

Bristol City Council Minutes of the Full Council

15 January 2018 at 2.00 pm



Present:

Lesley Alexander, Lord Mayor; Marvin Rees, Mayor of Bristol

Councillors: Peter Abraham, Donald Alexander, Lesley Alexander, Nicola Beech, Nicola Bowden-Jones, Harriet Bradley, Mark Brain, Charlie Bolton, Fabian Breckels, Tom Brook, Clare Campion-Smith, Tony Carey, Craig Cheney, Jos Clark, Stephen Clarke, Harriet Clough, Eleanor Combley, Asher Craig, Chris Davies, Mike Davies, Carla Denyer, Kye Dudd, Richard Eddy, Jude English, Martin Fodor, Helen Godwin, Paul Goggin, Geoff Gollop, John Goulandris, Fi Hance, Claire Hiscott, Gary Hopkins, Chris Jackson, Carole Johnson, Steve Jones, Anna Keen, Tim Kent, Gill Kirk, Mike Langley, Jeff Lovell, Brenda Massey, Olly Mead, Matt Melias, Graham Morris, Anthony Negus, Paula O'Rourke, Steve Pearce, Celia Phipps, Ruth Pickersgill, Kevin Quartley, Liz Radford, Jo Sergeant, Afzal Shah, Paul Smith, Clive Stevens, Jerome Thomas, Mhairi Threlfall, Estella Tincknell, Jon Wellington, Mark Weston, Lucy Whittle, Chris Windows and Mark Wright

Aldermen/women: A Massey, J McLaren, B Price, J Smith

1. Welcome and safety information

The Lord Mayor welcomed all attendees to the meeting, and made a safety announcement in relation to the fire/emergency evacuation procedure.

Deferral of agenda items 10 and 11

The Lord Mayor advised Full Council that following the Mayor informing the party group leaders, she had agreed that agenda items 10 (Review of the constitution – Human Resources matters) and 11 (Review of the procurement rules) should be deferred and not considered at this meeting. It was anticipated that these reports would be considered either at the 20 March Full Council meeting or at the annual Council meeting in May alongside other constitutional changes, after the relevant Cabinet member had been briefed on the reports as per the Council's decision pathway process.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors B Clark, Hickman, Holland, Jama and Lake.



3. Minutes of previous meeting - 12 December 2017

On the motion of the Lord Mayor, seconded by Cllr Eddy, it was

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Full Council meeting held on 12 December 2017 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Lord Mayor.

4. Declarations of interest

None.

5. Lord Mayor's business

John Readman, Strategic Director - People

On behalf of the Full Council, the Lord Mayor thanked John Readman (who would shortly be leaving the Council) for his services for the Council and the city, and extended best wishes to him as he left his Strategic Director role. Cllr Massey also paid tribute to John Readman's work during his time with the Council.

Trevor Cox

The Lord Mayor informed Full Council of the recent death of former Council employee Trevor Cox. The Full Council then observed a minute's silence in memory of Trevor Cox.

Bristol Young Heroes Awards

At the invitation of the Lord Mayor, the Mayor encouraged members to submit nominations for these awards, and reminded them of the deadline for nominations.

6. Public forum (public petitions, statements and questions)

Public petitions:

The Full Council received and noted the following petition:

Petition PP 01 - "PETA petition regarding silent fireworks"

Petition organiser - Luke Steele

Public statements:

The Full Council received and noted the following statements (which were also referred to the Mayor for his consideration/information):



PS 01 - Tony Hall - Wage war on dementia
PS 02 - David Redgewell - Rail/transport issues
PS 03 - Oliver Fortune - Council budgets/services
PS 04 - Michael Owen - Proposed underground line
PS 05 - Julie Boston - Housing
PS 06 - Edward Bowditch - Bristol underground and transport
PS 07 - Matthew Eastlake - Medicinal cannabis use
PS 08 - Sharon Gray - Venturers Academy Autistic School in south Bristol - planning application

Within the time available, statements were presented by individuals present at the meeting.

Public questions:

The Full Council noted that the following questions had been submitted:

PQ 01 - Public toilets - Question from Judith Brown
PQ 02 - Libraries - Question from Judith Brown
PQ 03 - Local bus services - Question from Graham Donald
PQ 04 - City of Sport legacy - Question from Mary Mellett
PQ 05 - Future funding of children's - Question from David Jepson
PQ 06 - Council budget - Question from Viran Patel

Within the time available, the Mayor responded verbally to questions PQ 01, PQ 02, PQ 03 and PQ 04, also responding to supplementary questions.

