

Minutes



Council

Date: 29 September 2020

Time: 5.00 pm

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

Apologies: Councillors R Mogford

1. Preliminaries

2. Minutes

The Minutes of the Council meeting held on 27 February and 28 July 2020.

Resolved: That the Minutes of 27 February and 28 July 2020 be recorded as a true record.

3. Appointments

To consider the proposed appointments set out in the report

Councillor Harvey moved the appointments set out in the Report, as agreed by the Business managers, subject to the additional appointments set out below.

Resolved: That the following appointments be agreed.

Internal Appointments

None received.

Appointments to External Organisations

Organisation	No. of Vacancies / Replacements	Nominations Received
Business Improvement District	1	The Leader to replace Councillor D Harvey

Governing Body Appointments

Organisation	Nominations Received	Number of
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		Vacancies/Replacements
Malpas C/W Primary School	Andrea Mulcahy	Re-appoint
St Josephs' RC High School	David Fouweather	Re-appoint
Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Terynon	David Fouweather	End term of office
Mount Pleasant School	Dilwyn Gurney	Appoint as LA governor
Temporary Governing Body - Welsh Medium School 4	Sheereen Williams	Information only
Temporary Governing Body - Welsh Medium School 4	Cllr Tracey Holyoake	Information only
Temporary Governing Body - Welsh Medium School 4	Cllr Jason Hughes	Information only
Glasllwch Primary School	Matthew Evans	Re-appoint
Llanwern High School	Ray Truman	Re-appoint
Alway Primary School	Ray Truman	Re-appoint
Bassaleg School School	Margaret Cornelious	Re-appoint
Pentrepoeth Primary School	Margaret Cornelious	Re-appoint
Crindau Primary School	Paul Cockeram	Re-appoint
Kimberley Nursery School	Paul Cockeram	Re-appoint
High Cross Primary School	Sally Mlewa	Re-appoint
Jubilee Park Primary School	Sally Mlewa	Re-appoint
Langstone Primary School	Ray Mogford	Re-appoint
Caerleon Comprehensive School	Ray Mogford	Re-appoint
Llanmartin Primary School	Martyn Kellaway	Re-appoint
Glan Llyn Primary School	Martyn Kellaway	Re-appoint
Llanmartin Primary School	John Davies	Re-appoint
Llanwern High School	Ray Truman	Re-appoint
Eveswell and Somerton Primary School Partnership	John Guy	Re-appoint
Llanwern High School	John Guy	Re-appoint
Lliswerry High School	Kenneth Critchley	Re-appoint
St Andrews Primary School	Kenneth Critchley	Re-appoint
Maindee Primary School	Majid Rahman	Re-appoint
Maes Ebbw School	Majid Rahman	Re-appoint
Malpas C/W Primary School	Andrea Mulcahy	Re-appoint
Malpas Court Primary School	Jane Mudd	Re-appoint
Marshfield Primary School	Thomas Suller	Re-appoint
Monnow Primary School	Valerie Delahaye	Re-appoint
Mount Pleasant Primary School	Stephen Bowen	Re-appoint
Malpas Court Primary School	Stephen Bowen	Re-appoint
Mount Pleasant Primary School	Kelly Jones	Re-appoint
Monnow Primary School	Kelly Jones	Re-appoint
Newport High School	David Mayer	Re-appoint
Newport High School	Valerie Delahaye	Re-appoint
Gaer Primary School	Valerie Delahaye	Re-appoint

St Davids RC Primary School	David Hutchings	Re-appoint
Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Teyrnnon	David Hutchings	Re-appoint
St Joseph's RC High School	Mark Whitcutt	Re-appoint
St Woolos Primary School	Miqdad Al-Nuaimi	Re-appoint
St Woolos Primary School	Kate Thomas	Re-appoint
Ysgol Gyfun Gwent Is Coed	John Harris	Re-appoint
Ysgol Gyfun Gwent Is Coed	Elin Maher	Re-appoint
Llanwern High School	Elin Maher	Re-appoint
Ysgol Gyfun Gwent Is Coed	Christopher Chapman	Re-appoint
St Joseph's RC High School	Christopher Chapman	Re-appoint
Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Teyrnnon	Shereen Williams	Re-appoint
Ysgol Gymraeg Ifor Hael	Olwen Allender	Re-appoint
Ysgol Gymraeg Ifor Hael	Glyn Jarvis	Re-appoint
Jubilee Park Primary School	Replace Rehman Hayat with Chris Lacey	New appointment

In addition to the above appointments, Councillor Harvey informed Council of the need to agree dispensations for Councillor absences, in accordance with section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972.

