

Bristol City Council

Minutes of the Full Council

10 January 2023 at 2.00 pm



Members Present:-

Councillors: Lord Mayor Councillor Paula O'Rourke, Deputy Mayor Councillor Craig Cheney, Donald Alexander, Lesley Alexander, Kerry Bailes, Jenny Bartle, Nicola Beech, Marley Bennett, Mark Bradshaw, Fabian Breckels, Andrew Brown, Craig Cheney, Jos Clark, Sarah Classick, Amirah Cole, Asher Craig, Chris Davies, Carla Denyer, Kye Dudd, Tony Dyer, Richard Eddy, Emma Edwards, Jude English, Lily Fitzgibbon, Tessa Fitzjohn, Martin Fodor, Lorraine Francis, John Geater, Paul Goggin, Geoff Gollop, Zoe Goodman, John Goulandris, Katy Grant, Fi Hance, Tom Hathway, Helen Holland, Gary Hopkins, Katja Hornchen, Jonathan Hucker, Philippa Hulme, Farah Hussain, Chris Jackson, Ellie King, Tim Kent, Heather Mack, Mohamed Makawi, Brenda Massey, Henry Michallat, Yassin Mohamud, Paula O'Rourke, Barry Parsons, Steve Pearce, Ed Plowden, Guy Poultney, Tom Renhard, Tim Rippington, James Scott, Sharon Scott, Steve Smith, Lisa Stone, Christine Townsend, Andrew Varney, Mark Weston, David Wilcox and Chris Windows

1 Welcome and Introductions

The Lord Mayor welcomed all attendees to the meeting and issued the safety information.

It was noted that the Mayor had tendered his apologies for this meeting due to illness, so Councillor Craig Cheney would be deputising.

2 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were heard from Mayor Marvin Rees and Councillors Ali, Morris, Quartley, Stafford-Townsend and Wye.

3 Declarations of Interest

The following councillors declared an interest in the Golden Motion because they are landlords or tenants in the private rental sector:

Breckels, Brown, Clark, Classick, Dudd, Edwards, Geater, Gollop, Goodman, Goulandris, Hance, Hathway, Hussain, Mack, Plowden and Stone.



The following councillors declared an interest in agenda item 10 due to their involvement with the Avon Fire Authority:

Eddy, Goggin, Massey, Mohamud, Varney and Wilcox.

4 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

On the motion of the Lord Mayor, seconded by Councillor Hance, it was

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Full Council meeting and the Extraordinary Full Council meeting to grant Freedom of the City to the Bristol Bus Boycott organisers held on the 13th December 2022 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Lord Mayor.

5 Lord Mayor's Business

Full Council noted that Bristol resident Mike Alden has been honoured with the “Unsung Hero Award” at the 2022 Sports Personality of the Year and was given a round of applause.

6 Public Petitions, Statements and Questions

Full Council received and noted the following statements, which were also referred to the Mayor for his consideration and information.

Ref No	Name	Title
PS01	Haydn Gill	Bristol has a car problem
PS02	Liv Fortune	Austerity
PS03	Ann Hughes Devereaux	Secretary Of State letter rejecting unsustainable and unpopular developments
PS04	Professor John Tarlton, BSc, PhD	Planning loophole cheating Bristol of trees
PS05	Jill Tarlton	Climate Resilience Needs Trees
PS06	Suzan Hackett	Ecological Emergency - Trees
PS07	Jen Smith	Subject Access Request to Bristol City Council
PS08	Danica Priest	Stop Building on Green Spaces
PS09	Christina Biggs	Bristol Clean Air Alliance
PS10	David Redgewell	Devolution of Transport service and powers to the city region
PS11	Lesley Powell	Extensive cuts to the Parks Department budgets
PS12	Richard Daniel	RE: Transfer of transport staff to WECA seems



		sensible
PS13	Catherine Withers	Protecting Bristol's Green spaces
PS14	Joanne Bryant	WITHDRAWN
PS15	Nasim Dumont-Namin	No more building on green spaces in the City of Bristol
PS16	Anita Bennett	Green space with over 100 trees
PS17	Mike Alden	Park Knowle Football Club
PS18	Gordon Richardson	The role of Heritage England and Historic England in the city and county of Bristol.
PS19	Pary Namini	Save our green spaces in Bristol
PS20	Louise Hingley	Mike Alden of Park Knowle Football Club
PS21	Brendon Taylor	Transfer of Transport staff from Bristol city council to west of England
PS22	Peter Travis	Devolution of Transport service and powers to the city region
PS23	TFGB Martin Garrett	WECA Transport Authority
PS24	Brendan Murphy – BARBI	Road Usage for Hospitality

