

Minutes



Council

Date: 26 January 2016

Time: 5.00 pm

Present: Councillors H Thomas (Chair), M Al-Nuami, D Atwell, T Bond, J Cleverly; P Cockeram, M Cornelious, E Corten, K Critchley, D Davies, V Delahaye, M Evans, C Ferris, D Fouweather, E Garland, G Giles, J Guy, P Hannon, D Harvey, P Huntley, R Hutchings, R Jeavons, M Kellaway, D Mayer, S Mlewa, R Mogford, R Poole, J Mudd, J Richards, M Spencer, C Suller, T Suller, K Thomas, E Townsend, R Truman, T Watkins, M Whitcutt, R White, K Whitehead, D Wilcox and D Williams

Apologies: Councillors O Ali, R Bright, C Evans, C Jenkins, M Linton, C Maxfield, A Morris and M Rahman

1. Preliminaries

Councillor Janet Cleverly

The Mayor announced that Councillor Janet Cleverly had been elected at the recent By Election held in the Bettws Ward. Councillor Whitehead introduced Councillor Cleverly to the Mayor and to the Council

Welsh National Healthy Schools Scheme

The Mayor was pleased to welcome to the representatives of Eveswell; Liswerry; and Langstone Primary Schools. These schools had been awarded the National Quality Award for the Welsh National Healthy Schools Scheme. Each school has demonstrated excellence in health promotion through education. The Mayor considered this to be a fantastic achievement. He offered congratulations on behalf of the Council.

The Mayor met representatives of staff, pupils and governors of each school.

Councillor Debbie Wilcox, Cabinet Member for Education and Young People presented the Awards after explaining the achievements of the schools to the Council and adding her congratulations.

Councillor Atwell also congratulated each of the schools involved, mentioning in particular Langstone Primary School here he serves as a Governor

2. Minutes

Subject to the amendment of two minor errors, the minutes of the meeting of the City Council held on 24 November 2015 were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Mayor

3. Appointments

The following appointments were agreed:

Body	Appointee	Replacing
Audit Committee	Cllrs Roger Jeavons and Emma Garland.	Cllr Ibrahim Hayat Cllr Jane Mudd
EAS Audit and Risk assurance committee	Councillor David Mayer and Councillor Sally Mlewa	New appointments
Newport City Homes	Councillor Val Delahaye	Councillor Omar Ali
Newport Transport Board	Councillor Mark Spencer	Councillor Chris Evans has resigned.
Friends of Newport Transporter Bridge	Charles Ferris	Richard White

Maes Ebbw – Additional Governors:

The Chief Education Officer has taken the decision to appoint two additional LA governors to the Governing Body at Maes Ebbw School. The appointees are Mr Mike Fisher and Ms Hannah Brayford.

Other Governor Appointments

Duffryn High School: Cllr David Fouweather and Laura Emily Dunn appointed to vacancies
 Malpas Park Primary School: Tyler Gibson to replace Laura Emily Dunn
 Monnow Primary School: Councillor Jan Cleverly was appointed to replace Noel Trigg
 Pillgwenlly Primary School: Ms Val Davies was appointed
 Ringland Primary School: Mr David Sutherland was confirmed as the appointment
 Somerton Primary School: Rob Brooks appointed
 St Julian's School: Gina Robertson appointed
 St Mary's RC Primary School: Cllr David Fouweather is to be replaced by Michael Doverman
 Ysgol Gymraeg Ifor Hael: Leah Stannard appointed

LA Appointed Governors - Terms of Office Coming to an End between 01/12/15 and 31/03/16			
School	Name	End Date	Resolved
Ysgol Gymraeg Casnewydd	Alan Speight	03/12/15	Re-appointed
Milton Junior	M Linton	11/12/15	Re-appointed
High Cross Primary	Ann Gunn	17/01/16	Re-appointed
Pentrepoeth Primary	Darren Walsh	22/01/16	Re-appointed
Pentrepoeth Primary	Paul Gregory	30/01/16	Re-appointed
St Marys RC Primary Newport	Charles Ferris	07/02/16	Re-appointed

Clytha Primary	Charles Ferris	07/02/16	Re-appointed
St Patricks RC Primary Newport	John Richards	24/02/16	Re-appointed
St Patricks RC Primary	Allan Morris	24/02/16	Re-appointed
Duffryn High	Jan Atkinson	27/02/16	Re-appointed
Glasllwch Primary	Anne Ferris	27/02/16	Re-appointed
Ringland Primary	R C Bright	13/03/16	Re-appointed

4. **Police Issues**

The Mayor welcomed Chief Inspector Kevin Warren to the meeting

Chief Inspector Warren shared the concerns of Councillor Harvey about continuing drug problems in the ward. He stated he would arrange contact with the local ward members and explained actions taken to try to deal with the situation. He stated he would speak to local officers about a plan to move the issue forward.