Resolved:

To approve and extend absence of Councillor Critchley for a further six months.

4. Police Issues

Superintendent M Richards gave the Council an update on current police matters before inviting questions from councillors.

Crime had decreased during the past five months with 2,000 fewer offences; Covid would have played some part in this. Burglaries had reduced by comparison to other forces in Wales. August saw a low crime month with around 40/50 fewer incidents than the previous year. May and July this year saw the pro-active team deal with seizure of 200 vehicles, anti-social behaviour and supplying of drugs. Huge quantities of Class A drugs to the value of £5M was seized. Operation Washington resulted in seven drug dealers being arrested and most had received significant sentences.

Newport Central – Tackling antisocial behaviour was a priority as well as dealing with begging and drug misuse by the main bus station. The night time economy changed during the pandemic and footfall was very low. The Superintendent thanked M Cridland, Regulatory Services Manager, Commercial Standards and the Licensing Team for support visiting nightclubs. The Police, working in partnership with the local authority at the beginning of lockdown were able to re-house over 100 rough sleepers, this had a positive impact on anti social behaviour and begging.

Newport West – There was a spate shed burglaries in the early summer months in Allt-yr-yn and a number of people were arrested and charged. A new mutli-agency governance meeting as established; Safer Pill which was attended by members and residents. There were 25 arrests in the Pill area in August with numerous vehicles seized. The Travellers encampment at Sandpiper Way, Duffryn that had arrived in May had now gone. There had been several calls regarding off road bikes within the Bettws, Malpas and Shaftesburyarea, a number of these bikes were seized. The Superintendent was part of the Peterstone and Wentllog group; PRAID which met recently. There was an unsightly incident on Saturday 12 September where a number of travellers riding around on pony traps completely disrupted

the City Centre, this took place during 2.30pm to 6pm. The Police had no intelligence it was taking place, the Travellers met in a pub car park in Duffryn before parading through Newport. The Police would be regularly monitoring the licenced premises in the future. Maseglas anti social behaviour teams were also looking into the issues.

Newport East - Car cruises in Spytty area were not taking place after a recent meeting with the Police. Inspector Cawley updated the Superintendent advising that anti social behaviour under George St Bridge, Corporation Road, Old Barn Estate and Black Ash were priorities. The Caerleon anti social behaviour team were also spending more time in this area.

The Leader thanked Superintendent Richards and the Police for their hard work during the pandemic. Both the Council and Police had seen challenging times and at every level, the engagement with Gwent Police had been really effective. The Leader recently met with the new Chief Superintendent and also wished to pass on her thanks. The approach taken by the Police and the support they had shown towards the Council's enforcement team reflected the maturity of the Council/Police relationship.

The Leader had a question from the residents of Malpas, Bettws and Shaftesbury where off road bikes were being used, these impacted on active travel routes. The Leader asked what assurances could Police give that this was being addressed. The Superintendent assured the Leader that feedback would be taken back to the Inspector and his team, this would also be a priority in the coming weeks.

