

BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET COUNCIL

MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING

Thursday, 8th November, 2018

Present:- **Councillors** Cherry Beath, Patrick Anketell-Jones, Rob Appleyard, Tim Ball, Colin Barrett, Jasper Becker, Sarah Bevan, Colin Blackburn, Neil Butters, Anthony Clarke, Matt Cochrane, Sue Craig, Chris Dando, Matthew Davies, Sally Davis, Douglas Deacon, Emma Dixon, Michael Evans, Charles Gerrish, Ian Gilchrist, Bob Goodman, Francine Haerberling, Alan Hale, Liz Hardman, Steve Hedges, Deirdre Horstmann, Eleanor Jackson, Les Kew, Marie Longstaff, Barry Macrae, Paul May, Robin Moss, Paul Myers, Michael Norton, Lisa O'Brien, Bryan Organ, Lin Patterson, June Player, Vic Pritchard, Joe Rayment, Liz Richardson, Nigel Roberts, Dine Romero, Richard Samuel, 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** John Bull, Paul Crossley, Andrew Furse, Lizzie Gladwyn, Steve Jeffries, Shaun Stephenson-McGall, Alison Millar, Michelle O'Doherty and Caroline Roberts

46 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

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

47 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Declarations were made by the following Councillors;

Item 7 – Statements from the public

- Councillor Paul May declared a disclosable pecuniary interest with regard to the statement from UNISON about Sirona, as a non-executive Director of Sirona. He left the Chamber while this statement was considered.

Item 8 – Joint Community Safety Plan

- Councillor Joe Rayment declared an 'other' interest as an employee of DHI which is mentioned in the document.

Item 12 – Protocol on Council Company Governance

- Councillor Charles Gerrish declared an 'other' interest as Chairman of ADL.

Item 15 – Labour motion – School Places and the Threatened Closure of Bath Studio School

- Councillor Emma Dixon declared a disclosable pecuniary interest as she works as a Teaching Assistant at Saltford School, which is part of the Wellsway MAT. She left the Chamber for this item.

- Councillor Tim Ball declared an ‘other’ interest due to having children at the Studio School.
- Councillor Liz Hardman declared an ‘other’ interest as a Governor at Aspire School run by the Wellsway MAT.

Item 17 – Liberal Democrat motion – SEND funding for Children

- Councillor Tim Ball declared an ‘other’ interest as having children with special educational needs.
- Councillor Robin Moss declared an ‘other’ interest as the Chair of the SEND partnership.
- Councillor Charles Gerrish declared an ‘other’ interest as a school governor at Threeways school.

Item 18 – Liberal Democrat motion – People’s Vote

- Councillor Robin Moss declared an ‘other’ interest, having signed the People’s Vote petition.
- Councillor Eleanor Jackson declared a disclosable pecuniary interest as being in receipt of a German state pension.

During consideration of item 9 on the agenda ‘Influencing the central government policy agenda’, the Monitoring Officer re-issued a dispensation for all Councillors with interests in Airbnb, short term lets, hotels, guest houses etc to enable them to take part in the debate and vote.

48 MINUTES - 13TH SEPTEMBER 2018

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

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of 13th September 2018 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

49 ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL OR FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

In addition to the customary announcements regarding meeting arrangements, the Chair made the following announcements;

- She asked Councillors to note that the Monitoring Officer had agreed a minor amendment to the job title for the officer delegation for the Joint Spatial Plan (JSP) (granted at the 9th November 2017 Council meeting) to change from Strategic Director for Place to ‘Corporate Director’.
- She asked Councillors to stand for a minute’s silence in recognition of the WW1 centenary, and also to remember former B&NES and Avon Councillor Jim Lingard who has passed away.

- She reminded Councillors of the programme of ceremonies and services for remembrance being offered in November 2018. [Details available in a leaflet on Reception and online.]
- She invited Councillors to the Holocaust Memorial Day event – 24th January (5.30 for 5.45 start) in the Alkmaar room.
- She reminded Councillors and the public to nominate to the Young Stars Award recognising young people's achievement;
www.bathnes.gov.uk/ouryoungstars
- She reminded Councillors of the Chairs awards ceremony on February 27th 2018, closing date for nominations 21st December 2018.

