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS**

The Mayor expressed condolences to Councillor Osundeko, on behalf of Council, for the recent loss of her daughter.

The Mayor congratulated the following who had received recognition in the Queen's Birthday Honours:

Friends of St Helens Cemetery who had been awarded The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service;

Ron and Sue Heyes who received a British Empire Medal in recognition of their excellent work with the charity 'African Children in Education'; and

Sally Yeoman, Chief Executive of Halton & St Helens Voluntary and Community Action Who received an MBE for services to the community.

19 **LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Councillor Baines, Leader of the Council spoke about the following:

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- Armed Forces Day;
- St Helens Pride;
- Town Centre Developments;
- Council Supporting Residents with Cost-of-Living Rise;
- Shared prosperity and LCRCA Investment Plan;
- City Fibre Digital Connectivity;
- St Helens Borough Housing Strategy;
- Omega West planning approval granted;
- Local Plan;
- Proposed changes to provision of bus services in the Borough;
- Men's Mental Health;
- New Highways Strategy approved;
- NHS Cheshire & Merseyside Integrated Care Board; and
- The Member Champion for Local Businesses is Councillor Hodkinson.

20 TO HEAR AND RESPOND TO ANY QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MEMBERS IN ACCORDANCE WITH COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 9

The Mayor reported that there were no questions submitted in accordance with this Procedure Rule.

21 TO HEAR AND RESPOND TO ANY QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC IN ACCORDANCE WITH COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 10

The Mayor reported that there were no questions submitted in accordance with this Procedure Rule.

22 TO HEAR ANY DEPUTATIONS BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC IN ACCORDANCE WITH COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 11

The Mayor reported that no requests to hear a deputation had been received in accordance with this Procedure Rule.

23 REPORT OF CABINET - REVENUE AND CAPITAL OUTTURN REPORT 2021/22

A report was submitted which detailed the outturn position in relation to the revenue and capital budget for 2021/22 (subject to audit) and summarised the reserves and balances position.

The report also included details of the 2021/22 use of COVID-19 Emergency Grant Funding and Sales, Fees and Charges Compensation Funding and included the Treasury Management Outturn Report for 2021/22.

*** Resolved that:**

- (1) the decisions made by Cabinet at its meeting held on 22 June 2022 be noted as follows:**
 - i) note the Revenue Outturn position (subject to audit) for 2021/22 as detailed in Section 2;**

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- ii) approve the proposed carry forward of budget provision as outlined in Section 2.9;
- iii) approve the carry forward of budget provision for continuing earmarked reserve funded schemes, as detailed in Annex B;
- iv) note the earmarking of resources to reserves as outlined in Section 2.6;
- v) approve for there to be no reductions to any Directorate budgets in 2022/23 arising from the outturn position for 2021/22 as detailed in Section 2.8;
- vi) note the use of additional Covid-19 Grant Funding and Sales, Fees and Charges Compensation in 2021/22, as detailed in Section 3;
- vii) note the 2021/22 Capital Outturn position (subject to audit) as summarised in Section 4;
- viii) note the latest reserves and balances position as outlined in Section 5, including the appropriation of general balances to the inflation reserve ; and
- ix) note the Treasury Management Outturn Report 2021/22 as detailed in Annex E

24 REPORT OF CABINET – ST HELENS BOROUGH LOCAL PLAN ADOPTION

At its meeting held on 30 June 2022, Cabinet considered the report which outlined the preparation of the St Helens Borough Local Plan up to this point, and set out the reasons for adopting the new St Helens Borough Local Plan to guide and shape the growth of the Borough up to 2037 and beyond.

The St Helens Borough Local Plan and associated Policies Map were Recommended, to Council, for adoption and implementation to replace the Core Strategy (2012) and UDP (1998) to ensure the Borough had an up-to-date policy framework in place, in accordance with legislation and national policy and guidance. Along with the Bold Forest Park Area Action Plan (2017) and the Joint Merseyside and Halton Waste Local Plan (2013), it would form a positive and effective Development Plan for the Borough.

A recorded vote was requested by over one third of the Members present and, therefore, a recorded vote was taken.