Chief Inspector Warren agreed with Councillor Jeavons that work needed to be done with stores to alleviate the problem of shoplifting. A partnership approach was needed and a Business Crime partnership had been set up with a group of retailers from Spytty Park.

Chief Inspector Warren recognised Councillor Huntley's concerns about the 101 system, in particular waiting times. He mentioned the new system "storm" and updated on progress

Councillor Truman raised the issue of diminishing police numbers. Chief Inspector Warren said that he had discussed with local members the impact of the new operating model and staff reductions. He mentioned that a further 60 officers were to be recruited in the next 12 to 18 months. Councillor Fouweather recognised that further officers are being recruited and so some progress was being made. Chief Inspector Warren mentioned need to recruit from across our communities.

Chief Inspector Warren informed Councillor Guy that the CCTV in the City Centre remains an important tool in gathering evidence

Councillor Matthew Evans asked if the reintroduction of the barriers would help the police. Chief Inspector Warren stated that potentially it could help but the geographical inspector would have a local view.

5. **Notice of Motion: Trade Union Bill**

The Council considered the following motion for which the requisite notice had been provided

This Council calls upon Welsh Government to seek to enforce the requirement that a Legislative Consent Motion is necessary for the UK Government's trade Union Bill to become law in Wales as applied to public services including local government, if necessary via court action and to with-hold such legislative consent in order to prevent the implementation of the Bill in the Welsh jurisdiction, recognising the damaging effect that the Bill would have as set out in the WLGA submission of 2nd October 2015 subscribed to by this Council.

In moving the motion Councillor Whitcutt stated that the Bill would have a pernicious effect on workers in the public sector. He considered that it could create division and unrest and

was not step forward, more a step towards social and economic division. He stated that legislative consent of the Assembly was needed and he encouraged the Assembly to back up its position legally if necessary. Councillor Whitcutt referred to the restrictive nature of the ballot thresholds which were significantly more demanding than elections to public office; the lack of opportunity to use electronic voting, which would impact on a number of people wishing to participate in the vote in that manner; and the new proposed notification system, which was a bureaucratic block backed up with sanctions. Councillor Whitcutt stated that safeguards against intimidation were already in place and were successful. He considered that the removal of the check-off system was politically motivated and he said that the repeal of the ban on the use of agency staff to cover striking workers would serve to promote bitterness.

In seconding the motion, Councillor Giles mentioned the serious effects on local government. She mentioned the long history of good working relations between the Council and Unions. The implementation of this as legislation would increase tension between the employers and unions. Local Government had suffered low or no pay rises recently and the good working relationships had helped the maintenance of local services. Councillor Giles stated that there was no need to mend what was not broken. She encouraged Welsh Government to withhold the necessary consent to allow this Bill to go forward.

Members speaking in favour of the motion stated that:

- The number of days lost to strike action had reduced significantly
- The ballot requirements were more stringent than those for the election of Councillors; AMs and MP's
- Electronic voting was ruled out
- The notification system was inflexible and could result in fines for the Trade Unions
- The check-off system allows people to opt out of paying into the political fund if they wish but few did
- The use of agency staff to cover the work of employees on strike was anti-democratic
- Members of Parliament from all parties had expressed concern about the Bill
- If Trade Unions funding to a party was to be withdrawn, other forms of party funding needed to be examined
- The Bill went back 30 years when Trade Unions were considered the 'enemy within'
- The proposals would hinder public relations
- Trade Unions had played a major role in improving conditions of employees and general health and wellbeing of people throughout the years and provided protection against unscrupulous employers or managers where necessary
- It had been described as an attack on civil liberties and an assault on working people, curbing freedoms
- The requirement to announce in advance how social media would be used was undemocratic and put barriers in the way of democracy
- Unions need to be part of the strategy to promote economic growth
- There were excessive new powers for the Certification Officer
- New picket supervisors would need to be identified by the wearing of armbands
- There had been significantly fewer strikes than in the 80's and most for a half or single day