50 TO ANNOUNCE ANY URGENT BUSINESS AGREED BY THE CHAIRMAN

There were no items of urgent business.

51 QUESTIONS, STATEMENTS, PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

The Chair made reference to the Q&A document which had been circulated at the meeting and is attached to the online minutes.

Statements to the meeting were made by the following members of the public;

Andrew Dickens from the Lower Common East Allotment Association (LCEAA) addressed the Council and made reference to his requests at the September Council meeting which he explained had not been addressed. He raised the same concerns about the rights of their allotment association regarding the access gates and noticeboards and called again for these rights to be properly respected. Councillor Rob Appleyard asked Andrew if he was aware of any reason why the Council took the position that it did. Andrew responded that he had been told that the access to gates and noticeboards was given to one association per site. A copy of Andrew's statement has been placed on the Council's Minute book. The Chair thanked Andrew for his statement which was referred to the relevant Cabinet Member.

Paul Roles made a statement in which he updated the Council on progress with the issues he had raised at the July meeting regarding Curo accommodation in Kingsmead. He reported that, with the Cabinet Member's help, there had been some progress on improving those issues. He had also been reporting drug dealing and Curo had taken action in this regard the previous day. Paul also raised the issue of mopeds in the city centre and problems with how they were sometimes parked across a full car space. He suggested a consultation and then measures to enforce action (a sticker with a first warning and then fines). Councillor Dine Romero asked Paul if he thought some of the issues he had raised were worse as a result of not having a local police station in Bath. Paul replied that he definitely thought so. The Chair thanked Paul for his statement which was referred to the relevant Cabinet Member.

David Redgewell made a statement on behalf of Bus Users UK. He explained he had been pushing hard for the U1 and U2 services and thanked Councillor Mark Shelford for his help with that. He expressed concern about the 179 service and wondered if CIL money could go towards supporting that service at the weekend. Councillor Neil Butters asked if David considered that the transfer of powers to the Metro Mayor was proceeding according to the original timetable, to which David responded that pressure needed to be kept up for that. A copy of David's statement has been placed on the Council's Minute book. The Chair thanked David for his statement which was referred to the relevant Cabinet Member.

Andrew Jones made a statement about the Council's planning website and requested it be modified to make the charges more evident. Councillor Sarah Bevan asked Andrew to confirm if he had already achieved some minor amendments to the planning portal, to which he replied that the website had been significantly changed to help inform individuals, but that further changes were needed about the charges. A copy of Andrew's statement has been placed on the Council's Minute book. The Chair thanked Andrew for his statement which was referred to the relevant Cabinet Member.

Keith Russell made a statement about the gull problem in Bath, as a resident of Bath Western Riverside, where he said it is a significant problem. He called for a number of measures to address this, including responsibilities placed on developers, and various gull-proofing initiatives. In response to a question from Councillor Tim Warren about whether residents would be prepared to pay a small contribution for anti-gull measures in their own buildings, Keith responded that he would but couldn't speak for others, and that developers needed to consider this issue with flat roofs generally. Councillor Ian Gilchrist asked if Keith was aware that the gull removal programme relied on residents asking for help, to which Keith responded that he was aware and acknowledged that residents who rented may have less interest in pursuing the issue. Councillor June Player asked if Keith thought spikes and netting were helpful as the current measures weren't working, to which Keith responded that a mixture of such measures was helpful, but reiterated that genuine engagement from developers was key. A copy of Keith's statement has been placed on the Council's Minute book. The Chair thanked Keith for his statement which was referred to the relevant Cabinet Member.

Fiona Edwards addressed the Council and presented a petition of 1137 signatures from Keynsham Plastic Reaction with the following wording;

"Single use, disposable plastics such as polystyrene takeaway containers and plastic cups are a cause of litter, a waste of resources, and a problem for future generations. They waste fossil fuels and create unsightly streets, and their persistence causes untold harm for wildlife on land and at sea.

We all need to play our part in resolving this situation, but local government in Keynsham should play a leading role as champion, active supporter, regulator, and service provider in ending the prevalence of single use, disposable plastics."

