

## BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING

Tuesday, 14th February, 2017

Present:- **Councillors** Patrick Anketell-Jones, Rob Appleyard, Colin Barrett, Cherry Beath, Jasper Becker, Sarah Bevan, Lisa Brett, John Bull, Neil Butters, Anthony Clarke, Matt Cochrane, Paul Crossley, Chris Dando, Fiona Darey, Matthew Davies, Sally Davis, Douglas Deacon, Emma Dixon, Michael Evans, Andrew Furse, Charles Gerrish, Ian Gilchrist, Lizzie Gladwyn, Bob Goodman, Francine Haeberling, Liz Hardman, Deirdre Horstmann, Eleanor Jackson, Steve Jeffries, Les Kew, Marie Longstaff, Barry Macrae, Paul May, Shaun Stephenson-McGall, Alison Millar, Robin Moss, Paul Myers, Michael Norton, Lisa O'Brien, Bryan Organ, Lin Patterson, June Player, Christopher Pearce, Vic Pritchard, Joe Rayment, Liz Richardson, Caroline Roberts, Nigel Roberts, Dine Romero, Will Sandry, Mark Shelford, Brian Simmons, Peter Turner, David Veale, Martin Veal, Karen Walker, Geoff Ward, Tim Warren, Karen Warrington and Chris Watt

Apologies for absence: **Councillors** Tim Ball, Colin Blackburn, Alan Hale, Donal Hassett and Steve Hedges

#### 65 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

The Chairman drew attention to the emergency evacuation procedure, as set out on the agenda.

#### 66 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Paul Myers declared an 'other' interest in item 8 – Budget & Council Tax 2017/18 and Financial Outlook 2017/18 to 2019/20 as set out below;

- as Chair/Mayor of Midsomer Norton Town Council – ref: the Community Empowerment Fund.
- as Chair of the Midsomer Norton Town Trust - ref: Midsomer Norton Town Hall Transformation Project - sum noted in the budget subject to business plan - in relation to negotiations for the Asset Transfer to the Town Council and then onto the Town Trust.
- as Secretary of the Sarah Ann Trust - ref: Midsomer Norton Town Hall Transformation Project - sum noted in the budget subject to business plan - in relation to the fact that the Sarah Ann Trust currently hold the rolling on lease for the Town Hall in Midsomer Norton from B&NES.

Councillor Michael Evans declared an 'other' interest in item 8 - Budget & Council Tax 2017/18 and Financial Outlook 2017/18 to 2019/20 as set out below;

- as a Midsomer Norton Town Councillor – ref: the Community Empowerment fund;
- as a member of the Town Council and trustee of the Town Trust – ref: the Midsomer Norton Town Hall Transformation Project.

Councillor Eleanor Jackson declared an 'other' interest in item 8 - Budget & Council Tax 2017/18 and Financial Outlook 2017/18 to 2019/20 as a frequent user of Hope House Surgery.

Councillor Robin Moss declared an 'other' interest in item 8 - Budget & Council Tax 2017/18 and Financial Outlook 2017/18 to 2019/20 as Chair of Radstock and Westfield Big Local.

Councillor Robin Moss declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in item 8 - Budget & Council Tax 2017/18 and Financial Outlook 2017/18 to 2019/20 as a Senior paid employee of One Community Trust Keynsham. The Monitoring Officer granted a dispensation for this item.

Councillor Joe Rayment declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in item 8 - Budget & Council Tax 2017/18 and Financial Outlook 2017/18 to 2019/20 as an employee of DHI with reference to proposed substance misuse cuts. The Monitoring Officer granted a dispensation for this item.

## **67 MINUTES - 10TH NOVEMBER 2016**

On a motion from Councillor Eleanor Jackson, seconded by Councillor Tim Warren, it was

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of 10<sup>th</sup> November 2016 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman, subject to the correction of an error in minute number 63 to reflect that the motion moved was a Labour group motion, not one from the Liberal Democrat group.

## **68 ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL OR FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

The Vice Chairman, Councillor Cherry Beath, explained that the Council Chairman was unable to attend the meeting due to illness so she would be chairing the meeting. She made the customary announcements regarding mobile phones, webcasting, Councillors accessing meeting papers via their ipads and a comfort break.

She welcomed new Councillor Lizzie Gladwyn who had been elected in the Abbey ward.

She congratulated the Roman Baths on being named best large visitor attraction at the South West Tourism Awards on 6th February. The Roman Baths won two awards: a Gold in the Large Visitor Attraction of the Year category and Silver for International Visitor Experience.

She further congratulated all those who had received honours in the Queen's New Year's list.

She then asked Council to stand in silence as a mark of respect for former Bath Mayor and Honorary Alderman Carol Paradise who had passed away late last year.

Councillor Beath then checked that everyone had received all the necessary supplementary information for the budget consideration and reminded Councillors that all votes on budget items (item 8) were required to be a recorded vote.

**69 TO ANNOUNCE ANY URGENT BUSINESS AGREED BY THE CHAIRMAN**

There were no items of urgent business.

**70 QUESTIONS, STATEMENTS, PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

The Chairman referred to the questions from the public, and responses provided, which had been circulated to the meeting and attached to the online minutes.

Statements were made by the following people;

Paul Stansall made a statement opposing the proposed changes to the Library service and calling for a full business case to be prepared before any decisions were made. Further details can be read in the statement which has been placed on the Council's Minute book and attached to the online minutes. In response to a question from Councillor Tim Warren about whether Paul was aware that the final decision had not been made and was still subject to consultation before coming to Cabinet, Paul confirmed that he was aware but that key detail needed to be identified early in the process. Councillor Sarah Bevan asked Paul if, in his professional opinion, there were aspects of the proposals that concerned him, to which he responded that there were and he considered they contravened building regulations. The Chairman thanked Paul for his statement.

Yue Rao made a statement about her use of Bath Central Library and expressing her reasons to oppose any plans to relocate or reduce the library service. As a taxpayer, Yue felt that her taxes should go towards funding public services such as libraries, which in her experience were very well used. She felt the location of Bath Central Library was ideal and was concerned that there wouldn't be enough space to accommodate the current number of library users in Lewis House. In response to a question from Councillor Dine Romero about Yue's needs being adequately accommodated in the new space, Yue reiterated her view that there would not be enough space for students and professionals. Councillor John Bull asked Yue where she had heard that the relocated library would be closed on Sundays, to which she responded that she had surmised that it would be the same arrangement as with the One Stop Shop. The Chairman thanked Yue for her statement.

