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**Agenda**

Saturday, September 16th, 2023, 11am

The Cobham Hotel

1. **Apologies for absence**
2. **Minutes of previous meeting**
3. **Leader update**
4. **Update from the Parliamentary candidates for Southend West and Rochford and Southend East**
5. **Local election candidate selection 2024**
6. **Suggested agenda debates for next meeting**
7. **Manifesto 2024 Debate**
   1. Discussion on tree felling policy
   2. Do you support ‘re-wilding’ that includes pro-actively planting seeds that are scientifically proven to aid the environment in selected spaces where it is deemed safe; whilst at the same time ensuring that our grass verges are well-kept to ensure we can take pride in where we live.
   3. Do you support fines for drivers who leave their cars on idle?
   4. Do you support the removal of manned ticket offices at train stations?
   5. Do you support building cycle lanes through the middle of the boulevards?
   6. Do you support the rollout of ‘Quiet Streets’?
   7. Do you support regulated brothels in Southend?
   8. Should we campaign to make local Election Day a bank holiday?
   9. Do you support the introduction of female-only toilets alongside toilets that are gender neutral?
   10. What is the long-term solution to bring homeless people off the streets?
   11. What changes are required to ensure our bus service fulfils the needs of residents?
   12. Do you think the council should invest in putting together a business plan that could lead to a potential Compulsory Purchase Order of the Kursaal?
   13. Do you support the current asylum policy in Southend?
   14. Do you support the expansion of pocket parks?
   15. Discussion on policy around the observation of energy companies and methods of invoicing
   16. Do you support proportional representation? [Proportional representation - UK Parliament](https://www.parliament.uk/site-information/glossary/proportional-representation/)
8. **AOB**

**Standing orders (Rule of Engagement for the meeting)**

We recognise that in order to explore different opinions on various subjects, there is a risk that opinions cannot be separated from the person expressing those opinions and that debates may become emotive and ultimately lead to a person leaving the party. However, real democracy is one of the pillars of the party and we need each person to be able to express themselves in an environment where they feel comfortable and confident of doing so without fear, alienation or ridicule, and despite disagreements, we can remain united in our vision to change our city for the better.

For this reason, the following standing orders are in place:

* We adhere to the Equality Act of 2010\*.
* The purpose debate is to explore views and issues and not to condemn them.
* All participants should aspire to act with kindness, compassion, respect, empathy, patience and forgiveness.
* The chair is the only person who can invite a member to speak.
* People must be able to express their opinion without interruption. The length of time for each person to speak will be facilitated by the chair.
* The facts of a debate must be presented without bias
* We seek to explore another person’s argument, however seemingly ignorant, otherwise we remain ignorant of their logic.
* People must feel confident about expressing their view without bullying, intimidation, alienation and ridicule.
* Members have first priority to speak, but all participants will have the right to speak

\*The Equality Act and protected characteristics

The Equality Act of 2010 brought together various anti-discrimination laws into one single act, so any unlawful treatment (discrimination, harassment or victimisation) relating to one of the Equality Act protected characteristics, since 2010 is covered by this area of employment law.

Discrimination can be direct or indirect – which is why care must be taken when for example, making a change or in reviewing employment policy, practice or criteria used in the workplace. The characteristics that are protected by the Equality Act 2010 are:

* Age
* Disability
* Gender reassignment
* Marriage or civil partnership (in employment only)
* Pregnancy and maternity
* Race
* Religion or belief
* Sex
* Sexual orientation

The Act also provides for protection against discrimination by association, which provides protection for people who are discriminated against because someone close to them falls under the definition of one of the protected characteristics.

**Voting Method**

* We score the vote from 1 to 100 to measure the strength of the vote.
* 49 or lower is effectively a no for now. It does not necessarily mean the member is against the policy, but that they may require more information to make a decision.
* 50 or higher is effectively a yes. However, a vote may only pass if the leader votes 90 or higher.
* Duel members can vote, but their vote will not be able to veto a motion.