- Councillor R Jeavons referred to the car cruises along the SDR and the ongoing dialogue with the aforementioned groups. The Superintendent had a productive meeting with event organisers recently regarding a recent gathering. There would be no further meetings for 6-8 months. The Police were also working closely with Tesco to make it a difficult place to visit.
- Councillor D Harvey informed the Superintendent of near miss incidents relating to the travellers' dangerous event with traps, that almost caused a collision with pedestrians, including a young mum and child. There was aggressive behaviour towards members at NISV and unprovoked fights and damage to the cost of £500 to the play park. Councillor had a briefing with Newport Live and understood that Police could have used Section 61 to manage the situation, or made arrests. The Superintendent had received regular briefings from Newport Live and would arrange a meeting with Cllr Harvey to go through what was discussed.
- Councillor M Evans thanked police staff for their hard work during lockdown and local lockdown. Councillor asked if the Council should have taken civic action in relation to the Sandpiper Way encampment, or was it the responsibility of the police. There was a multi-agency joint protocol in Gwent regarding unauthorised encampments. The lead role was to rest with the local authority, however there were restrictions imposed by WG on local authority's due to Covid-19. Police did have certain powers under Section 61 although there was certain criteria relating to these powers and when they could be used. The local authority had similar powers under Section 77 of the same Act. The calls from residents however were low level therefore Section 61 was not triggered.
- Councillor M Rahman referred to the lack of police response in Victoria Ward. There was a brawl recently that took place outside a Fried Chicken Takeaway shop on Corporation Road. Councillor was only made aware of fight on Face Book when owners posted footage. Police had not contacted or visited them and perpetrators were not apprehended. The lack of police response might be due to people not reporting incidents and Councillor requested that this be raised with the team. The Superintendent was not aware of the incident but would take messages back to the Newport East Team.

- Councillor Hughes thanked the police for their support with licensing related matters. On 26 September, Caerleon had a significant house party and police attended the scene at 2.30am but left allowing the party to continue until 3.30am, when the partygoers had dispersed, vehicles were doing wheel spins and playing loud music. More attention was needed in Caerleon as there was a rise in anti social behaviour and councillor welcomed the police presence. The Superintendent would receive a briefing on the incident and report back to the councillor.
- Councillor Holyoake congratulated both the Superintendent and Inspector Williams on their work in the Pill Ward. There had been a Travellers encampment on Alexander and Commercial Road. Drinking in public had also risen considerably. The Pill advisory group suggested that a PSPO order should be put back in place. The local chemist in the area had also seen an increase of drug users on the street outside and regular ambulance call outs to take the users to hospital. The Superintendent was attending the Safer Pill meeting the day after Council and there was a Safer Newport governance meeting with Council's Chief Executive also taking place to discuss issues.
- Councillor C Evans referred to the homelessness shelter sign posted to the most vulnerable. The group which was led by the Chief Inspector and was attended by T McKim, Policy Partnership and Involvement Manager, was successful in housing the homeless as referred to in the Superintendent's update. The Councillor hoped that the group of strategic leaders would maintain this approach and build on success of the last few months.
- Councillor White referred to the co-operation with Gwent and South Wales Police represented at stake holder level regarding the events and subsequent incidents relating to pony traps and whether this also happened in Cardiff and Newport. The Superintendent had received intelligence on Sunday 13 September that it was a group of Travellers from Swansea that pitched up at the Duffryn Arms, although he was not sure if they were related to Peterstone and Wentloog incidents.

5. **National Non-Domestic Rates: Discretionary Relief: Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Rate Relief Scheme**

The Leader presented the above report, highlighting that the covid-19 pandemic resulted in a shutdown of all non-essential businesses earlier this year. In response to this, Welsh Government provided a raft of measures intended to help businesses adversely affected from not being able to trade.

One of these measures was the introduction of a new rate relief scheme for businesses in the Retail, Leisure and Hospitality sectors which removed the need to pay any rates in 2020-21.

This important scheme required approval as it was based on the discretionary rate relief provisions. As Council was not sitting at the time, and due to the need to act quickly the scheme was approved by the Leader under emergency provisions.

This removed the worry of ratepayers paying their rates in 2020-21 and the rate relief was swiftly applied to their rate accounts and notifications issued before the first instalment was due in April.

This report sought formal retrospective approval and ratification of the resolution agreeing to adopt the scheme.