Alex Lea, a Year 7 pupil at Ralph Allen school, made a statement opposing any change to Bath Central Library and explaining why he considered libraries and reading to be so important to young people. Further details can be read in Alex's statement which has been placed on the Council's Minute book and attached to the online minutes. Alex also presented a petition 'Save Bath Library' with over 5000 signatures. Councillor Tim Warren asked Alex if he was aware that plans were for the library to be open 7 days a week to which he replied that he was. In response to a question from Councillor Joe Rayment about whether Alex would ever forgive the

Council if Bath Central Library was moved, he replied that he would not. The Chairman thanked Alex for his statement.

Professor David Almond made a statement in support of the valuable role libraries had played in his life and how they continued to do so in the lives of children all over the world. He countered the myth that modern children don't read and shared his experience from travelling extensively as a children's author, that children read voraciously. He stated that any move to diminish the service or reduce stock was a backwards step to a vitally important resource at the heart of the city. He urged Councillors not to go ahead. Councillor Tim Warren asked where Professor Almond had heard that the number of books would be reduced to which Professor Almond responded that he had heard that books would be accessible online and then clarified that he had come to believe that the stock would be reduced. Councillor Dine Romero asked if Professor Almond had evidence of the impact of click and collect rather than free roaming on children's literacy. Professor Almond responded that there was evidence in schools that those with a library and librarian found the standards in the school increased. Councillor John Bull asked if Professor Almond's comments also extended to branch libraries threatened with closure, to which he responded that they did and reiterated his view that we absolutely need local libraries. The Chairman thanked Professor Almond for his statement.

Andy Halliday, former Manager of Bath Central Library, made a statement describing various improvements to the library that had been made over the last few years following consultation, resulting in National Awards. He urged the Council not to go ahead with this move which, in his view, would decimate the service. Further details can be read in the statement which has been placed on the Council's Minute book and attached to the online minutes. Councillor Dine Romero asked Andy how much of a reduction to the total staff was 25 staff members to which he responded that he understood there were 75 staff equating to 42 FTEs. Councillor Tim Warren asked if Andy was aware that the proposed staff cut was not solely from library staff, Andy responded that that was not what he had read and that it wasn't clear. Councillor Robin Moss asked, in Andy's professional opinion, how many staff would be needed to recruit, train and support the volunteers. Andy replied that he didn't know but gave examples of how volunteers were supported at Saltford and Paulton libraries. Councillor Sarah Bevan asked for Andy's view of which sections of the community might stop visiting the library if the move was to take place. Andy replied that he feared that a move might prevent those with physical difficulties and/or those who needed to park nearby. The Chairman thanked Andy for his statement.

Kim Sherwood, an author and senior lecturer, explained that she had moved to Bath because of its cultural identity. She expressed concern that the service was being diminished, which she considered would deter creative professionals from locating here. She commented that the numbers given about equivalent space did not add up and gave examples to demonstrate this view. She explained her view that, on a proper analysis, the new space at Lewis House would be approximately half the size. She urged Councillors not to vote for this which would cause lasting damage to Bath. Councillor Tim Warren asked if Kim was aware that a final decision would be subject to a full business case and planning approval; to which Kim responded that she hoped it would, although she was puzzled that more preparatory work had not already taken place. Councillor Joe Rayment asked if Kim was aware that the decision to set the budget envelope tonight would mean there was little option to

vary plans after tonight, to which she replied that she was. The Chairman thanked Kim for her statement.

Moira Young, a published author, made a statement referring to the recently published DCMS National Strategy for Libraries and highlighted various points such as visitor numbers exceeding cinema, football and top UK attraction visits, the need for Councils to inform DCMS about proposals prior to engagement and produce a rigorous impact analysis and the need for co-creation with the local community. She gave examples of where this had successfully taken place in other towns. Councillor Tim Warren asked if Moira was aware of actual library closures taking place in neighbouring Authorities, to which she replied that the Council should consider a range of options including moving the One Stop Shop to the Podium. Councillor Dine Romero asked for further comparison of the proposed move to the One Stop Shop compared to a facility such as The Hive in Worcester. Moira explained that The Hive was a world class venue, which could be done here with the knowledge, good will and experience available. Councillor John Bull asked if Moira's comments also related to branch libraries and she confirmed that they did. The Chairman thanked Moira for her statement.

Oscar Ward read a statement from Jake Bishop-Ponte who had been unable to attend the meeting concerning the proposed 50% cut to Youth Services which would leave the Youth Service unfit for use. He commented that this would disproportionately affect the most disadvantaged. The statement concluded with the resignation of Jake as a member of the Youth Parliament. Councillor Dine Romero asked if Oscar was aware that the Liberal Democrats were also opposed to these cuts, to which he replied that he was. Councillor Joe Rayment asked Oscar to give an example of how he considered this Administration were not listening to young people to which Oscar responded that by making these cuts now, they were not considering the longer term impacts of pushing young people into anti-social behaviour and the associated costs of dealing with that. Councillor Sarah Bevan asked Oscar if he would agree that these proposals were discriminatory to one section of the community, a view with which he wholeheartedly agreed. The Chairman thanked Jake for his statement.

Amber Sims made a statement as a user of the Youth Services from the age of 12 to 23 (and continuing). She explained it had been invaluable in building her confidence and giving her vital skills in building relationships, healthy eating etc. She had been able to access vital support and felt that without this service being available, mental health and safeguarding issues would go unnoticed. Councillor Liz Hardman asked Amber if she thought that future generations would be affected by this; to which Amber responded that without this service, young people would not be able to access vital support from Youth Workers. Councillor Sarah Bevan asked about the number of young people attending Youth clubs, to which Amber responded there were loads. The Chairman thanked Amber for her statement.