Councillor Bob Goodman asked if Fiona was aware that the Council was already committed to removing single use plastic and supported the ambitious targets within the petition, to which she responded that she was. Councillor Cherry Beath asked what further practical support the Council could give, to which Fiona responded that they were working towards national accreditation, but being able to consult Councillors and the Cabinet Member was helpful. Councillor Joe Rayment asked if

there was a similar group in Bath, to which Fiona responded that there was. A copy of Fiona's statement has been placed on the Council's Minute book. The Chair thanked Fiona for her statement and petition which were referred to the relevant Cabinet Member.

Sarah Moore made a statement about the proposed closure of Bath Studio School closure following Bath Community Academy closing, which had affected her son. She mentioned accommodation problems resulting from Academies increasing numbers for funding but not increasing the space available for learning. She acknowledged that the Council did not have control over Academies but called on the Council to put pressure on Government to put in guidelines for limiting pupil numbers to ensure an optimum learning environment. In response to a question from Councillor Tim Ball about whether Sarah considered enough information had been given to parents before the closure was announced, she responded that she definitely did not think so. The Chair thanked Sarah for her statement which was referred to the relevant Cabinet Member.

Angie Sowton made a statement to Council in support of a petition of 130 signatures which she presented on behalf of the parents of children at St Andrew's Church school opposing planned cuts to education. It called upon the Council to write to the Secretary of State for Education and the Chancellor of the Exchequer calling for them to reverse cuts to school budgets and amend arrangements for per pupil funding so that no school loses out. Councillor Paul May asked if Angie was aware that the Council, traditionally in receipt of quite low funding, had this year received the highest settlement through the national funding formula representing 7.8% for the next two years, plus extra funding for special educational needs: Angie responded that she was aware of the extra SEN funding but that, in most schools, they were facing cuts. Councillor Tim Ball asked Angie if she considered that funding was sufficient to meet the needs of the ever growing number of SEND pupils, to which she replied that it wasn't and teachers and volunteers were being expected to deal with children with more and more complex needs. Councillor Chris Dando asked if Angie considered this would be sorted out by the funding promised in the budget from Philip Hammond, to which Angie responded that she didn't consider that would be the case. The Chair thanked Angie for the statement and petition, which would be placed on the Council's Minute book and referred to the relevant Cabinet Member.

Jane Riekemann made a statement calling on the Council to publicly support a people's vote on the final terms of any Brexit deal and outlined a number of ways in which the South West would be adversely affected by leaving the European Union. Councillor Tim Warren asked whether Jane didn't consider that this issue was up to individuals rather than the Council to express a view, to which she responded that it was effective if the Council as a public body gave a view, as well as individuals giving their views. Councillor Sue Craig asked if Jane was aware that the Local Government Association had asked Government for a strategy to address the £8.4 billion funding shortfall which would open up when we leave the European Union, to which Jane responded that she was not. The Chair thanked Jane for her statement, which would be placed on the Council's Minute book and referred to the relevant Cabinet Member.

Pam Richards made a statement to Council highlighting lack of progress in two key performance areas of the Virgin Care Transformation programme. Full details can be read in Pam's statement which has been added to the Minute book and attached to the online record. Councillor Vic Pritchard asked if Pam was aware that he intended to bring a comprehensive update to the next Health & Wellbeing Select Committee. Pam responded that she was aware, it was about time and more information was needed. Councillor Tim Ball asked Pam what more she considered the Council should be doing, to which she responded that Virgin Care needed to be held more closely to account and there needed to be a more transparent and accountable atmosphere in Virgin Care. Councillor Robin Moss asked if it was still the case that staff were having to complete multiple referral forms leading to poor information sharing and potentially putting clients at risk, to which Pam responded that that was her understanding, despite IT integration being one of Virgin Care's promises. The Chair thanked Pam for her statement, which would be placed on the Council's Minute book and referred to the relevant Cabinet Member.