Within the time available, statements 01, 02, 03, 04, 05, 06, 09, 11, 13, 16, 17, 23 and 24 were presented by individuals at the meeting.

Public Questions

Full Council noted that the following questions had been submitted:

PQ01	Haydn Gill	Feeder Road
PQ02	Haydn Gill	Heat Networks
PQ03	Liv Fortune	Public Services
PQ04	Tom Bosanquet	East Street Pedestrian Zone
PQ05	Tom Bosanquet	Antisocial Driver Behaviour
PQ06	Sian Ellis Thomas	Park Football Club
PQ07	Samantha Bensted	Unanswered Complaints
PQ08	Suzanne Audrey	FOI Requests
PQ09	Suzanne Audrey	Committee System
PQ10	Len Wyatt (Bristol Parks Forum)	Parks Service
PQ11	South West Transport Network	Bus Services
PQ12	Gordon Richardson	Accessible Heritage
PQ13	St Christophers Action Network	St Christophers Consultation

Within the time available, the Deputy Mayor responded verbally to questions 01, 02, 03, 06, 07 and 13 also responding to supplementary questions.



7 Petitions Notified by Councillors

Full Council received and noted the following petitions:

Petition CP01 – Parks Funding – petition presented by Councillor Gary Hopkins

Petition CP02 – Stop the Cuts to Brislington Buses – petition presented by Councillor Tim Rippington

8 Petition Debate: No More Building on Green Spaces in the City of Bristol

Full Council considered a report of the Director – Legal and Democratic Services setting out details of a petition ‘No more building on green spaces in the city of Bristol.’ The petition had reached the 3,500 signature threshold to qualify for a Full Council debate.

Nasim Dumont, a petition organiser, was invited by the Lord Mayor to present the objectives of the petition.

Full Council debated the petition.

Following the debate it was:

RESOLVED:

That the petition and the comments from the debate be noted and referred to the Mayor for response

9 Council Tax Base 2023/24

Full Council considered a report on the Council Tax Base for 2023/24.

Councillor Craig Cheney moved the report and the recommendations therein. Councillor Fabian Breckels seconded the report.

Following the debate, there was a vote (60 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstain) and it was:

RESOLVED Agreed, 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 2023/24 shall be 129,654.

10 Collection Fund Surplus / Deficit 2022/23

Full Council considered a report on the Collection Fund Surplus / Deficit for 2022/23.

Councillor Craig Cheney moved the report and the recommendations therein. Councillor Zoe Goodman seconded the report.



Following the debate, there was a vote (60 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstain) and it was:

RESOLVED

- 1. That an estimated surplus as at 31 March 2023 on the Council Tax element of the Collection Fund of £1.960m be declared for 2022/23 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 2022/23 precepts on the Collection Fund.**
- 2. That an estimated deficit as at 31 March 2023 on the Non-Domestic Rates (NDR) element of the Collection Fund, net of grants, of £3.358m be declared for 2022/23 and shared between this Council, Avon Fire and Rescue Service and the West of England Combined Authority (WECA) in proportion to the appropriate year demands (Bristol 95%, WECA 4%, Avon Fire and Rescue Service 1%).**

11 Recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel

Full Council considered a report on the Recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel.

The Lord Mayor moved the report and the recommendations therein. The Deputy Lord Mayor seconded the report.

There was no debate and it was:

RESOLVED Full Council considered the recommendations from the Independent Remuneration Panel and approved the scheme as proposed.