Adam Reynolds made a statement about trust between the Council, organisations and residents when looking at transport solutions for London road, and elsewhere across B&NES. He quoted figures from the Cabinet Member about London road usage but asked specifically for a modal split of cycling numbers per ward so that individual Councillors could plan on the most appropriate transport solution for their area. He also made reference to the built environment and transport solutions

having an effect on future obesity figures and gave some statistics to support this. Councillor Lisa Brett asked if Cycle Bath had developed any proposals for the £200,000 allocated to the London Road project to which Adam responded that a Sustrans study had demonstrated a clear need for an east running protected cycle lane, which could be done with the removal of 23 on street parking spaces. Councillor Eleanor Jackson asked specifically about transit for cyclists through Kingsmead Square and Dorchester Street to which Adam responded that it was better to look at people flow but he hoped more work could be done for Dorchester Street and stressed again the need for solutions to be locally based. The Chairman thanked Adam for his statement.

## **71 BUDGET AND COUNCIL TAX 2017/18 AND FINANCIAL OUTLOOK 2017/18 TO 2019/20**

The Council considered a report presenting the Cabinet's revenue and capital budgets for the 2017/18 financial year together with a proposal for a Council Tax level for 2017/18.

In addition to the reports circulated with the agenda, all Councillors had received a copy of the draft minute of the Resources Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel meeting held on 30<sup>th</sup> January with the Panel's comments on the budget proposals. Councillors also received Appendix 7 – Formal Council Tax Setting resolutions (incorporating precepts from Parishes, Fire and Police).

On a motion from Councillor Tim Warren, seconded by Councillor Dine Romero, it was **RESOLVED** that the Council suspends Council rule 42, Content and Length of Speeches, for the duration of this debate so as to enable variations to be permitted to the length of speeches by the Cabinet Member for Finance and Efficiency, the Liberal Democrat, Labour and Independent Group Leaders and the Chair of the Resources Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel.

On a motion from Councillor Gerrish, seconded by Councillor Tim Warren, it was

### **RESOLVED**

#### **1. To approve:**

- a) The General Fund net revenue budget for 2017/18 of £112.889m and the associated Council Tax increase of 1.50% plus a further 2% precept for Adult Social Care, as set out in Appendix 2.
- b) That no Special Expenses be charged other than Town and Parish Council precepts for 2017/18.
- c) The adequacy of reserves at Appendix 2 Table 10 with a risk-assessed level of £13.5m.
- d) The individual service cash limits for 2017/18 summarised at Appendix 2 Table 6 and detailed in Annex 1.

- e) That the specific arrangements for the governance and release of reserves, including invest to save proposals, be delegated to the Council's Section 151 Officer in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance & Efficiency and the Chief Executive.
- 2. To include in its Council Tax setting, the precepts set and approved by other bodies including the local precepts of Town Councils, Parish Councils and the Charter Trustees of the City of Bath, and those of the Fire and Police Authorities.
- 3. To note the Section 151 officer's report on the robustness of the proposed budget and the adequacy of the Council's reserves (Appendix 2, Annex 2) and approves the conditions upon which the recommendations are made as set out throughout Appendix 2.
- 4. That in relation to the capital budget the Council:
  - a) approves a capital programme of £56.083m for 2017/18 and notes items for provisional approval in 2017/18 and the programme for 2018/19 to 2021/22 (including invest to earn) as shown at Appendix 2, Annex 3 including the planned sources of funding .
  - b) delegates implementation, subject to consultation where appropriate, of the capital programmes set out in Annex 3i to Annex 3iii to the relevant Strategic Director in Consultation with the appropriate Cabinet Member.
  - c) approves the CIL allocations as set out in Appendix 2 and the proposed arrangements for agreeing the use of CIL for the unparished area of Bath.
  - d) approves all other delegations as set out in the budget report.
  - e) approves the revised Minimum Revenue Provision Policy as shown at Appendix 2, Annex 4 with the changes to become effective immediately.
  - f) approves the Capital Prudential Indicators as set out in Appendix 2 Table 8.
- 5. To agree the Council's proposed pay policy statement as set out in Appendix 5.
- 6. To note the issues raised in Appendix 6 and agree that the proposals in the budget properly reflect the Council's duties under the Equalities Act 2010.
- 7. That the Council approves the technical resolutions that are derived from the budget report, and all figures in that report, including the precepts for towns, parishes and other precepting bodies as set out in Appendix 7.

**THE COUNCIL APPROVES THE BUDGET AND COUNCIL TAX FOR 2017/18 AS INDICATED ABOVE AND ACCORDINGLY RESOLVES:**

8. That the 2017/18 revenue expenditure is funded as follows:

	Total £
<b>2017/18 Gross Expenditure</b>	<b>330,033,500</b>
2017/18 Income (service income and specific grants)	186,626,977
Core Funding:	
Retained Business Rates*	60,417,560
Use of Reserves	796,763
<b>2017/18 Gross Income</b>	<b>247,841,300</b>
<b>Council Tax Requirement (excluding Parish Precepts)</b>	<b>82,192,200</b>

\* Before Tariff Payment of £29.139m

9. a) That it be noted that on the 20th December 2016 the Divisional Director of Business Support (as authorised section 151 officer) agreed 63,996.16 Band D property equivalent as the Council Tax Base for the year 2017/18 in accordance with regulation 3 of the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992 made under Section 35(5) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.
- b) The amounts calculated by the Council, in accordance with Regulation 6 of the Regulations, as the amount of its Council Tax Base for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which one or more special items relate is given as Annex 1 (1).

*[Annex 1 (1) gives Band D Tax base by parish]*

10. That the following amounts be now calculated by the Council for the 2017/18 financial year in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Local Government and Finance Act 1992, as amended:

a) **£332,437,276** (=£330,033,500 (gross expenditure) +£2,403,776 (Parish precepts)) being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) of the 1992 Act.

*[This is the gross expenditure incurred in performing functions and charged to the revenue account, contingencies for revenue, any financial reserves to be raised, financial reserves to meet prior year deficit not yet provided for, any amounts transferred from its general fund to its collection fund in accordance with section 97(4) of the Local Government Finance 1988 Act, and any amounts transferred from general fund to collection fund under section 98(5) of 1988 Act.]*

b) **£247,841,300** (gross income including use of reserves) being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) of the 1992 Act.