Dave Dixon made a statement highlighting various aspects of the public realm which he considered would benefit from a portion of the £10million of public funding that the Leader would be discussing with WECA later this month. Councillor Tim Warren asked Dave if he was aware that 80% of the Council's budget went on Adult and Children's Social care. Dave replied that he was aware of that, but wanted the Leader to access some of the WECA funding to support the high street. Councillor Dine Romero sought clarity on when the photos that Dave showed were taken, to which he replied that it had been earlier that day. Councillor Robin Moss asked Dave if he knew who was responsible for some of the unsightly aspects of the city centre that he had displayed, to which Dave responded that when the Liberal Democrats had put them in, they had been in good condition. The Chair thanked Dave for his statement, which would be placed on the Council's Minute book and referred to the relevant Cabinet Member.

John Drake from UNISON made a statement regarding the current dispute with Sirona and stated the Council had a moral responsibility to sort it out. He asked the Council to think about the care workers who would lose out if this change to their contracts was implemented, and further called on the Council to not enter into any flat rate contracts in future. Councillor Tim Ball asked John if he was aware that, were the Council to step in with funding, it would mean that 5 existing staff would need to be made redundant. John responded that would be one way of doing it, but there were other ways and explained that Bristol City Council had raised the pay of care workers so it must be possible. Councillor Tim Ball asked if John believed the Council could have done better to avoid the situation, to which John responded that it would have been better to not force flat cash contracts onto care providers, which take no account of inflation or pay awards. Councillor Robin Moss asked if John could confirm what he had heard that, due to problems with recruitment and retention, staffing rotas were lower in some shifts than health and safety requirements permitted. John responded that as Sirona's reputation as an employer was not very good, he had heard that there were shifts which did not have the correct staff levels. The Chair thanked John for his statement which would be referred to the relevant Cabinet Member.

52 JOINT COMMUNITY SAFETY PLAN

The Council considered a report presenting the Joint Community Safety Plan which sets out the joint community safety work which will be done by the Community Safety Partnership and the Police and Crime Commissioner over the next three years.

On a motion from Councillor Bob Goodman, seconded by Councillor Mark Shelford, it was unanimously

RESOLVED to adopt the Joint Community Safety Plan.

53 INFLUENCING THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT POLICY AGENDA

The Council considered a report setting out progress made in developing a single document containing the Council's key requests of central government in order to create a more sustainable Council.

On a motion from Councillor Tim Warren, seconded by Councillor Lisa O'Brien, it was

RESOLVED

1. To support the outlined proposals in the attached document *Thriving in uncertain times*, but note that the total estimated additional income to the Council if all of these proposals were agreed to by government would only be an estimated £2.3m p.a.
2. To adopt the document attached as the Appendix as its core position statement in order to influence the central government policy agenda, with the following amendment:

Delete, on page 3, from 'This document is not about...' to '...future funding of local authorities'. Replace with:

'This document sets out our thinking about how local authorities such as B&NES can be granted new powers to raise revenues in order to alleviate some of the pressure that has resulted from demographic changes and significant reductions in our Revenue Support Grant. These proposals reflect the changes that have taken place in recent years such as the growth of Universities and changes to the retail sector, including the growth of e-commerce. We want to be a constructive voice in the debate around the future funding of local authorities, and this document outlines some ways that we could raise revenues through new powers and technical changes, rather than increased grant funding. However, we will also press central Government to restore money directly to us through the Revenue Support Grant, as this is the only way that we will be able to continue to deliver for our residents.'

3. And with the following further amendment to update the section on page 7 ii) b) **Technical Changes that can be achieved in the shorter term** so that this paragraph now contains the replacement underlined words, and now reads;

'Fees for listed building applications: B&NES receives around 800-900 such applications per year, which rightly require time and resources from the council to deal with. We strongly support the need to maintain and safeguard listed buildings for the future, and indeed are very proud of our approach to listed buildings in our area. However, we believe it is unreasonable to expect a small authority to pick up the disproportionate cost of having such a high concentration of listed buildings and we will be engaging further on how best to compensate Bath & North East Somerset for these costs.'

4. Ensure that relevant Secretaries of State, local Members of Parliament, key officials and other relevant stakeholders receive a copy of the adopted document;
5. Use the document in order to continue to seek influence on central government; and
6. Encourage local stakeholders to use the document to also influence central government to benefit Bath & North East Somerset residents and businesses.