7. Petitions notified by councillors

None notified for this meeting.

ADJOURNMENT – At this point the Lord Mayor advised that the Full Council meeting would adjourn for a 15 minute refreshment break.

8. Collection Fund - Estimated Council Tax and Business Rates surplus/deficit report 2017-18

The Full Council considered a report on the determination of the estimated Collection Fund deficit as at 31 March 2018.

Cllr Cheney, Deputy Mayor for Finance, Governance and Performance moved the report and the recommendations contained therein.

Cllr D Alexander seconded the report.



Following debate, it was:

RESOLVED (52 members voting in favour, 6 against, with 6 abstentions):

1. That an estimated deficit at 31 March 2018 on the Council Tax element of the Collection Fund of £37k be declared for 2017-18 and shared between this Council, the Police and Crime Commissioner for Avon and Somerset and the Avon Fire and Rescue Service in proportion to their 2017-18 precepts on the Collection Fund.

2. That an estimated deficit at 31 March 2018 on the Non-Domestic Rates (NDR) element of the Collection Fund of £13.976m be declared for 2017-18 and shared between this Council, the Secretary of State, Avon Fire and Rescue Service and the West of England Combined Authority (WECA) in proportion to the appropriate year demands (for 2017-18: Bristol 94%, WECA 4%, Avon Fire and Rescue Service 1%. For prior years, Bristol 49%, Secretary of State 50%, Avon Fire and Rescue Service 1%).

9. Approval of Council Tax Base 2018-19

The Full Council considered a report on the determination of the council tax base for 2018-19.

Cllr Cheney, Deputy Mayor for Finance, Governance and Performance moved the report and the recommendation contained therein.

Cllr Jackson seconded the report.

Following debate, it was:

RESOLVED (51 members voting in favour, none against, with 12 abstentions):

That in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012, the amount calculated by Bristol City Council as its Council Tax base for the financial year 2018/19 shall be 125,798.

10. Review of the Constitution - Human Resources matters

Item deferred.

11. Review of the procurement rules

Item deferred.



12. Licensing Committee membership change

The Full Council considered a report seeking approval of the appointment of Cllr Hiscott to serve on the Licensing Committee.

The Lord Mayor moved the report and the recommendation contained therein.

Cllr Lovell, Deputy Lord Mayor seconded the report.

RESOLVED:

That Cllr Hiscott be appointed to serve on the Licensing Committee.

13. Motions

Motion 1 – Planned Bristol Metro

Councillor Weston moved the following motion:

“This Council acknowledges the ambition behind the recently announced plan for Bristol to have its own underground metro system but is concerned over the lack of detail on how this idea is to be delivered, particularly around its price and build window.

Council notes that included in the Mayor’s manifesto he gave a commitment to achieving greater accountability and transparency in the priorities for capital spending of the West of England Joint Transport Board. Yet, to date, he has not been forthcoming in sharing information around this proposed major infrastructure project.

As a result, Members and the public are being asked to blindly support a scheme upon which they have no basis to judge whether this idea is a realistic proposition or a political flight of fancy.

Accordingly, Council calls on the Mayor to provide members of the public and this Council, via the Overview & Scrutiny Committee, with a report containing the following information:

- The results of the geological survey that apparently concluded widespread tunnelling was possible.
- How the price estimates have been arrived at including why the cost has already risen from £2.5bn to £4.5bn.
- How the proposed passenger numbers have been calculated.
- The results of discussion that must have been had with neighbouring authorities on this project since the Mayor’s plans clearly show the routes and stations reaching beyond our boundaries.
- Explanation of how the proposed three routes were determined.
- A detailed account (including dates/minutes) of any meeting(s) held with key stakeholders in any such project, particularly local authority leaders in the West of England Partnership.



- What the actual time frame for delivery is and how this has been estimated, and
- What expressions of interest the Mayor has received so far in financing this project.

Unfortunately, without this information, Council cannot reasonably be expected to support such a large capital spend.”

Councillor Goulandris seconded the motion.

Following debate, upon being put to the vote, the motion was LOST (31 members voting in favour, 32 against, with 1 abstention).

At this point in the meeting, on the motion of the Lord Mayor, it was agreed that standing orders be suspended to allow the consideration of motions to continue for a further 15 minutes.

