

Minutes



Council

Date: 28 November 2017

Time: 5.00 pm

Present: Councillors M Al-Nuaimi, J Cleverly, M Cornelious, K Critchley, D Davies, C Evans, M Evans, C Ferris, D Fouweather, G Giles, J Guy, D Harvey, I Hayat, R Jeavons, C Jenkins, M Kellaway, M Linton, D Mayer, R Mogford, J Mudd, M Rahman, J Richards, M Spencer, H Thomas, K Thomas, C Townsend, R Truman, T Watkins, R White, K Whitehead, D Wilcox, D Williams, G Berry, J Clarke, Y Forsey, R Hayat, T Holyoake, P Hourahine, J Hughes, J Jordan, S Marshall, W Routley, H Townsend and J Watkins

Apologies: Councillors P Cockeram, A Morris, T Suller, M Whitcutt, V Dudley and L Lacey

1. Preliminaries

i. To receive any apologies for absence

The Monitoring Officer reported apologies for absence.

ii. To receive any declarations of interest

No declarations of interest were made.

iii. To receive any announcements by the Mayor

The Mayor did not have any announcements to make.

2. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 26 September 2017 were approved as a true record.

3. Appointments

Resolved

The following appointments were agreed:

Internal Appointments

Committee	No. of Vacancies / Replacements	Nominations Received

Standards Committee	1 vacancy	John Davies (as the Community Council Representative)
Carers Champion	1 replacement	Cllr Tracey Holyoake to replace Cllr Ibrahim Hayat
Performance Scrutiny Committee – Partnerships	1 replacement	Cllr Yvonne Forsey to replace Cllr James Clarke
Performance Scrutiny Committee – Place and Corporate	2 replacements	Cllr James Clarke to replace Cllr Yvonne Forsey Cllr Ibrahim Hayat to replace Cllr Laura Lacey
Social Services Rota Visits	1 replacement	Cllr Jan Cleverly to replace Cllr Kevin Whitehead
Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee	1 replacement	Cllr Laura Lacey to replace Cllr Ibrahim Hayat

Appointments to External Organisations

Organisation	No. of Vacancies / Replacements	Nominations Received
GAVO Local Committee	1 replacement	Cllr Phil Hourahine to replace Cllr Christine Jenkins

Governing Body Appointments

Governing Body	No. of Vacancies / Re-appointments	Nominations Received
Llisbury High School	1 re-appointment	Cllr Roger Jeavons
Malpas Park Primary	1 re-appointment	Cllr Jane Mudd
Marshfield Primary	1 re-appointment	Ms Catherine Sainsbury
Milton Primary	1 re-appointment	Cllr Malcolm Linton
Ringland Primary	1 re-appointment	Mrs Helen Truman
St Michael's RC Primary	1 re-appointment	Ms Modupe Obilanade
Pupil Referral Unit Management Committee	1 vacancy	Cllr David Mayer
Clytha Primary	1 vacancy	Mr Peter Bray
Jubilee Park Primary	1 vacancy	Cllr Val Dudley
Llanwern High School	2 vacancies	Shereen Williams and Emma Wakeham

Newport High School	2 vacancies	Lucy Jackson and Gareth Cooke
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4. **Police Issues**

The Mayor welcomed Chief Inspector Michael Richards to the meeting. The Chief Inspector gave a brief update on current issues and operations in the city, before inviting questions from Members.

A number of councillors raised issues relating to parking offences and enforcement in the city centre and within their wards, with particular reference made to problems outside schools. The Chief Inspector outlined some of the enforcement action taken in different parts of the city since the last Council meeting, highlighting the continuing commitment of the police to this area while discussions on decriminalisation of parking were ongoing. Councillor Mogford highlighted the recent action by school pupils in Langstone to protest against dangerous parking, and suggested this idea could be rolled out to other schools.

Councillor Guy raised concerns regarding scams targeting older people, and asked what was being done locally to tackle this problem. The Chief Inspector outlined some of the initiatives currently in place, such as training for officers on recognising the signals of scam activity. New plans for this area were in the early stages, and further details could be provided on request.

Referring the recent incident in Bettws, where a police car was set alight, Councillor Whitehead stressed that the actions of a small minority did not reflect the overwhelming support local residents have for the police. The Chief Inspector shared the frustrations felt over incidents like this, and underlined the importance of local support and intelligence in their work.

Councillor Marshall reported some problems recently with fireworks being used as weapons. The Chief Inspector was disappointed to hear this, as a great deal of work had been done in the run up to Bonfire Night, visiting premises and seeking to prevent potential problems.

In response to a further question from Councillor Marshall, the Chief Inspector provided an update on the success of the recent weapons surrender.

The Chief Inspector thanked Councillor Ferris for his positive feedback about the new city centre policing lead, Inspector John Davies.

The Chief Inspector agreed to follow up concerns raised by Councillors Linton and Jenkins relating to specific events in their wards.

The Mayor thanked the Chief Inspector for attending.