Resolved:

That Council agreed to adopt the Welsh Government's Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Rate Relief Scheme for 2020-21 by making the appropriate determination and decision, as

required by Sections 47(1)(a) and 47(3) respectively of the Local Government Finance Act 1988, as set out in the Appendix to this report.

6. **Treasury Management Report Covering the Financial Year 2019/20**

The Leader presented this report, detailing the treasury management activities of the Council for 2019/20. It was a backwards looking report confirming that all borrowing and investments undertaken during the financial year were expected and in line with the agreed limits set by full Council. It also confirmed that 2019/20 Prudential Indicators for treasury management were also met in line with those set by Council.

The Council's current strategy was to fund capital expenditure through reducing investments (our internal borrowing) rather than undertake new borrowing where it can ie, we deferred taking out new long term borrowing and fund capital expenditure from the Council's own cash resources -mainly reserves. By using this strategy the Council could also minimise cash holding at a time when counter-party risk remained relatively high, especially with the current economic implications during Covid-19.

The level of internal borrowing was around £87m, and by using this strategy it was estimated that Council saved about £2.6m in revenue costs based on current interest rates. This strategy could not be maintained as the council would be reducing its reserves over the medium term, for example, PFI reserves, therefore the council would need to 'swap' the internal borrowing for real borrowing in future.

The level of external borrowing the Council held at 31 March 2020 was still significant at £166m, this would increase in future years as our ability to internally borrow reduced as reserves were utilised as noted above.

Of this £166m, it was important to note that an additional £15m of borrowing was undertaken to enable the Council to be a front-runner in supporting the response to Covid-19 and administering business grants to businesses in Newport, prior to the funding being received by Welsh Government.

The investment balance at 31 March 2020 was £12.5m, taking net borrowing to £153.8m, this was an increase of £17.2m on the previous year. It was noted that the Council would keep a minimum investment balance to satisfy the requirements of being deemed a professional body for compliance purposes.

The report also detailed non-treasury investments as required by Welsh Government, including investments in directly owned property such as commercial and industrial units, loans to local businesses and landlords and shareholdings in subsidiaries; in our case, Newport Transport. The total value of these investments at 31 March 2020 was £14.5m.

Cabinet approved the report in July therefore the Leader now submitted the report to full Council for approval.

Councillor M Rahman thanked the Leader for taking the quick action and releasing the money for businesses, which saved families and businesses going under.

Resolved:

That Council noted and approved the report on treasury management activities for 2019/20, which were in line with the agreed Treasury Management Strategy for 2019/20.

7. **Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024**

The Leader of Newport City Council was pleased to be able to present to Council the authority's third Strategic Equality Plan. The plan represented an evolution from the 2016-

2020 plan, with more outcome based objectives that had been developed by working closely in partnership with various teams across the authority and in collaboration with key stakeholders and communities.

The Equality Objectives within the Strategic Equality Plan, had a good mix of internally focused objectives, such as our commitments to improving our workforce diversity through greater positive action, and more externally focused objectives such as the on-going commitment to improving community cohesion across the city. This balance of internal self-reflection and an outwardly focused commitment to improve equality in key areas of society was the strength of this strategy and represented a positive step forward for Newport City Council.

The past few months, and no doubt the next few months to come, were challenging, and had exposed many of the structural and social inequalities that continued to persist in society, from the global Black Lives Matter protests, to our exit from the European Union, and the ramifications of the global COVID-19 pandemic. The Council found itself at a societal cross road as it looked to recover and learn from events that affected Newport, but had impacted specific groups in the communities so acutely.

The Council continued to strive to deliver equitable public services for all residents in the face of an increasingly challenging economic backdrop, without allowing the forces of division to create an environment of intolerance and hostility, this Strategy would help achieve this aim.

The Leader thanked both the Cabinet Member for Community and Resources, Cllr David Mayer and Cllr Mark Whitcutt for their contributions to the plan and the Strategic Equality Group over the past four years.

Cabinet approved the strategy at its meeting in July and the Leader moved for the adoption of this strategy by full Council.