For:		Councillors:	Baines, Banks, Begum, Bell, Bond, Bowden, Burns, Campbell, Clarke, Dickinson, Gomez-Aspron MBE, Groucutt, Hattersley, Hodkinson, Laird, D Long, T Long, Maloney MBE, McCauley, McCormack, McQuade, Murphy, O'Connor, Osundeko, Quinn, Sweeney and Uddin.
Against:		Councillors:	Betts, Case, Collier, Greaves, Haw, Hawley, Hooton, Maguire, Makin, Mussell, Peers, Richards, Sheldon, Spencer, Stevenson, Tasker and van der Burg.

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- * **Resolved that the St Helens Borough Local Plan at Appendix A and associated Policies Map at Appendix B, be adopted and become part of the Development Plan for the Borough with immediate effect.**

25 REPORT OF STANDARDS COMMITTEE – REVISED PROTOCOL FOR COUNCILLORS AND OFFICERS DEALING WITH PLANNING MATTERS AND RELATED CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUES

A report was submitted which asked Council to consider the recommendation from the Standards Committee held on 4 July 2022.

The Protocol for Councillors and Officers Dealing with Planning Matters (“the Protocol”) aimed to ensure that, within the planning process, there were no grounds for suggesting that a planning decision taken by officers or members had been biased, partial or not well founded in any way. The Protocol was a living document and had been the subject of amendment over the years to ensure it reflected current best practice.

The report recommended amendments to the Protocol in order to reflect recent changes to the Code of Conduct for Elected and Co-opted Members. Minor amendments were also recommended to officer delegations contained at Part 3 of the Constitution and which were to be referenced within the Protocol. Other updates were made to the site visit protocol and public speaking arrangements. The opportunity had also been taken to reflect recent changes to officer job titles and to provide greater clarity with regard to requirement to report excessive lobbying to officers.

At its meeting held on 28 June 2022, Planning Committee had also approved the recommendations.

- * **Resolved that:**

- (1) the amendments to the Protocol for Councillors and Officers Dealing with Planning Matters, as set out at Appendix 2 be approved;**
- (2) the changes to Part 3 of the Constitution (Responsibility for Functions – Council Functions Delegated to Officers – Planning), as set out at Appendix 3 be approved; and**
- (3) the Monitoring Officer be authorised to amend the Constitution so that it accords with the decision of Council in this regard.**

Councillor Gomez-Aspron MBE here left the meeting.

26 COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW – DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE

A report was submitted which set out the Terms of Reference for approval by Council, which would commence the Community Governance Review (“CGR”) process once published.

Parish councils can, when operating effectively, play an important role in terms of community empowerment at the local level. CGRs provide the opportunity for principal councils (district and unitary councils) to review and make changes to community

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governance within their areas. They may be undertaken in circumstances such as where there have been changes in population, following a Boundary Commission review of warding patterns (as is the case for St. Helens) or in response to specific or local new issues.

At its meeting held on 3 November 2021, Council agreed to undertake a CGR for the borough following the local and parish elections in 2022. Council also noted a petition received from Newton & Earlestown Community Group in 2020 in relation to a proposal to create a new Town Council for Newton and Earlestown (now known as Newton East and Newton West wards).

* **Resolved that:**

- (1) **approve the Terms of Reference for a Community Governance Review at Appendix 1;**
- (2) **agree the proposed consultation in respect of the Community Governance Review for the borough;**
- (3) **agree the proposed consultation for the proposal in the petition to create a new Town Council for Newton East and Newton West wards;**
- (4) **agree to establish a cross-party Community Governance Review Working Group to make recommendations to Council in relation to the Review and the proposal in the petition supported by officers; and**
- (5) **the Monitoring Officer, be authorised, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance & Governance, to take all necessary steps in relation to the Review and the proposal in the petition.**

Councillor Gomez-Aspron MBE here returned to the meeting.

27 ANNUAL SCRUTINY REPORT 2021/22

A report was submitted which informed Council that the Overview and Scrutiny Commission was required to produce an annual report for submission to Council to document the activity of all scrutiny committees during the municipal year.

The report set out the outcome and added value of the work undertaken by scrutiny over the last year, which had been an unprecedented year in terms of challenges from the Covid-19 pandemic.

The content of the Annual Scrutiny Report 2021/22 was approved by the Overview and Scrutiny Commission at its meeting held on 4 April 2022.