[Notes;

1. *During debate, an unsuccessful amendment was moved by Councillor Richard Samuel, and seconded by Councillor Dine Romero, to refer the document to the Resources Policy Development & Scrutiny Panel for further work. This was lost with 12 Councillors voting in favour and 43 Councillors voting against;*
2. *Resolutions 1 and 2 in the successful resolution were proposed by Councillor Joe Rayment and accepted into the substantive motion by the mover and seconder;*
3. *The above resolution was carried with 44 Councillors voting in favour and 11 Councillors abstaining.]*

54 REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS AND POLLING STATIONS 2018 - APPROVAL OF FINAL POLLING DISTRICT SCHEME

The Council considered a report presenting a plan of polling stations for the local elections in May 2019, following the Local Government Boundary Commission for England publishing its final recommendations on the electoral review of B&NES ward boundaries.

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

RESOLVED

1. To approve the new polling district scheme; and
2. To note the proposed polling station plan, acknowledging that work is still in progress, and that the Returning Officer will continue to liaise with Ward Councillors and Parish Councils in order to identify the most suitable venues.

55 REVIEW OF THE COUNCIL'S STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES UNDER THE GAMBLING ACT 2005

The Council considered a report seeking adoption of the Statement of Principles with regard to gambling which, under the Gambling Act 2005, is required to be reviewed every three years. This follows consultation and a recommendation of the Licensing Committee.

On a motion from Councillor Bob Goodman, seconded by Councillor Les Kew, it was

RESOLVED to adopt the Statement of Principles provided in Appendix B to the report, having had regard to the responses received following the public consultation exercise, as recommended by the Licensing Committee.

[Notes:

- 1. The above resolution was carried with 50 Councillors voting in favour, 2 Councillors voting against and 3 Councillors abstaining.]*

56 PROTOCOL ON COMPANY GOVERNANCE

The Council considered a report setting out the progress made on implementing the decisions of Council on 14th September 2017 relating to the governance arrangements for local authority trading companies.

Councillor Sarah Bevan, as Chair of the Resources Policy Development & Scrutiny Panel, informed Councillors of her Panel's recommendations when they considered this item earlier in the week. Those recommendations were incorporated into the resolution below.

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

RESOLVED to approve the proposed amendments to the Protocol for governance arrangements of local authority trading companies and the consequent Constitution changes, as set out in the report and summarised in paragraph 5.2, with the addition of the following further recommendations from Resources Policy Development & Scrutiny Panel;

1. With regard to the Group Leaders Briefing (Appendix E, page 215 of the agenda pack),
 - i. the Group Leaders may hold a separate briefing to discuss such matters if they wish (separate from their standard meetings which can be time pressured) and may send an appropriate substitute from their group;
 - ii. Minutes should be taken at the above briefings;
 - iii. Group Leaders (or their substitutes) can ask that their concerns (or dissent) are noted in the minutes; and
2. The proposals for Scrutiny should be reviewed early in the new administration (after May 2019, but before November 2019).

[Notes:

1. *The above resolution was carried with 52 Councillors voting in favour and 2 Councillors abstaining.]*

57 TREASURY MANAGEMENT 2018/19 QUARTER 2 PERFORMANCE REPORT (MID YEAR UPDATE)

The Council considered the Treasury Management quarter 2 performance report.

On a motion from Councillor Charles Gerrish, seconded by Councillor Paul May, it was unanimously

RESOLVED to note;

1. The Treasury Management Report to 30th September 2018, prepared in accordance with the CIPFA Treasury Code of Practice; and
2. The Treasury Management Indicators to 30th September 2018.

58 ANNUAL REPORT ON USE OF REGULATORY INVESTIGATIONS POWERS ACT (RIPA)

The Council considered a report providing an update on the use of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers policies and procedures.

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

RESOLVED

1. To note that no Inspector's report for 2018 has been received; and
2. To note the Council's use of RIPA.

59 MOTION FROM THE LABOUR GROUP - SCHOOL PLACES & THREATENED CLOSURE OF BATH STUDIO SCHOOL

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

RESOLVED that

This Council notes that;

1. Ministers from the Department for Education (DfE) have given their in-principle agreement to the termination of the Bath Studio School's funding agreement following a request by the Wellsway Multi Academy Trust to seek this by mutual agreement. This decision was not made by the Council but instead by the Regional Schools Commissioner.
2. It is proposed that following the termination of the funding agreement, the Bath Studio School will close in August 2020.