The following issues were discussed:

Councillor Rahman, speaking as BAME Champion, welcomed the report and thanked Cllr Mayer and councillors for their time putting together the report's sharing opinions from all the communities. The Leader and staff met with other groups to discuss bringing about community cohesion. Members of the public had been consulted online and through focus groups putting Newport at the forefront of other councils.

Councillor Wilcox supported the Leader's comments adding that it was a milestone moving forward. The plan continued to be explicit on how to deliver services for Newport. The visuals and graphics were a step forward in how they talked to people. The Strategic Equality Group would support the delivery and scrutiny committee would have responsibility for monitoring progress. Councillor Wilcox added that she would like to see an opportunity for young people and youth groups to feed into the monitoring at some stage when we return to some form of normality, as they had a vital role to play for the future.

Councillor Whitcutt thanked the Leader for her gracious comments regarding his previous role adding that it was a pleasure to work with the team in preparing the document, who deserved to be commended on work they continued to do. Over 5,000 people responded which was a tremendous achievement at this time of challenge. It was an extremely important document which the councillor supported as part of his profession as a solicitor. The Council was in a strong position because of this work, thanking the Cabinet for its involvement and Tracy Mckim, Policy Partnership and Involvement Manager.

Councillor Davies added that the consultation with residents was a fundamental key to this report. It was apparent that views had not changed. The report was welcomed and

characteristics should be rightfully celebrated when and ignorance promoted a negative part in society.

Councillor K Thomas, Champion for vulnerable people as well as mental health champion highlighted the commitment that council had to supporting people and as councillors there was a need to approve and support the aims of this plan.

Councillor Lacey, LBGTQ champion also supported the report, stressing the importance of the document and that it was good to see Newport at the forefront of this.

Councillor Al-Nuami supported the document which was comprehensive and felt that he could not do it enough justice in such a short time. The pandemic had made a difference and it was welcomed that the impact of Covid was recorded within the document, which was very important. Councillor hoped that when Mayoral duties were able to return to normal, the events within the Muslim calendar would be celebrated with the community in Newport.

Councillor M Evans highlighted the importance of meeting with Black Lives Matter Group to ensure they were well represented within the community and to be aware of their aims and objectives.

Councillor Routley considered the report united rather than divided Newport, which was a welcoming place to diversity.

Councillor C Evans finally mentioned that the Newport Independent Party welcomed the report and gave its wholehearted support highlighting that it was important that we looked to ourselves and recognised the prejudice potentially in us all and to celebrate the diversity within the city.

Resolved:

That Council approved the attached Strategic Equality Plan.

8. Questions to the Leader of the Council

The Leader gave the following announcements, before proceeding with questions:

Joint inspection of child protection services

At the end of last year, children's services and education were part of the first multi-agency inspection of its kind.

Care Inspectorate Wales, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services, Healthcare Inspectorate Wales, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation and Estyn carried out an in-depth inspection into child protection services in the city.

It evaluated how the Council, Aneurin Bevan University Health Board, Gwent Police, and the Probation Service responded to child exploitation.

The joint inspection found many strengths in all the services and made recommendations where it was felt improvements could be made.

It was a very welcome award, which had many positive things to say about council services in this very important area.

The council had extremely dedicated staff doing crucial work in collaboration with other agencies to try and keep children safe from physical, sexual or emotional harm.

The recommendations were taken on board to make sure every child in the Newport was protected and properly cared for.

Summer childcare schemes

More than 300 children were cared for and entertained in safe and secure venues in schemes run by the Council and partners.

During school closure, care was provided for the children of key workers and vulnerable children using Covid-19 funding, this came to an end before the school holidays and the Council decided to step in and continue childcare provision using some Welsh Government funding and a donation from First Campus.

As well as schemes for children aged two to 12, there was also a specialist care scheme, working with Duffryn Community Link, Clybiau Plant Cymru and Newport Live in order to offer as many places as possible.

Over five weeks, more than 268 children of key workers were able to use the schemes while more than 60 vulnerable children took up places.