Altered Motion 2 – Safer Bristol Partnership multi-agency learning review

Councillor Brain moved the following altered motion:

“This council is shocked and appalled that the Safer Bristol Partnership report into the 2013 murder of Bijan Ebrahimi found that, using the definition set out in the Macpherson Report into the 1999 murder of Stephen Lawrence, there was 'evidence of both discriminatory behaviour and institutional racism on the part of Bristol City Council and Avon and Somerset Constabulary.'

The murder itself was ghastly and council is pleased that the murderer was caught and is now serving a life prison sentence. Another neighbour, who assisted the offender, was given a four-year custodial sentence. Whilst most of the blame for the murder lies with the murderer that does not excuse employees of both Avon and Somerset Police and Bristol City Council from their share of responsibility.

Following the report of the Independent Police Complaints Commission two PCSOs and two police officers were dismissed by Avon and Somerset Police and two were jailed, one for four months and one for ten months for misconduct in public office.

By contrast no action has been taken against any Bristol City Council employee despite the fact that:

- He made 44 allegations to the police that he had been a victim of crime.
- This included 5 allegations of harassment, 5 allegations of criminal damage, 17 allegations of assault, and 7 death threats.
- Boiling water was thrown over his head.
- Council officers regularly sided with Mr Ebrahimi's abusers.
- Mr Ebrahimi was arrested repeatedly and council officers obtained an ASBO against him, rather than his persecutors.



- Authorities took no action to dispel the rumours that he was a paedophile leaving his persecutors to believe the rumours were true.

The Multi-Agency Learning Review judged there to have been a 'collective failure of both Avon and Somerset Constabulary and Bristol City Council to provide an appropriate and professional service to Bijan Ebrahimi' while also reporting that '[n]o evidence has been provided to this review that any individual representative of either agency intentionally behaved in a racist manner' and that '[t]here is nothing racist in the intentions or established policies and procedures of either organisation.'

Actions taken by Bristol City Council officers at the time were considered but they did not identify any issues that warranted any internal disciplinary action.

This council calls upon the Mayor to ensure there is a rigorous investigation of the behaviour of individual council officers involved in this case and that disciplinary action is taken where appropriate and training be given to all officers employed in those and similar roles."

Councillor Bradley seconded the altered motion.

Following debate, upon being put to the vote, the altered motion was CARRIED (63 members voting in favour, none against, with 1 abstention), and it was then

RESOLVED:

This council is shocked and appalled that the Safer Bristol Partnership report into the 2013 murder of Bijan Ebrahimi found that, using the definition set out in the Macpherson Report into the 1999 murder of Stephen Lawrence, there was 'evidence of both discriminatory behaviour and institutional racism on the part of Bristol City Council and Avon and Somerset Constabulary.'

The murder itself was ghastly and council is pleased that the murderer was caught and is now serving a life prison sentence. Another neighbour, who assisted the offender, was given a four-year custodial sentence. Whilst most of the blame for the murder lies with the murderer that does not excuse employees of both Avon and Somerset Police and Bristol City Council from their share of responsibility.

Following the report of the Independent Police Complaints Commission two PCSOs and two police officers were dismissed by Avon and Somerset Police and two were jailed, one for four months and one for ten months for misconduct in public office.

By contrast no action has been taken against any Bristol City Council employee despite the fact that:

- He made 44 allegations to the police that he had been a victim of crime.
- This included 5 allegations of harassment, 5 allegations of criminal damage, 17 allegations of assault, and 7 death threats.
- Boiling water was thrown over his head.



- Council officers regularly sided with Mr Ebrahimi's abusers.
- Mr Ebrahimi was arrested repeatedly and council officers obtained an ASBO against him, rather than his persecutors.
- Authorities took no action to dispel the rumours that he was a paedophile leaving his persecutors to believe the rumours were true.

The Multi-Agency Learning Review judged there to have been a 'collective failure of both Avon and Somerset Constabulary and Bristol City Council to provide an appropriate and professional service to Bijan Ebrahimi' while also reporting that '[n]o evidence has been provided to this review that any individual representative of either agency intentionally behaved in a racist manner' and that '[t]here is nothing racist in the intentions or established policies and procedures of either organisation.'

Actions taken by Bristol City Council officers at the time were considered but they did not identify any issues that warranted any internal disciplinary action.

This council calls upon the Mayor to ensure there is a rigorous investigation of the behaviour of individual council officers involved in this case and that disciplinary action is taken where appropriate and training be given to all officers employed in those and similar roles.

Meeting ended at 4.25 pm

Lord Mayor _____