3. A high proportion of current pupils at Bath Studio School transferred there from Bath Community Academy (BCA) which closed its doors for the last time in July. Without these additional pupils, the lack of parental demand for the school would have been much starker, resulting in a recommendation for closure even earlier.
4. Bath Studio School has one of the highest proportions of students eligible for free school meals in Bath.
5. Bath Studio School only opened in 2014 and has only had one full Ofsted inspection.
6. Bath Studio School has state of the art facilities, specialising in digital media, which is a growing and vital industry in the West of England.
7. That current students at BSS will be able to complete their existing course of study, either to 16, when many pupils naturally transition to a new establishment for Sixth Form or college course, or to 18 when they would have finished school anyway.
8. That there is a range of 'good' or 'outstanding' educational options available locally including multiple Sixth Form or college options and two other more successful studio schools within B&NES.

This Council believes that:

9. That the Secretary of State and Regional Schools Commissioner, working with the Wellsway MAT have a duty to consider all possible options to make the school viable, but if they are satisfied that these options have been exhausted, they still have a duty to local pupils to ensure they have better educational opportunities available.
10. The quality of educational experience and outcomes for pupils should be the paramount factor in determining a school's viability.

Council resolves therefore:

11. To ask the cabinet member to write to the Wellsway MAT and RSC to ask them to ensure that if, following due process, they agree to the closure of the school, that: -
 - a. BSS pupils are given as much support as possible to successfully complete their current course of study without disruption, and to then successfully move on from BSS to their next preferred destination;
 - b. They will work with other local education providers to make the best use of the specialist resources owned by BSS and to consider if other providers can adapt their Sixth Form curriculum offer to address needs formerly met by BSS;

- c. That the future opportunities for children and parental choice shall be explored by all parties to provide long term sustainable educational uses in the area.
12. To ask the Cabinet member for Children and Young People to raise the issue of which schools will be offering T-levels at the Schools Standards Board; and
13. To request that our local MPs lobby government to reinstate the role of local authorities in agreeing planned admission numbers.

[Notes;

1. *The above resolution was carried as an amendment to the Labour motion which appeared in the agenda pack, on a vote of 33 Councillors in favour, and 20 Councillors against.*
2. *The words 'Driven by parental choice' were removed from the start of resolution 10 at the suggestion of Councillor Joe Rayment, and accepted by the mover and seconder of the substantive motion.*
3. *The resolutions 12 and 13 were proposed by Councillor Tim Ball, and accepted into the substantive motion by the mover and seconder.*
4. *The substantive motion was carried unanimously.]*

60 MOTION FROM THE LABOUR GROUP - COUNCIL TAX COLLECTION

On a motion from Councillor Charles Gerrish, seconded by Councillor Chris Watt, it was

RESOLVED

Council notes that:

1. The 2018 House of Commons Treasury Committee report Household Finances: Income Saving and Debt, found that government and local authorities are often found to be the most zealous and unsympathetic of creditors in collecting arrears, with routine recourse to bailiffs.
2. It concluded that the public sector should be leading by example in their treatment of the most financially vulnerable, but that the current approach risks driving them into further difficulties.
3. Citizens Advice, in its evidence to the Treasury Committee, said that Government and local authority debt collection practices have a lot to learn from consumer creditors who have been brought into line both by regulation and by the realisation that aggressive collection methods are not effective at getting money out of people.
4. Bath and North East Somerset has a significant number of payment plans with residents either directly or through advice agencies and seeks to use alternative methods of debt recovery. However, as in many other local authorities, once an individual falls behind with their Council Tax the right to

pay by instalments can be withdrawn, formal action to recover the money owed can move very rapidly and costs to the Council Tax payer can rise sharply.

5. During 2017/18, 2852 liability orders for Council Tax were sent to bailiffs in B&NES. Once a Council Tax debt has been referred to bailiffs it incurs additional bailiff fees thereby exacerbating an already difficult situation.
6. Officers in B&NES are about to enter into discussions about early referrals to Citizens Advice to support people experiencing difficulties paying their Council Tax.
7. The London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham has said it will stop using bailiffs for unpaid Council Tax. Bristol City Council is also piloting an approach to a more ethical form of Council Tax collection.