12 Motions

Altered Golden Motion: Private Sector Housing

Councillor Tom Renhard moved the following motion:

This council notes:

- Privately rented homes in Bristol make up around 30% of the total housing stock.
- The cost of privately renting a property in Bristol has increased by over 50% in ten years.
- 40% of council homes have been transferred to the private rented sector through right-to-buy. The UK Housing Review 2022 branding right-to-buy as a 'strategic failure.'
- Increasingly unaffordable rents risks driving key workers further out of the city.
- The current demand for rented properties at affordable prices has led to an increased power imbalance between tenants and landlords, resulting in tenants being warier to ask for repairs in fear of eviction, and the rising prevalence of 'bidding wars' - where letting agents encourage private renters to outbid one another for a property. This clearly has negative effect for renters, particularly low-income households.



- The Labour administration’s work so far to support private renters, including the roll out of landlord licensing schemes, stamping out illegal ‘no DSS’ discrimination, the Renters’ Summit, and the Living Rent Commission – which is exploring the options for rent controls within Bristol.

This council believes:

- Housing should be regarded first and foremost as homes rather than investment assets.
- Rent controls are needed in Bristol to stop homes in the private rented sector becoming increasingly unaffordable.
- Effective rent controls should be equitable, proportionate, and data-driven.
- Landlord Licensing schemes are an effective tool to improve conditions in the private rented sector.

These schemes should be expanded city-wide.

- Further action is needed to protect private renters and ensure their homes are not in poor condition.
- Private renters are less likely to complain about problems with their homes if they face a threat of losing it as a result. Therefore, Government should bring forward the legislation it pledged to outlaw no fault evictions immediately.
- The Renters Reform White Paper should be strengthened. The Renters’ Reform Coalition’s ‘Safe, secure and affordable homes for all: A renters’ blueprint for reform’ should be the basis for reforms to the Private Rented Sector.
- Right-to-buy should not be expanded to include housing associations, as was included in the 2022 Queen’s Speech – which outlines a government’s legislative agenda.

This council resolves to:

- Bring the findings of the Living Rent Commission to Full Council and commit to implementing its results. Should the Commission recommend a form of rent control, this council should use its resources to lobby the Government for permission to introduce rent controls in Bristol.
- Ask officers to consider serving improvement notices on homes with severe hazards to prevent landlords from serving Section 21 notices and enable Rent Repayment Orders if the landlord fails to comply. Council officers should also seek to serve more improvement notices for excess cold in homes that fail Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards, and help private renters claim back rent through rent repayment orders when they are eligible to do so.
- Enforce the ban on letting agent fees by issuing fines to criminal letting agents.
- To condemn the practice of bidding wars and instruct officers to find ways that Bristol City Council can work to end the practice of ‘bidding wars’ in the private rented sector.
- Support the Renters’ Reform Coalition proposals and use council resources to lobby the government to strengthen the Renters’ Reform White Paper. This includes calls for a national landlord register and abolishing the ‘Right to Rent’ checks.
- Oppose any expansion of right-to-buy to include housing associations and instruct officers to submit a plan to government of possible ways to boost affordable home ownership rates without depleting social housing stock.
- Publish an annual “living rent index” of what affordable rents would be for Bristol.
- Following the conclusion of the Living Rent Commission, continue its work through a new, constituted forum in conjunction with the Homes and Communities Board.



- Review our Private Housing Enforcement policy to ensure it reflects any new national legislation and that formal action can be taken in a timely manner.
- Maintain a publicly accessible list of Enforcement Notices served on Private Housing in Bristol if no such national database materialises following the Renters Reform bill.
- Establish a regular Renters' Forum to engage with private rental tenants.