*[This is the income estimated to accrue which will be credited into the revenue account for the year in accordance with proper practices, any amounts transferred in the year from the collection fund to the general fund in accordance with section 97(3) of the 1988 Act, any amounts which will be transferred from the collection fund to the general fund pursuant to a direction under section 98(4) of the 1988 Act and will be credited to the revenue*



*account for the year, and financial reserves used to provide for items in Section 31A(2)]*

c) **£84,595,976** being the amount by which the aggregate at 10(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 10(b) above calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the 1992 Act as its **Council Tax requirement** for the year.

d) **£ 1,321.89** being the amount at 10(c) above divided by the amount at 9(a) above, calculated in accordance with Section 31B of the 1992 Act, as the basic amount of Council Tax for the year.

*[This is the average Council tax including B&NES and parish precepts]*

e) **£ 2,403,776** being the aggregate amount of all special items (Parish precepts) referred to in Section 34(1) of the 1992 Act.

*[This is the total of parish precepts]*

f) **£1,284.33** being the amount at 10(d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 10(e) above by the amount at 9(a) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(2) of the 1992 Act, as the basic amount of its council tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no special item relates.

*[This is the B&NES Council tax only excluding parish precepts]*

g) The amounts given by adding to the amount at 10(f) above the amounts of special items or items relating to dwellings in those parts of the Council's area mentioned above divided in each case by the amount at 9(b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with section 34(3) of the 1992 Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which one or more special items relate are given at Annex 1 (3). *[Annex 1 (3) gives the Band D Council tax for each area **including** the parish precepts]*

h) The amounts given by multiplying the amounts at 10(g) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band divided by the number which in that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in valuation band D, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 36(1) of the 1992 Act, as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different valuation bands are given in Annex 1 (4).

*[Annex 1 (4) shows the B&NES and parish Council Tax for all bands.]*

#### Precepting Authorities

11. That it be noted that for the year 2017/18 the Police & Crime Commissioner for Avon and Somerset has determined the amount in precepts issued to the Council in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, for each of the categories of the dwellings shown below:-

12. Avon and Somerset Police

#### Valuation Bands

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
£121.21	£141.41	£161.61	£181.81	£222.21	£262.61	£303.02	£363.62

13. That it be noted that for the year 2017/18 Avon Fire Authority met on 10th February 2017 to determine the amounts in precepts issued to the Council in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, for each of the categories of the dwellings shown below:-

#### 14. Avon Fire Authority

#### Valuation Bands

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
£46.19	£53.88	£61.58	£69.28	£84.68	£100.07	£115.47	£138.56

15. That, having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts 12, 14 and 10(h) above, the Council, in accordance with Sections 30 and 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 hereby sets the following amounts as the amounts of Council Tax for the 2017/18 financial year for each of the categories of dwellings shown, as listed in Annex 1 (5).

16. On average (for a Band D, 2 adult household) the Council Tax for 2017/18 will be as follows:

Reference Band D 2016/17 £		£ Band D 2017/18	% Increase on 2016/17
1,216.87	Bath and North East Somerset Council*	1,235.48	1.50*
24.03	- Adult Social Care (ASC)*	48.85	2.00*
<b>1,240.90</b>	<b>Sub Total B&amp;NES (Including ASC)</b>	<b>1,284.33</b>	<b>3.50</b>
36.80	Average Parish Precept	37.56	2.07
67.93	Avon Fire Authority	69.28	1.99
178.26	Avon and Somerset Police	181.81	1.99
<b>1,523.89</b>	<b>Total Tax Charged</b>	<b>1,572.98</b>	<b>3.22</b>

[Overall annual increase in average Band D Council Tax is £49.09]

\* The percentage figures represent the number of percentage points which increases for the Adult Social Care precept and the B&NES general expenditure charge each contribute to the overall increase set by the Council in 2017/18.

17. The Council's basic amount of Council Tax for 2017/18 is not determined to be excessive in accordance with principles approved under section 52ZB Local Government Finance Act 1992.

[Notes;

1. During debate, an unsuccessful amendment was moved by Councillor Joe Rayment and seconded by Councillor Robin Moss, calling for the Council to defer setting a budget until the provisional Council date of 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2017 to allow time for the Leader to demand from Government a reversal of cuts to the core grant. This was lost on a recorded vote with 9 Councillors voting in favour, 40 Councillors voting against and 10 abstentions, as set out below;

Councillor voting in favour: - Councillors John Bull, Chris Dando, Doug Deacon, Liz Hardman, Eleanor Jackson, Robin Moss, Lin Patterson, June Player, Joe Rayment.

Councillors voting against: - Councillors Patrick Anketell-Jones, Colin Barrett, Cherry Beath, Jasper Becker, Sarah Bevan, Lisa Brett, Anthony Clarke, Matt Cochrane, Fiona Darey, Matthew Davies, Sally Davis, Emma Dixon, Michael Evans, Charles Gerrish, Lizzie Gladwyn, Bob Goodman, Francine Haerberling, Deirdre Horstmann, Steve Jefferies, Lew Kew, Marie Longstaff, Barry Macrae, Paul May, Paul Myers, Michael Norton, Lisa O'Brien, Bryan Organ, Chris Pearce, Vic Pritchard, Liz Richardson, Mark Shelford, Brian Simmons, Peter Turner, Martin Veal, David Veale, Karen Walker, Geoff Ward, Tim Warren, Karen Warrington, Chris Watt.

Councillors abstaining: - Councillors Rob Appleyard, Neil Butters, Paul Crossley, Andy Furse, Ian Gilchrist, Alison Millar, Nigel Roberts, Dine Romero, Will Sandry, Shaun Stephenson McGall.

2. The substantive motion was carried with 36 Councillors voting in favour and 24 Councillors voting against, as set out below;

Councillors voting in favour: - Councillors Patrick Anketell-Jones, Colin Barrett, Jasper Becker, Anthony Clarke, Matt Cochrane, Fiona Darey, Matthew Davies, Sally Davis, Emma Dixon, Michael Evans, Charles Gerrish, Lizzie Gladwyn, Bob Goodman, Francine Haerberling, Deirdre Horstmann, Steve Jefferies, Les Kew, Marie Longstaff, Barry Macrae, Paul May, Paul Myers, Michael Norton, Lisa O'Brien, Bryan Organ, Chris Pearce, Vic Pritchard, Liz Richardson, Mark Shelford, Brian Simmons, Peter Turner, Martin Veal, David Veale, Geoff Ward, Tim Warren, Karen Warrington, Chris Watt.