Those speaking against the motion made the following points

- The motion would not win sympathy from the public
- Fatal flaws in Welsh government oversight had been reported
- Business will be put off from investing here if we had laws that make it easier to strike here than in England

- Unions have an important role to play but this Bill protects essential services from being disrupted by strikes supported by only a small number of union members
- Key reforms include a key 'opt-in' provision for political subscriptions. This is transparent and allows members to make up their own minds about their wish to contribute to the political funds
- In the past there had been undue influence of unions
- Electronic voting does not contribute much to the number of people voting
- There should be a threshold on the number of people taking part in a ballot before strike action is agreed
- This legislation would protect against flying pickets and sympathy strikes
- The Bill includes scrutiny of facility time that currently costs tax payers of Newport £60,000 when the unions could fund this themselves
- Less than half the people in the UK are members of unions
- No issue if relations with Unions are good

The required number of members called for a recorded vote.

Members voting in favour of the motion were: M Al Nuiami; T Bond; J Cleverly ; P Cockeram; E Corten; K Critchley; D Davies; V Delahaye; E Garland; G Giles; J Guy; P Hannon; D Harvey ; P Huntley; R Hutchings; R Jeavons; D Mayer; S Mlewa; J Mudd; R Poole; J Richards; M Spencer; C Suller; H Thomas; K Thomas; E Townsend; R Truman; T Watkins; M Whitcutt; K Whitehead; and D Wilcox . A total of 31 votes

Members voting against the motion were: Councillors D Atwell; M Cornelious; M Evans; C Ferris; D Fouweather; M Kellaway; R Mogford; T Suller; R White; and D Williams. A Total of 10 votes

The motion was carried

Resolved

This Council calls upon Welsh Government to seek to enforce the requirement that a Legislative Consent Motion is necessary for the UK Government's trade Union Bill to become law in Wales as applied to public services including local government, if necessary via court action and to with-hold such legislative consent in order to prevent the implementation of the Bill in the Welsh jurisdiction, recognising the damaging effect that the Bill would have as set out in the WLGA submission of 2nd October 2015 subscribed to by this Council

6. Council Tax Reduction Scheme

The Deputy Leader introduced a report in which the Council was informed that the Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2016/17 updates the scheme that was introduced on 1st April 2015. The Council is not required to consult on the proposals of the new scheme as the amendments made are in consequence of amendments made to the Prescribed Requirements Regulations. The local discretions that are available to the Council will remain unchanged.

No changes to current arrangements were proposed and the Council will continue to disregard the whole amount of War Disablement Pensions and War Widows Pensions when calculating the income of a claimant.

If the Council did not adopt a local Scheme, the Welsh Government would impose the default scheme. That would mean no support for War Disablement and War Widows Pensioners

The resolution was unanimous

Resolved

To approve the Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2016/17 in accordance with the Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements and Default Schemes) (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2016 ("the Prescribed Requirements Regulations") exercising its local discretions as indicated in the report.

7. Treasury Management

The Deputy Leader introduced a detailed report of treasury activities up to 30 September. Members noted from the report that activities had been consistent with relevant Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy Guidance, Treasury Management principles and the Council's investment strategy.

There were no proposed changes to the Counterparty limits for UK Banking. However, the maximum lending period for a number of the UK Institutions had been revised as advised by the Authority's Treasury Management Consultants

The Head of Finance explained to Councillor Hannon that it would be inappropriate to discuss the details in relation to the repayment of the loan to Queensberry other than to say that Queensberry are required to repay by November 2016

Resolved

To receive the report on treasury management activities for the period to 30 September 2015.

8. Schedule / Diary of Meetings 2016 - 2017

The proposed diary / schedule of meetings for the coming municipal year was adopted as a guide, recognising that individual Committees would agree their start times and that amendments to the schedule could be agreed as necessary

9. Nomination of the Mayor 2016-2017

The Deputy Leader of the Council nominated Councillor David Atwell to serve as the Mayor of Newport for the municipal year 2016-17. The Leader of the Opposition seconded the motion. Councillor Atwell thanked members for their nomination

Resolved

It was unanimously resolved to nominate Councillor David Atwell as the Mayor elect for the Municipal Year 2016-2017

10. Questions to the Chair of the Cabinet

There were no questions submitted

11. Questions to Cabinet Members

There were no questions submitted

12. Questions to Chairs of Committees

There were no questions submitted

13. **Standards Committee**

The minutes of the meeting of the Standards Committee held on 14 January 2016 were received

The meeting terminated at 18:28