The motion was seconded by Councillor Carla Denyer

Following debate, upon being put to the vote, the motion was CARRIED (35 For, 9 against, 2 abstentions) and it was

RESOLVED:

This council notes:

- Privately rented homes in Bristol make up around 30% of the total housing stock.
- The cost of privately renting a property in Bristol has increased by over 50% in ten years.
- 40% of council homes have been transferred to the private rented sector through right-to-buy. The UK Housing Review 2022 branding right-to-buy as a 'strategic failure.'
- Increasingly unaffordable rents risks driving key workers further out of the city.
- The current demand for rented properties at affordable prices has led to an increased power imbalance between tenants and landlords, resulting in tenants being warier to ask for repairs in fear of eviction, and the rising prevalence of 'bidding wars' - where letting agents encourage private renters to outbid one another for a property. This clearly has negative effect for renters, particularly low-income households.
- The Labour administration's work so far to support private renters, including the roll out of landlord licensing schemes, stamping out illegal 'no DSS' discrimination, the Renters' Summit, and the Living Rent Commission – which is exploring the options for rent controls within Bristol.

This council believes:

- Housing should be regarded first and foremost as homes rather than investment assets.
- Rent controls are needed in Bristol to stop homes in the private rented sector becoming increasingly unaffordable.
- Effective rent controls should be equitable, proportionate, and data-driven.
- Landlord Licensing schemes are an effective tool to improve conditions in the private rented sector. These schemes should be expanded city-wide.
- Further action is needed to protect private renters and ensure their homes are not in poor condition.
- Private renters are less likely to complain about problems with their homes if they face a threat of losing it as a result. Therefore, Government should bring forward the legislation it pledged to outlaw no fault evictions immediately.
- The Renters Reform White Paper should be strengthened. The Renters' Reform Coalition's 'Safe, secure and affordable homes for all: A renters' blueprint for reform' should be the basis for reforms to the Private Rented Sector.



- **Right-to-buy should not be expanded to include housing associations, as was included in the 2022 Queen's Speech – which outlines a government's legislative agenda.**

This council resolves to:

- **Bring the findings of the Living Rent Commission to Full Council and commit to implementing its results. Should the Commission recommend a form of rent control, this council should use its resources to lobby the Government for permission to introduce rent controls in Bristol.**
- **Ask officers to consider serving improvement notices on homes with severe hazards to prevent landlords from serving Section 21 notices and enable Rent Repayment Orders if the landlord fails to comply. Council officers should also seek to serve more improvement notices for excess cold in homes that fail Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards, and help private renters claim back rent through rent repayment orders when they are eligible to do so.**
- **Enforce the ban on letting agent fees by issuing fines to criminal letting agents.**
- **To condemn the practice of bidding wars and instruct officers to find ways that Bristol City Council can work to end the practice of 'bidding wars' in the private rented sector.**
- **Support the Renters' Reform Coalition proposals and use council resources to lobby the government to strengthen the Renters' Reform White Paper. This includes calls for a national landlord register and abolishing the 'Right to Rent' checks.**
- **Oppose any expansion of right-to-buy to include housing associations and instruct officers to submit a plan to government of possible ways to boost affordable home ownership rates without depleting social housing stock.**
- **Publish an annual "living rent index" of what affordable rents would be for Bristol.**
- **Following the conclusion of the Living Rent Commission, continue its work through a new, constituted forum in conjunction with the Homes and Communities Board.**
- **Review our Private Housing Enforcement policy to ensure it reflects any new national legislation and that formal action can be taken in a timely manner.**
- **Maintain a publicly accessible list of Enforcement Notices served on Private Housing in Bristol if no such national database materialises following the Renters Reform bill.**
- **Establish a regular Renters' Forum to engage with private rental tenants.**

Silver Motion: Preserving Bristol's Transport and Design Powers For The Future

Councillor Ed Plowden moved the following motion:

This Council notes:

- **There is a climate emergency and Bristol needs to change rapidly to adapt to and mitigate the existential threats caused by climate chaos;**
- **We will need to play a difficult balancing act to preserve what makes our city great whilst recognising that "do nothing" is not an option;**
- **The design of the City's places and movement will play a critical part in this adaptation and mitigation;**
- **We have specialist officer expertise in the Strategic City Transport and City Design teams that help the Council make good decisions to re-design our future City;**



- The Mayor's controversial proposal to abolish these teams, with minimal detail provided as to their future form or ongoing functions;
- That outsourcing the delivery of some transport projects will actually cost more than keeping them in-house;
- The Temple Quarter Regeneration will shape the city for decades;
- The commitment made by the Cabinet Member for Transport to publish the report on Workplace Parking Levy has not been fulfilled, despite his reasoning that it was such an important decision that it should be put before Full Council;
- The recent WECA (West of England Combined Authority) Audit report that identified significant weaknesses in its operations.