Councillors voting against: - Councillors Rob Appleyard, Cherry Beath, Sarah Bevan, Lisa Brett, John Bull, Neil Butters, Paul Crossley, Chris Dando, Doug Deacon, Andy Furse, Ian Gilchrist, Liz Hardman, Eleanor Jackson, Alison Millar, Robin Moss, Lin Patterson, June Player, Joe Rayment, Caroline Roberts, Nigel Roberts, Dine Romero, Will Sandry, Shaun Stephenson McGall, Karen Walker.]

3. During debate, a successful motion was moved by Councillor Tim Warren, seconded by Councillor Dine Romero and agreed, to extend the meeting until 10.30pm if business was not concluded by 10pm (in accordance with Council rule 4A, 48.)

## **72 TREASURY MANAGEMENT & INVESTMENT STRATEGY 2017/18**

The Council considered a report seeking approval for the Treasury Management Strategy and the Investment Strategy.

On a motion from Councillor Charles Gerrish, seconded by Councillor Brian Simmons, it was

### **RESOLVED**

1. To approve the actions proposed within the Treasury Management Strategy statement (Appendix 1 of the report);
2. To approve the Investment Strategy as detailed in Appendix 2 of the report; and
3. That decisions to borrow from the Local Government Association (LGA) Bond Agency, as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report, are delegated to the Chief Finance Officer in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance and Efficiency.

*[Notes;*

- 1. The above resolution was carried with one abstention from Councillor Lin Patterson and all other Councillors voting in favour.]*

## **73 LGPS POOLING OF INVESTMENTS**

The Council considered a report about the Council's participation in Brunel Pension Partnership.

On a motion from Councillor David Veale, seconded by Councillor Charles Gerrish, it was

### **RESOLVED**

1. That, in its capacity as the Administering Authority for the Avon Pension Fund, and having received and reviewed the Full Business Case relating to the proposed Brunel Pension Partnership, the Council hereby resolves to enter into investment pooling with respect to the Avon Pension Fund.

Such resolution is made on and subject to the following terms and conditions:

- i. That the Brunel Pension Partnership investment pool is developed, funded and implemented substantially in accordance with provisions in the Full Business Case and more particularly that:
  - A FCA regulated company to be named Brunel Pension Partnership Limited be established and operated substantially in accordance with provisions in the Full Business Case as to its ownership, structure, governance and services capability;
  - A new supervisory body be established comprising the Council and all other Administering Authority participants in the Brunel Pension Partnership to act to ensure effective oversight of the Council's investment and participation in the Brunel Pension Partnership.
- ii. Delegate to the Leader of the Council the exercising of all Council functions as shareholder of the company, in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer.
- iii. The Avon Pension Fund Committee be authorised and granted delegated powers to undertake such tasks as it thinks appropriate to progress implementation of investment pooling, and to take such decisions and do all other things deemed necessary in order to promote the interests of the Council with respect to pooling, which without limitation shall include participation in the development of Terms of Reference and the role of the supervisory board and agreeing and authorising financial expenditure or investment that may be required consequential upon the Council's participation in the Brunel Pension Partnership.

- iv. That the Chief Finance Officer, Chief Legal Officer and Head of Business Finance and Pensions be authorised and granted delegated powers to undertake such tasks as they think appropriate to progress implementation of investment pooling, and to take such decisions and do all other things deemed necessary in order to support the Avon Pension Fund Committee with respect to pooling, which without limitation shall include agreeing and authorising documentation and contracts, and informing and advising the Committee on the continued viability and suitability of investment pooling in light of any developments, financial or otherwise, in the period up to the establishment of the Brunel Pension Partnership.
- v. That subject to the above, all such matters be carried out with the aim of achieving a target date for investment pooling of 1 April 2018, and otherwise subject to such intermediate steps and timescales as may be considered appropriate and necessary by the Avon Pension Fund Committee.

*[Notes;*

- 1. *The above resolution was carried with one abstention from Councillor Lin Patterson and all other Councillors voting in favour.]*

#### **74 DESIGNATION OF STATUTORY OFFICER FOR ADULT SOCIAL SERVICES & CHILDREN'S SERVICES**

The Council considered a report seeking approval to the designation of the Strategic Director - People & Communities (CM Bowden) as the Council's statutory Director of Adult Social Services and Director of Children's Services with immediate effect.

On a motion from Councillor Tim Warren, seconded by Councillor Dine Romero, it was

**RESOLVED** unanimously to designate Charles Michael Bowden, Strategic Director – People & Communities, as its 'Director of Adult Social Services' and 'Director of Children's Services' in accordance with section 6 of the Local Authority Social Services Act 1970 and section 18 of the Children's Act 2004 respectively, with immediate effect.

#### **75 QUESTIONS, STATEMENTS, PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS FROM COUNCILLORS**

There were no items from Councillors.

The meeting ended at 10.13 pm

Chairman .....

Date Confirmed and Signed .....



# **COUNCIL 14<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2017**

## **PUBLIC STATEMENTS**

### **List of registered public speakers**

- |                      |                                 |            |
|----------------------|---------------------------------|------------|
| 1. Paul Stansall     | Library services                | (attached) |
| 2. Yue Rao           | Library services                |            |
| 3. Alexander Lea     | Library services                | (attached) |
| 4. David Almond      | Library services                |            |
| 5. Andy Halliday     | Library services                | (attached) |
| 6. Kim Sherwood      | Library services                |            |
| 7. Moira Young       | Library services                |            |
| 8. Jake Bishop-Ponte | Proposed cuts to Youth Services |            |
| 9. Amber Sims        | Proposed cuts to Youth Services |            |
| 10. Jared Downs      | Proposed cuts to Youth Services |            |