The Leader thanked all staff, and our partners, who provided childcare and First Campus for its kind and generous contribution.

Commendation for scheme aimed at stopping young people getting involved in serious and organised crime

Serious and organised crime was a national problem and preventing young people from being preyed on and becoming involved in such criminality is a great concern. Newport had a successful partnership with Gwent Police and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, delivering interventions to vulnerable young people at risk of being drawn into serious and organised crime.

The team worked with St Giles Trust, Crimestoppers and Barnardo's to deliver a ground-breaking programme that educated young people about the risk of serious and organised crime, encouraging them to report their concerns to all nine secondary schools in Newport. The partnership was working to deliver more targeted intervention high risk young people. Earlier this month, the partnership was commended in the Gwent Police Awards 2020.

NEET figures

Even more young people are in education, training or work in Newport following a determined and coordinated effort by the council and its partners by comparison to eight years ago when just under 5% of 16-year-olds were not in education, employment or training.

By 2016 the numbers had fallen to a record low of 1.7% however the figures had steadily improved. Last year's data took the council to sixth in Wales for its performance in this area and figures for 2019 showed it had done even better.

Less than 1% (0.9%) of the year 11 age group was not in education, employment or training, raising the council to second in the all-Wales table and well above the Welsh average.

It was important to identify young people at risk of slipping through the net ensuring they took advantage of the opportunities available to change their future prospects.

New mobile enforcement vehicle

On 24 August, a new mobile enforcement vehicle was launched as part of the council's ongoing effort to tackle illegal parking. Since civil parking enforcement was introduced in July last year, almost 22,000 penalty charge notices were issued to motorists parking illegally across the city.

The recognisable hybrid car was fitted with cameras on the roof with clearly displayed logos 'parking enforcement vehicle' in both English and Welsh.

Grant to refurbish Newport Stadium

Refurbishment work at Newport Stadium was boosted by more than £150,000 of grant funding. Working in partnership with Newport Live and in partnership with Newport Harriers, Sport Wales and Welsh Athletics to deliver the refurbishment. This would see the installation of a new World Athletics' specification throwing cage and new polymeric surfacing for the track and field areas in addition to works of cleaning, repairs and line marking, establishment of new external throwing cage and area to be used as a training facility.

It was hoped that this strong collaborative partnership would continue to support and maintain athletics as a priority sport in the city.

Leader's Questions

- Councillor M Evans thanked staff that excelled during lockdown and would like to formally recognise those staff that had gone the extra mile by resurrecting the award. Councillor asked what additional measures was the council taking to support the wellbeing of residents in light of the effects caused by the Pandemic.

The Leader responded that measures had been taken and that public protection had worked with businesses to implement safety requirements with positive feedback. This week a walk in centre at Rodney parade had been opened which meant residents could book a walk in test which greatly improve the system currently in place.

Ken Skates schemes would be opening up along with the business support team advising hospitality businesses on how to apply for funding. The test and trace team also worked hard, as well as schools and Head Teachers who had responded quickly and appropriately under the circumstances. The Leader also looked forward to resuming her weekly update with Cllr M Evans.

Supplementary:

Councillor M Evans asked if the Leader could do more to ease concerns over mental health as the council could not continue with social aspects for elderly. Abuse and suicide had risen, could the council adopt a more compassionate and human approach during the lockdown.

The Leader advised that there was a range of schemes in place working closely with various voluntary groups such as MIND and Red Cross as well as helping those with financial difficulties.

WG was considering how to help adults living on their own and how they could engage with other people. WG was a fantastic support during the pandemic. The WG website had FAQs in relation to Newport regarding this, or alternatively, Newport City Council customer support staff would be happy to help by contacting 656656/

- Councillor Whitehead congratulated Leader and was grateful for keeping him updated on all issues. Councillor also thanked the silent heroes working in hubs. Would the Leader consider working with officers in creating a portal to enable public access for services around domestic violence, debt, loneliness, isolation and mental health.

The Leader would discuss this with partners and would get back to Councillor Whitehead.

9. Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday 5pm on 24 November 2020.