This Council believes:

- Decisions that impact on the Council's future need to be taken transparently and informed by expertise;
- The Council needs expert support to fulfil its statutory Planning and Transport duties, in collaboration with other authorities;
- Although there is a good Transport Strategy in place, very little progress has been made in delivering it in a rounded and balanced way, for example the city needs parking and cycling strategies, but these have not been progressed despite repeated promises to bring them forward.
- Restructuring the expertise of planners in City Design and Transport departments without clear future arrangements has the potential to affect severely the Council's ability to make informed and quality decisions, which will inevitably impact on regeneration plans such as Temple Quarter;
- The capacity of the Council to continue to exercise these functions needs to be underpinned by a clear options and risk analysis and be referred for proper scrutiny, including to the Committee Model Working Group;
- There are different potential funding models that need to be explored to support the effective continuation of the teams, such as reviewing the capital recharge rate for staff and demand management options.
- Bristol needs capacity to be able to negotiate strategically with WECA, as recommended by the WECA auditors.

This Council resolves:

- To call on the Mayor to pause and clarify what the alternative proposals are for fulfilling these functions in sufficient time for this to be fully considered by councillors, including the Committee Model Working Group;
- That the proposals for ongoing staffing budgets should be considered as part of a budget process led by Full Council, rather than the Cabinet in isolation;
- To call on the administration to make the Workplace Parking Levy report available to Full Council as promised, so its potential to raise valuable revenue can at the very least be considered;
- To call on the Mayor to ensure problems with WECA's functioning are resolved before any further significant functions are transferred;
- To call on the Mayor to include in any firm proposals careful consideration of how Bristol will retain capacity to negotiate strategically with WECA, and the other Unitary Authorities involved



The motion was seconded by Councillor Emma Edwards.

Following debate, upon being put to the vote, the motion was CARRIED (40 For, 0 against, 19 abstentions) and it was

RESOLVED

This Council notes:

- **There is a climate emergency and Bristol needs to change rapidly to adapt to and mitigate the existential threats caused by climate chaos;**
- **We will need to play a difficult balancing act to preserve what makes our city great whilst recognising that “do nothing” is not an option;**
- **The design of the City’s places and movement will play a critical part in this adaptation and mitigation;**
- **We have specialist officer expertise in the Strategic City Transport and City Design teams that help the Council make good decisions to re-design our future City;**
- **The Mayor’s controversial proposal to abolish these teams, with minimal detail provided as to their future form or ongoing functions;**
- **That outsourcing the delivery of some transport projects will actually cost more than keeping them in-house;**
- **The Temple Quarter Regeneration will shape the city for decades;**
- **The commitment made by the Cabinet Member for Transport to publish the report on Workplace Parking Levy has not been fulfilled, despite his reasoning that it was such an important decision that it should be put before Full Council;**
- **The recent WECA (West of England Combined Authority) Audit report that identified significant weaknesses in its operations.**

This Council believes:

- **Decisions that impact on the Council’s future need to be taken transparently and informed by expertise;**
- **The Council needs expert support to fulfil its statutory Planning and Transport duties, in collaboration with other authorities;**
- **Although there is a good Transport Strategy in place, very little progress has been made in delivering it in a rounded and balanced way, for example the city needs parking and cycling strategies, but these have not been progressed despite repeated promises to bring them forward.**
- **Restructuring the expertise of planners in City Design and Transport departments without clear future arrangements has the potential to affect severely the Council’s ability to make informed and quality decisions, which will inevitably impact on regeneration plans such as Temple Quarter;**
- **The capacity of the Council to continue to exercise these functions needs to be underpinned by a clear options and risk analysis and be referred for proper scrutiny, including to the Committee Model Working Group;**



- There are different potential funding models that need to be explored to support the effective continuation of the teams, such as reviewing the capital recharge rate for staff and demand management options.
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Meeting ended at 5.00 pm

CHAIR _____