## **QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

<b>P 01</b>	<b>Question from:</b>	<b>Christine Boyd</b>
<p>Prior to the last budget and council tax setting meeting on 16th February 2016 budgets with provisional approval required a formal Cabinet decision for full approval. Since last year's budget setting meeting full approval has been approved by a single cabinet member (for example when 300k tranches of money were released for the east of Bath park and ride).</p> <p>The budget and council tax setting report presented to council for approval on 16th February 2016 contains no discussion of this change, neither do the minutes of this meeting. To avoid a perception that this change was slipped past members without them noticing please explain;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How and when this change was explained to members of the council prior to them giving approval for this change?</li> <li>2. What was the justification for weakening budget controls in this way, given that the effect has been to exclude other members of the cabinet from such decisions, and to make them less transparent to Council members and to the public?</li> </ol>		
<b>Answer from:</b>		<b>Councillor Charles Gerrish</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The reference to a Cabinet decision includes Single Member as set out in Part 3 of the Council Constitution. This use of Single Member decisions for Capital approvals has operated for a considerable number of years and there has been no change in approach by the Council.</li> <li>2. As above – there has been no weakening of budget controls or transparency. The Single Member decision process requires the same financial and legal sign-off and approval as a Cabinet Report and is subject to the same publication and call-in procedures.</li> </ol>		
<b>P 02</b>	<b>Question from:</b>	<b>Sophie Hooper Lea</b>
<p>Having a car park as close as possible to the library is essential for those with accessibility issues. Please could the Council confirm that Manvers Street car park is not being considered for redevelopment (either as a whole or in part) as part of the long term development of Bath city centre?</p>		
<b>Answer from:</b>		<b>Councillor Martin Veal</b>
<p>There are no current plans to redevelop Manvers Street car park. Policy SB3 of the Council's Place-making Plan proposes redevelopment of the wider area but plans for the retention of car parking. It should also be noted that the SouthGate car park is also within nearby walking distance.</p>		
<b>P 03</b>	<b>Question from:</b>	<b>Sophie Hooper Lea</b>
<p>The One Stop Shop is not currently open on Sundays, which is a vitally important day for</p>		



schoolchildren and others such as full-time employees to use the library. Please could the Council confirm whether the new library will be open on Sundays and, if so, that it will be open for at least the same number of hours as the current library (i.e. 3 hours)?

**Answer from:**

**Councillor Martin Veal**

Yes, we can confirm it is our intention to open on Sundays for at least the same number of hours as the current library.

**P 04**

**Question from:**

**Mary English**

I would like to ask why they has been no consultation re the moving of Bath Central Library All we are being told is what's going to happen AFTER the move, not whether or not we agree with it.

This is in complete contravention to government guidelines  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-libraries-as-a-statutory-service/libraries-as-a-statutory-service> re library changes which clearly state:

*Libraries as a statutory service*

*Local authorities have a statutory duty under the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 'to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service for all persons' in the area that want to make use of it (section 7). Local authorities have the power to offer wider library services beyond the statutory service to other user groups, and the Act allows for joint working between library authorities.*

*In considering how best to deliver the statutory duty each library authority is responsible for determining, through consultation, the local needs and to deliver a modern and efficient library service that meets the requirements of their communities within available resources.*

*The key points being:*

*Opinions on how to consult*

*Consultation proposals must be at a formative stage as stated in Brent v Gunning, (1985). Lord Singh in Barnet v Partingdale (2003) also said, "however that is what it must be, a proposal and not something that has already been decided".*

*Applying the learning from judicial reviews*

*It is good practice to do a thorough analysis of local need - do not 'assume'.*

*Best value principles state that a consultation needs to:*

- *occur when proposals are still at an early stage*
- *provide sufficient reasons for any proposal to enable intelligent consideration and response*
- *give adequate time for consideration and response*
- *take into account its results when finalising any proposal*
- *factor in the time taken for the different stages*

I would like to know why this hasn't happened and what you intend to do about it?

I have already emailed the Minister for Culture, Media and Sports and informed her of your actions.

**Answer from:**

**Councillor Martin Veal**

The Council is presently consulting on what users want the Library to look like should it relocate to Lewis House, and what services users want the Library to provide if relocated to Lewis House. That consultation closes on 1 March 2017. The Council will then reach a decision about what any proposed relocated Library and service would look like. After this, the Council proposes to hold further consultation and this will inform the Council's discharge of the Public Services Equality Duty.

**P 05**    **Question from:**    **William Morris**

Why is it that members of the cabinet and the council are not in active talks with Bath University, to help fund and sponsor the annual costs of a public access library at its current site of the Podium?

**Answer from:**    Councillor Martin Veal

We have had conversations with both Bath University and Bath Spa University about the general provision of library services and will continue to do so. We are still in the consultation process and would be willing to consider alternative opportunities that help deliver the required saving along with the strategic objective. What is clear is that the joint library and One Stop Shop in Keynsham – which opened in October 2014 – is already proving the success of the integrated modern library approach. The number of active users at Keynsham Library (those taking out at least one item) rose from 3,099 in March 2014 to 4,630 in March 2016; while the number of active users in other libraries continued to decline – reflecting the national picture of falling library use.

**P 06**    **Question from:**    **William Morris**

Bath Uni, now one of the largest and richest Universities in England and recently ranked no.3 in the Times league table of student satisfaction, has the economic means to contribute to civic life, driving up standards for low income young people by helping fund a thriving library. They are building their own new library opposite Lewis house, in a new halls of residence. Why is it therefore that the Council, instead of seeking business sponsorship for the podium space, propose to use the podium space for its own BNES offices and staff? (instead of the very loved public access library it now is....)

**Answer from:**    Councillor Martin Veal

See previous answer

**P 07**    **Question from:**    **Jane Middleton**

How many unaccompanied refugee children did the Council state to the Government that it would be able to resettle in this (2016/17) financial year, under section 67 of the Immigration Act (Dubs Amendment)?

**Answer from:**    Councillor Michael Evans

At the point that the Government set up the National Dispersal Scheme for Un-accompanied Asylum-Seeking children, each LA was asked to take up to a number children equivalent to 0.07% of their 0-19 population. For B&NES this meant that we were asked to take up to 23

children over next 2-3 years. This request did not specify that these children would be “Dubs” children. Any children placed through the National Dispersal Scheme would be UASC’s from any destination (They could also be children identified as being smuggled/trafficked in lorries through ports, although primarily Dover).

**P 08      Question from:      Jane Middleton**

How many unaccompanied refugee children have been resettled in Bath & North East Somerset in this (2016/17) financial year, under section 67 of the Immigration Act (Dubs Amendment)?

**Answer from:**      Councillor Michael Evans

Currently B&NES looks after a total of 13 Un-accompanied Asylum-Seeking children. Eight of these children have come since the beginning of the National Dispersal Scheme which began in June 2016.