5. **Notice of Motion: M4 Relief Road**

The Council considered a motion for which the necessary notice had been provided. The motion was moved by Councillor Matthew Evans and seconded by Councillor William Routley:

This Council supports the black route proposals for the M4 Relief Road. It urges Welsh Government to resolve outstanding concerns as a matter of urgency, and start the project as soon as possible.

Speaking to present the motion, Councillor Matthew Evans highlighted the positive economic, environmental and social impact the Relief Road would have on Newport and the wider area, and urged Councillors to support this motion to push for progress on this project.

The following amendment was moved by Councillor Debbie Wilcox and seconded by Councillor Ray Truman:

This Council accepts the current Public Inquiry as the legitimate forum for investigating outstanding issues regarding the proposals for an M4 Relief Road. Council has previously expressed support for the M4 Relief Road as a way of easing traffic congestion in and around Newport and trusts that the Public Inquiry will reach a balanced conclusion taking into account transport, environment, public and business concerns in Newport and South East Wales. Council calls on the Welsh Government to make a decision on the project and its funding as soon as possible after the current process is concluded.

In moving the amendment, the Leader of the Council reiterated the vital importance of the Relief Road to the local area, but advised awaiting the outcome of the public inquiry process before lobbying Welsh Government for further progress.

A number of Members spoke in favour of the motion, urging Welsh Government to take on board the public responses through the inquiry process, and agreeing that the inquiry needed to conclude before further comment was made on any preferred route.

The Leader of the Opposition stated that he would support the amendment.

Resolved

To adopt the amendment as moved by the Leader of the Council and set out above.

6. Notice of Motion: Pay in Local Government in Wales

The Council considered a motion for which the necessary notice had been provided. The motion was moved by Councillor Debbie Wilcox and seconded by Councillor David Mayer:

This Council

- 1. Recognises the impact that austerity has had on the pay of local government workers in Wales since 2010 where basic pay has fallen by 21% in real terms and included a 3-year pay freeze.**
- 2. Supports the notion of pay that is fair, affordable and sustainable.**
- 3. Supports the NJC for Local Government Services in its pursuance of a renewed pay spine that addresses the issues 'bunching' at the lower end of the pay spine.**
- 4. Wishes to see an end to austerity and an improvement in funding that enables local authorities to fund a fair pay increase for its workforce.**

Therefore, this Council resolves to:

- 1. Ask the LGA to effectively lobby Central Government to fund the implementation of the NJC Pay Spine Review caused by the direct effect of the National Living Wage.**
- 2. Write to both Central and Welsh Governments to provide local government in Wales with the funding to ensure a fair, affordable and sustainable pay increase is made to the local government workforce in Wales.**

3. Work with the WLGA in consultation with the trade unions in pursuance of a fair funding deal for local government.

Speaking to present the motion, The Leader of the Council referred to the impact of continuing austerity on local government finances, and the ongoing lobbying to lift the public sector pay freeze, which this motion would support.

Speaking to second the motion, Councillor Mayer put forward that many low paid council workers experienced in-work poverty, and action was needed to implement a pay spine review and improve public sector pay.

The following points were put forward by Members speaking in favour of the motion:

- Examples were given of low paid public sector workers struggling with rising bills and increased living costs. Members also cited the rising use of food banks as an indicator of in-work poverty.
- Members called for more fairness in the pay system.
- The impact of ongoing budget reductions on the workloads and responsibilities of staff.
- The impact of public sector pay levels on pay levels within the voluntary sector.
- The political debate between the two extremes of ending austerity and reducing the national debt.
- The impact of low public sector pay on the local economy generally.
- More attention should be paid by central government to addressing the unclaimed tax from big business.

The following comments and questions were raised by Members speaking against the motion:

- What had the Leader done through her WLGA and LGA roles to lobby Welsh Government?
- How would a pay uplift be funded?
- In contradiction to points raised in favour of the motion, it was suggested that public sector workers were currently better paid than the private sector, and increases to the living wage and tax allowances meant that people generally were now better off.
- The funding diverted to Welsh Government and the impact of devolution on public sector funding in Wales.
- The issue of national debt needed to be addressed.

The required number of members called for a recorded vote. The vote was as follows:

Those in favour of the motion: Councillors Al-Nuaimi, Berry, Clarke, Cleverly, Critchley, Davies, C Evans, Forsey, Giles, Guy, Harvey, I Hayat, R Hayat, Holyoake, Hourahine, Hughes, Jeavons, Jenkins, Jordan, Linton, Marshall, Mayer, Mudd, Rahman, Richards, Spencer, H Thomas, K Thomas, C Townsend, H Townsend, Truman, T Watkins, Whitehead, Wilcox. A total of 34 votes.

Those against: Councillors Cornelious, M Evans, Ferris, Fouweather, Kellaway, Mogford, Routley, J Watkins, White, Williams. A total of 10 votes.

Members who abstained: None.

The motion was therefore **carried**.

Resolved

To adopt the motion as set out in full above.

