

MOTIONS ON NOTICE

1.1 The Proper Officer reports that, pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 13, the following motions have been received:-

1.2 **From Cllrs M Hoy and S A Wilson and supported by Cllrs Mrs T L Carter, A H Eves, Mrs C M Mason and J E Newport:-**

‘During the pandemic Council officers took a decision to not charge NHS staff and social care workers for parking in the Council run car parks.

Whilst we wholly support this decision, we believe that it is fundamentally a policy decision and as such should be ratified by Members.

We Propose that:

1. The action taken by officers in not charging NHS staff and social care workers for parking in the Council run car parks is formally ratified by Council as a Member decision rather than remaining in the remit of officers.
2. All NHS Staff and social care workers may park for free in all Rochford District run car parks upon displaying supporting official evidence on the vehicle.

This will be effective until it is reviewed by the first Council meeting of the Municipal Year of 2021/22.’

1.3 **From Cllrs J E Newport and A H Eves and supported by Cllrs Mrs T L Carter, M Hoy, Mrs C M Mason and S A Wilson:-**

‘The Council is currently in the process of mothballing the Mill Arts Centre and the Civic Suite, both in Rayleigh.

This Council is requesting that officers explore the possibility of using these buildings to provide either of the following with an interim formal report at the next Full Council:

1. Accommodation for new, small and emerging business on affordable short term rents, including shared office workspace with flexible rental arrangements. This will allow businesses to see if the business is viable and also allow for start up businesses easy affordable access to the High Street.
2. Temporary accommodation for homeless people.’

1.4 From Cllrs Mrs C M Mason and M Hoy and supported by Cllrs Mrs T L Carter, A H Eves, N J Hookway, J E Newport and S A Wilson:-

'When a question was raised in Full Council with officers about the number of declared votes not corresponding to the number of Members present the Monitoring Officer ruled that there were four categories of votes: For, Against, Abstain, and 'No wish to vote'. It was explained to Members that we were not obliged to vote, thus the apparent anomaly.

In the chamber the public could see if Members voted or not. When we moved to Zoom meetings the Managing Director set up a protocol that again made Members' votes transparent. Full council then decided that the number of Members voting in each category would be recorded.

Since then, the Acting Managing Director has altered the method of voting to the raising of a 'blue hand' to save time in meetings. However, in the recent Review meeting on the first vote no numbers were given; we were just advised the item had been agreed.

On the second item we were advised 11 Members voted for and three Members did not vote. On enquiry it appeared that some Members were unable to raise their blue hand and the vote was retaken.

It was then stated that 13 Members voted for and that there were no votes for and no abstentions. Then the officer stated that there were 13 votes for and one abstention.

This new system raises concerns. Neither the public nor Members can see who is voting and therefore we lose the transparency that prevailed before. It is also problematic if a Member who decides not to vote is then counted as an abstention and contrary to what Council had previously been advised.

With important decisions being taken it is important that there is clarity. Therefore:

This Council asks that the Portfolio Holder for Governance, in conjunction with the Monitoring officer and the Acting Managing Director, ensures that the method of voting is re-examined as a matter of urgency and a verification process is implemented to prevent such a recurrence.'

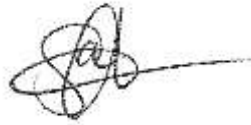
1.5 From Cllrs J E Newport and C C Cannell and supported by Cllrs M Hoy, Mrs C M Mason and C M Stanley:-

'This Council notes:

- 1) The Council has a working group to understand the implications and recommend a policy to this Council on how it can reduce its carbon footprint and become carbon neutral by 2030 at the latest;
- 2) That the biggest single contributor to climate change is the emission of carbon from fossil fuels;
- 3) That trees have the ability to soak up carbon emissions and therefore tree planting can offset some of the carbon dioxide which is contributing to climate change;
- 4) Forest Research, Britain's principal organisation for forestry and tree related research, says that the average tree canopy cover figure in England is 16%, measured from 283 towns and cities. The Rochford District has less than 10% tree cover and Friends of the Earth recommends that this should be, at least, doubled.

This Council therefore calls on the Chief Executive to prepare a tree planting strategy which:

- 1) Aims to increase considerably the tree cover within the District by identifying council owned land that could be used for tree planting;
- 2) Works with the voluntary sector to deliver tree planting plans;
- 3) Involves schools, colleges and their pupils and students in carrying out tree planting and woodland maintenance, specifically to promote and facilitate residents to enable the use of Council land to take part in the BBC's 'Plant Britain' campaign as supported by HRH The Prince of Wales over the course of the next two years;
- 4) Sets out to create community orchards to help improve the supply of fresh, local produce and boost the health of residents;
- 5) Identifies sources of funding available to the Council and voluntary organisations to pay for tree planting.'



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