This Council believes that:

8. It is important that residents pay their Council Tax. Any money not collected is money that can't be spent on delivering the services that residents depend upon.
9. In cases where people are able to pay but choose not to, the Council must act to recover the money owed.
10. However, where people are struggling with arrears, they should be offered help to produce affordable payment plans. Alongside this, early intervention and money management services should be used to support people before they fall behind with their payments.

Council resolves therefore:

11. To agree in principle that, as the Council is currently reviewing its total Debt Management Policy, that officers should provide their conclusions to the Corporate Audit Committee in February to which the Resources Policy Development & Scrutiny Panel members should be invited, which in turn should consider the Council's proposed approach to debt collection before any final decision is made.

[Notes:

1. *The above resolution replaced the Labour motion which had been included with the agenda pack, and was carried on a vote of 42 Councillors voting in favour, 7 Councillors voting against and 4 Councillors abstaining.*
2. *The substantive motion was carried unanimously.]*

61 MOTION FROM THE LIBERAL DEMOCRAT GROUP - SEND FUNDING FOR CHILDREN

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

RESOLVED unanimously that

Council notes:

1. The serious concerns raised by parents and teachers in Bath and North East Somerset regarding school funding.
2. The particular concerns around funding for young people with a special educational need or disability. There are over 4,200 children and young people locally either receiving SEND Support in mainstream schools or having an Education Health and Care Plan, with the number of EHC Plans or Statements having risen by 58% between January 2015 and January 2018. SEND services are under particular pressure due to a combination of growing demand and complexity of need; rising costs for specialist provision; the pressure on places in the outstanding special schools in B&NES due to the number of children being placed here by other Local Authorities; and the under-funding of the positive SEND Reforms introduced by government. Sufficient funding is vital to ensure that children are able to access the specialist education and support that they need in order to thrive.
3. The recent meeting for parents and carers, which was organised by the National Association of Head Teachers and the National Education Union, and at which the massive pressure on school budgets locally were highlighted.
4. That whilst B&NES schools remain under pressure, they have received the best funding settlement in the country over the last two years at 7.8%, this reflects that our schools are funded above the regional average and just below the national average.

Council resolves to:

5. Back local children, parents, carers, teachers, other schools staff and the LGA who are campaigning for better funding for our schools and education system.
6. Instruct the Leader of Council to write to the Secretary of State for Education and to the MPs for Bath and North East Somerset highlighting the impact of funding pressures locally and calling for additional funding to be made available for schools and particularly for SEND services.

[Notes:

1. *The above resolution contains suggested wording from Councillor Paul May, comprising resolution 4, and the words 'and the LGA' in resolution 5, which were accepted into the substantive motion by the mover and seconder.]*

62 MOTION FROM THE LIBERAL DEMOCRAT GROUP - PEOPLE'S VOTE

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

RESOLVED

To note that:

1. The outcome of the United Kingdom European Union membership referendum of 23rd June 2016;
2. The question posed in the referendum presented a binary choice;
3. On Saturday 20th October 2018, over 700,000 people marched in London to support a People's Vote on the final outcome of the government's exit negotiations with the European Union. This represented the second largest protest march ever hosted by our capital city.

To recommend that:

4. Those who express support for either side of the argument should write to the Member of Parliament in order to register their interest on the issue with them.

[Notes;

1. *The above resolution was moved as an amendment to the motion published with the agenda and was carried with 33 Councillors voting in favour, 15 Councillors voting against and 6 abstentions.*
2. *The substantive motion was carried with 33 Councillors voting in favour, 4 Councillors voting against and 17 abstentions.]*

63 QUESTIONS, STATEMENTS, PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

The Chair made reference to the question from Councillor Richard Samuel which had been circulated.

Councillor Richard Samuel then made a statement to the meeting calling for more clarity on the proposals for Bath Central Library. The statement was referred to the relevant Cabinet Member.

The meeting ended at 9.58 pm

Chairman

Date Confirmed and Signed

Prepared by Democratic Services