7. **Standards Committee Annual Report**

Councillor Herbie Thomas, Member of the Standards Committee, presented the Standards Committee's annual report to Council for 2017-18, highlighting the changes to the membership of the committee recently, and the outcomes of its work programme over the last year.

The Leader of the Council praised the ongoing positive record on complaints, highlighting the collegiate approach taken by Members from across the political spectrum.

Members asked for more information about the mandatory training on the Code of Conduct. The Monitoring Officer explained the implications if this training was not completed, and reported that a final session was being arranged for those Members who missed the sessions during the induction programme.

Resolved

To receive the Standards Committee Annual Report for 2016/17 and to note the forward work programme.

8. **Corporate Plan**

The Leader of the Council presented the Corporate Plan to Council.

The final draft of the Corporate Plan was agreed by Cabinet in November, and set out what the Council would do over the next five years to Build on Success and Build a Better Newport, focussing on jobs and the economy, education and skills, fairness and equality, community safety and cohesion, the environment, transport, culture, and social wellbeing. The Plan would set the vision and direction for the coming years, and would be underpinned by a comprehensive change programme, to make sure the Council could deliver the plan and meet its statutory responsibilities set out in the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act.

The Leader highlighted that the Corporate Plan formed part of the policy framework, and so had been through the necessary consultation with scrutiny colleagues as well as with staff. Comments from the consultation process had been incorporated into the covering report, together with the management responses.

The following points were made by Members in discussing the plan:

- The plan lacked the necessary detail that would allow delivery to be scrutinised effectively. This included further detail needed on:
 - Increasing educational and social care capacity to reduce out of county placements
 - Progress transforming Newport City Centre through physical and economic regeneration
 - The location of the three proposed new schools, and whether these would be primary or secondary.
- The value "be responsible" was questioned

- In response to a question, the Chief Executive explained the authority's involvement in the development of a compound semiconductor industrial cluster through the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal.

Resolved

To agree the Corporate Plan.

9. Questions to the Leader of the Council

Leader's Announcements

In answer to the first question from the Mayor, the Leader made the following announcements:

- Newport was continuing to attract considerable interest as a place to do business and as a venue for events.
- Since last Council, the first ABP Newport Wales Marathon had been announced, taking place in April 2018.
- Regeneration work was continuing in the city centre, including progress on the former Hornblower pub and around Park Square car park.
- Garrison Barclay Estates had unveiled proposals to develop office accommodation on the site of the former Royal Mail sorting office in Mill Street.
- IQE had announced plans to open a state of the art semiconductor plant in Coedkernew as part of the city deal.
- Shop Local Saturday was taking place this week, and the Newport Now gift card was now on sale.

New Schools

Councillor Matthew Evans asked for further details of the three new schools to be built, including timescales and funding. The Leader responded that a bid had been submitted as part of Band B of the 21st Century Schools programme, and the Council was confident that that match funding would be received. Plans being made included new schools in Glan Llyn, and on the Whiteheads development. The Leader highlighted the low bid for funding under Band A of the programme.

Responding to the Leader's answer, Councillor Evans highlighted the advice given to his administration at the time of the Band A bid, that match funding was not available for a higher bid. Councillor Evans asked a supplementary question on secondary provision, citing concerns over increasing pressure on secondary school places. The Leader responded that secondary capacity was a statutory responsibility, and some schools were over capacity but others were under capacity. There were opportunities for using funding through streams like section 106 for increasing provision in this area. The Leader also highlighted Corporate Plan also included plans for a review of tertiary provision.

Street Cleaning

Councillor Kevin Whitehead asked whether it was possible to split the shifts of the street cleansing team to make sure the city centre was looking at its best over the festive period. The Leader agreed to take this suggestion forward to officers and provide a full response as soon as possible.

Newport to Ebbw Vale Rail Link

Councillor Carmel Townsend asked what representations were being made to Welsh Government to secure the Newport to Ebbw Vale Rail Link. The Leader responded that she had been part of collective representations to Assembly Members and others, and promised to make individual representations on this matter to the Secretary of State at the earliest convenience.

Draft Budget Settlement

Councillor Deb Davies requested an updated on the draft budget settlement received from Welsh Government. The Leader reported that the draft settlement represented a cash reduction for the Council, with a cut of 0.3% for 2018/19. £33m of cuts would need to be found over the course of this Council term, and options for the coming year would be presented to Cabinet in December to start consultation.

Celebrating Newport's People and Heritage

Councillor William Routley suggested that more should be done to recognise Newport's people and heritage, for example through a walk of heroes or replica stars. The Leader responded that a new award called the Spirit of Newport was soon to be agreed, which sought to recognise and reward the people who make the city what it is, whether through sporting excellence, charitable work, business, the arts, learning, or showing courage or tenacity in the face of adversity.

10. **Questions to the Cabinet Members**

There were no questions to the Cabinet Members on this occasion.

11. **Questions to the Chairs of Committees**

There were no questions to the Chairs of Committees on this occasion.

12. **Standards Committee Minutes**

The minutes of the Standards Committee meeting held on 26 October 2017 were noted.