The organisation and dispersal of unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people throughout the South West region is undertaken by South-West Councils following notification by the Home Office. Each of the LA’s in the South West is contacted in turn on a rota basis to identify placements as and when SW Councils are notified by the Home Office of young people that require a placement. All of the young people we have been asked to place have come via either Kent County Council (found as stowaways in lorry’s coming through Dover), or from other LA’s across the South East, having been deposited by lorries at various motorway services. None of the young people were classified as “Dubs” children (ie; from the Calais (or other) refugee camps in France).

**P 09      Question from:      Mike Midgley**

Did the Council give any indication to the Government that it would not be able to resettle any unaccompanied refugee children in the 2017/18 financial year or any future year?

**Answer from:**      Councillor Michael Evans

I can confirm that at no point has the Council indicated that it cannot take unaccompanied refugee children in 17/18 or any future year. In fact the Council has played a leading role in the regional organisation of arrangements for the dispersal of UASC’s throughout the region.

**P 10      Question from:      Mike Midgley**

Had any assessment been made of how many unaccompanied refugee children the Council would be able to resettle in the 2017/18 financial year or any future year, before the Government announcement of the end of the Dubs Amendment programme?

**Answer from:**      Councillor Michael Evans

In the summer of 2016 (at the point that the National dispersal scheme was introduced), the Home office calculated that each Local Authority could take a number of UASC’s up to 0.07% of its child population. In B&ANES this equated to a request to take up to 23 young people. At present we have 13 UASC’s, 8 of whom have come to our care via the National Dispersal system since June. The organisation and dispersal of unaccompanied asylum-

seeking young people through-out the South West region is undertaken by South-West Councils following notification by the Home Office. Each of the LA's in the South West is contacted in turn on a rota basis to identify placements as and when SW Councils are notified by the Home Office of young people that require a placement. All of the young people we have been asked to place have come via either Kent County Council (found as stowaways in lorry's coming through Dover), or from other LA's across the South East, having been deposited by lorries at various motorway services. None of the young people were classified as "Dubs" children (ie; from the Calais (or other) refugee camps in France).

Paul Stansall RIBA  
Bath Library Downgrading - High Risk of Fiscal Failure

I am an architect with five decades in teaching, research and design. I have worked across the UK, continental Europe and North America. I have advised the National Audit Office on value-for-money savings across the central government estate. I advised HM Treasury on workplace procurement policy. My specialty is the refurbishment of buildings while under occupation.

The Council's plan to move the Podium library to Lewis House and to move office staff from Lewis House to the Podium is courting fiscal failure. It is ill prepared. It will overrun its budgetted spend of £4.4m, will not deliver the promised savings of £800k/year and will fail Bath library users. When senior visitors to the Podium library - with its bus stops nearby - were asked about the move to Manvers Street, they said they would not be able to walk the extra distance.

There are well established principles for value-for-money spending in government procurement. They start with a sound business case based on HM Treasury's Green Book. My FOI request of 10th January asked for sight of the Council's business case. I have not received this. Will the Council open their books on this project, as permitted under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014?

Moving the library without a feasibility study is asking for trouble. Not asking key questions of available experts at this early stage is foolhardy. Ignoring the due consultation process is illegal.

1. Has the council consulted development control on the Podium and Lewis House changes of use? One from office to library. The other from library to office. Will the public object? Is half the current Podium space enough to provide a fit-for-purpose public library?
2. Has the Council had a conversation with the local fire-officer for these changes of use? Are they happy about fire compartmentation at Lewis House and with the means of escape for the forty-three thousand library visitors per month?
3. What do structural, mechanical and electrical engineers say about the technical challenges of punching staircases through floor slabs and threading new services in buildings already in use? Will adequate numbers of library book stacks prove a problem for Lewis House floor loads? Will the Podium need an expensive raised floor to carry new workplace cabling?
4. Has an outline cost plan been prepared? What do construction professionals say about the project management challenges of occupied buildings? Has the removal of asbestos from either building been considered? Will 'green' construction management and 'considerate contractors' be employed?
5. The One-Stop-Shop will need relocating while the work is carried out. Where to? The cost of business disruption will be high. Has this been factored into the spend-to-save equation? There is a police presence in Lewis House. How will this be dealt with?

This is a high-risk venture. In my experience, it will be an expensive job creation scheme for builders, cable installers and office removal firms with library users and taxpayers being the big losers.

The risk of fiscal failure is high. I ask you to vote against a budget that has holes in it; to stop and debate what kind of library service is needed for our World Heritage city. Bath hosts annual literary festivals, has two world-class universities, a high number of library using groups of writers, foreign students, children and senior citizens.

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## **Why libraries matter to young people**

Alex Lea

14<sup>th</sup> February 2017

My name is Alex Lea. I am 11 years old and in my first year at Ralph Allen School. I would like to talk to you about the importance of libraries to young people.

I love Bath Central Library. It is a wide open and welcoming space, perfect for inspiration and broadening horizons. It has an excellent selection of books for all ages of children.

My brother, sister and I are regular library users. According to our loans history on LibrariesWest we borrowed 225 books in the six months before we heard about the library move. We browse in the library and we order books online.

Online ordering works if you are computer literate, know which books you want and have time to wait for them to arrive. But having a wide selection of books on shelves is essential. How else do we find what interests us amidst all the crowds of books online? We need books to flip through and first pages to read. And our homework projects are due in long before online orders would arrive.

My nine year old sister Izzy has significant learning difficulties. She is easily discouraged and needs books that look inviting. She judges books by their pages as well as their covers and she can't do that online. Izzy struggles enormously with her reading but she perseveres because she loves books. Reading and being read to has a huge impact on her cognitive ability and we have the library to thank for that.

Children need to choose books for themselves and need the freedom to browse the shelves. Bath Central Library is one room with one exit. As long as a parent can see the exit if they need to, they know their children are safe. A library over three floors with lifts, stairs and an exit spilling onto a busy road would be a nightmare for parents of young children and those with additional needs.

Reading books makes us better people. I can give anyone who is interested a page of references to research that shows all the benefits of reading for pleasure from academic progress to mental health. Young people who use libraries read more and enjoy books more, so they get those benefits. I have learned so much from books and will always be grateful to Bath Central Library and its librarians for that.

I am shocked by the fact that the Council is moving and changing the library without any meaningful consultation or any assessment of what our community needs. Bath has 'entrenched problems with literacy' according to research published last week by The Literacy Trust and Experian. If this tells us anything, it is that Bath needs a well-stocked library and knowledgeable librarians more than ever.