* **Resolved that the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2021/22 be noted.**

28 INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL (IRP) REPORT - REMUNERATION FOR INDEPENDENT MEMBER ON AUDIT & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

A report was submitted which presented a recommendation to Council for consideration from the Independent Remuneration Panel in relation to remuneration for an

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Independent Person on the Audit & Governance Committee.

* **Resolved that:**

- (1) **the recommendation of the Independent Remuneration Panel to offer remuneration to the Independent Person on the Audit & Governance of £500 per year be approved; and**
- (2) **the Monitoring Officer be authorised to amend the Members' Allowances Scheme in Part 6 of the Constitution to include a Co-optees Allowance in this regard.**

29 **CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUES**

A report was submitted which set out a number of issues in relation to the Constitution and the governance of the Council, which Council was asked to consider and either note or determine, as appropriate.

It was the responsibility of the Monitoring Officer to monitor and review the operation of the Constitution and to seek approval to any changes necessary due to changes in legislation or changes in the way the Council wishes to operate. This report set out the proposed changes which had been identified.

At Annual Council on 25 May 2022, Council noted the representatives identified on the Cabinet Member Schedule in Appendix 1 to the Appointments to Outside Bodies and Other Bodies 2022/23 report. Included in the report was membership to the Health and Care Partnership Board.

On 1 July 2022, upon the Health and Care Act 2022 coming into force, NHS Cheshire & Merseyside replaced the clinical commissioning group infrastructure, with nine borough 'Places' tasked with working to improve health and care outcomes under the umbrella of the new organisation, a statutory Integrated Care Board. Integrated Care Systems (ICSs) were partnerships that brought providers and commissioners of NHS services across a geographical area together with local authorities and other local partners to collectively plan health and care services to meet the needs of their local population

The new Act moved ICSs onto a statutory footing with the establishment of Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) and Integrated Care Partnerships (ICPs). The former Health & Care Partnership Board was therefore replaced by the ICP and the Council's representatives were Councillor Baines and Councillor Quinn.

Council was also informed that the Code of Conduct for Employees had been reviewed and updated to reflect best practice, the Council's values and behaviours, a consistent format and changes in post titles. The Code was approved by Delegated Executive Decision on 13 June 2022 as part of a suite of revised People Management policies. Council was invited to note the revised approved Code for inclusion at Part 5 of the constitution.

* **Resolved that:**

- (1) **the change to the representatives on the Cabinet Member Schedule, namely Councillor Baines and Councillor Quinn on the new Integrated Care Partnership in replacement of the former Health & Care Partnership Board be noted; and**

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- (2) the revised Code of Conduct for Employees at Appendix 1 for inclusion in Part 5 of the constitution be noted.

Councillor Osundeko left the meeting during discussion of the following item.

30 NOTICE OF MOTION SUBMITTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 12

The following Notice of Motion was submitted by Councillor Mussell:

“St Helens is well known for many things, coal mining, glass manufacturing, trains, and rugby league. We, however, recognise the part women from the Borough have played in the country’s heritage and success in sport. These women, in their chosen sports, not only demonstrate the benefit and value of sport and physical activity but act as female role models for current and future generations.

I therefore propose that this Council in recognition of these women’s achievements establish a cross party working group to:

- Identify how these accomplishments can be permanently celebrated publicly to ensure their impact and historical success is remembered but also to act as a positive role model for generations to come; and
- identify funding streams for the erection of a monument in the Borough.”

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 14.7(a) Councillor Mussell moved the following alteration which was seconded by Councillor Greaves and agreed by Council.

“St Helens is well known for many things, coal mining, glass manufacturing, trains, and rugby league. We, however, recognise the part women from the Borough have played in the country’s heritage and success in sport. These women, in their chosen sports, not only demonstrate the benefit and value of sport and physical activity but act as female role models for current and future generations.

I therefore propose that this Council in recognition of these women’s achievements establish a cross party working group to:

- Identify how these accomplishments can be permanently celebrated publicly to ensure their impact and historical success is remembered but also to act as a positive role model for generations to come; and
- ~~identify funding streams for the erection of a monument in the Borough.~~ Explore how we can commemorate them throughout the Borough.”

* **Resolved that the altered Motion be approved.**