I would like to present the Council with our petition to save Bath Central Library. Our campaign group is full of interesting, articulate, creative, and committed people who got that way by reading books. Please delay your decision to move the library and engage with us – we have lots of ideas about how we can protect our great library, make it greater still and address the Council's need to cut costs.

Thank you.

## **Research references for: Why libraries matter to young people**

**Alex Lea**

**14<sup>th</sup> February 2017**

Social inequalities in cognitive scores at age 16: The role of reading  
Centre for Longitudinal Studies, Institute of Education, University College London,  
September 2013

Children who read for pleasure are likely to do significantly better at school than their peers. Reading for pleasure during secondary school had the biggest effect, with books judged to be more important to children's development at an older age than the influence of their parents. The combined effect on children's progress of reading books often, going to the library regularly and reading newspapers at 16 was four times greater than the advantage children gained from having a parent with a degree.

<http://discovery.ucl.ac.uk/1473708/>

[http://www.literacytrust.org.uk/news/5560\\_study\\_provides\\_evidence\\_that\\_reading\\_for\\_pleasure\\_boosts\\_children\\_s\\_academic\\_performance](http://www.literacytrust.org.uk/news/5560_study_provides_evidence_that_reading_for_pleasure_boosts_children_s_academic_performance)

Literature Review: The impact of reading for pleasure and empowerment

The Reading Agency, June 2015

Children reading for pleasure - the main outcomes reported were enjoyment, knowledge of the self and other people, social interaction, social and cultural capital, imagination, focus and flow, relaxation and mood regulation. Improvements in young children's communication abilities and longer-term education outcomes were also reported for early years children.

[https://readingagency.org.uk/news/The\\_Impact\\_of\\_Reading\\_for\\_Pleasure\\_and\\_Empowerment.pdf](https://readingagency.org.uk/news/The_Impact_of_Reading_for_Pleasure_and_Empowerment.pdf)

Research evidence on reading for pleasure

Department of Education, May 2012.

Research evidence on reading for pleasure from domestic and international literature.

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/284286/reading\\_for\\_pleasure.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/284286/reading_for_pleasure.pdf)

Public libraries and Literacy

National Literacy Trust, February 2011

Young people that use their public library are nearly twice as likely to be reading outside of class every day. Public library users are nearly twice as likely to say that they enjoy reading either very much or quite a lot. Of the 43.8% of pupils who do use the library, the most common reason, cited by over half of all pupils, was that the library had interesting reading materials.

[http://www.literacytrust.org.uk/assets/0000/7424/Public\\_libraries\\_literacy\\_2011.pdf](http://www.literacytrust.org.uk/assets/0000/7424/Public_libraries_literacy_2011.pdf)

Identifying the places with the greatest literacy need

National Literacy Trust and Experian, February 2017

Bath is one of the constituencies with 'entrenched problems with literacy' i.e. where at least one ward with significant literacy need. 212 constituencies (40% of the total of 533) have a higher literacy score than Bath.

[http://www.literacytrust.org.uk/assets/0003/7673/Constituency\\_literacy\\_score\\_table\\_-\\_by\\_rank\\_-\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.literacytrust.org.uk/assets/0003/7673/Constituency_literacy_score_table_-_by_rank_-_FINAL.pdf)

<https://www.experianplc.com/media/news/2017/86-of-english-constituencies-have-entrenched-problems-with-literacy>



**WHAT WE STAND TO LOSE As the former Manager of the Library-I would like to put to you.---**

Modern City Central Library---Excellent access including from an undercover car parking Superb-facilities for all of our 43,000 a month visitors, ALL on one floor a massive 1,675 sq m of public space.

A well equipped gallery space -very popular with local groups,and highly acclaimed by all organisers of the diverse range of Festivals the city hosts.

Dedicated areas for Childrens and Families and Teenage areas both -re modelled after face to face consulting with our frequent users ,many families valuing the range of books readily available-many children have with family and staff support begun their reading activities, as well as the excellent activities organised, regularly attracting 60 plus children each time . Our 100 seater study area is frequently full, benefitting from new seating and improved lighting, plug in facilities for laptops and close access to many well used reference books.

Equally after consulting we refurnished the reading area again regularly filled with visitors enjoying papers and periodicals Our extensive stock of books are all on moveable book presses, an advantage to us to open up our large floor space for Author talks, Music and Drama, Festivals activities- using our in house p/a system, and loop Many Visitors, and Festival staff praising our excellent building .Very much into modern digital technology progress, our 35 public computers whilst not always in use, do have the latest software updates installed -to meet, our visitors demand/expectations, and trained staff can and do assist users including those seeking benefits and universal credit applicants We also have a good range of kit for those with visual impairment. A further 3 pcs have fast response library catalogue access. With our own direct dedicated high speed broadband connection, we offer study area users wifi hot spots, with 4 other spots around the library. All of our 3 meeting rooms have internet connections-widely used by hirers of these facilities. Our 5 self service kiosks are in regular demand certainly more than 9% of library visitors use them ,each has had the new library management systems installed. To aid archive hunters we purchased state of the art digital retrieval kit and printers- is a very very popular asset. Immediate access to our extensive archives is regularly appreciated by many researchers , as is access to the thousands of books currently in Rolling stack store--again sought after daily.

To aid visitors enjoyment, we re-lit our foyer, and installed new display boards-and groups pay to advertise the City's diverse events and activities, new signage inside our modern library and also with permission of our landlord Waitrose improved external information boards. Internally we installed a new air conditioning unit, along with new heating,.

I was proud to lead an excellent team of staff members, with whom regular workshops and training was done to enable their delivery of excellent front line service-which received national awards, it saddens me and I am sure many others that 25 posts feature in these savings plans.

I still believe that with professional promotion and marketing of both our service at this Wonderful Podium library, and facilities available, we can increase library footfall, use of our services and income from hired facilities has great potential to ards more income generation - at accost far less I suggest than the move proposed.

I fear that if this move happens the decimation, fragmenting, and considerable reduction in what we are applauded for providing within our Modern Central Library ,will impact on the future of literacy in this Heritage city, and I am certain affect the lives of so many people for many years to come. I would plead that it be reconsidered urgently.

Thank You.