

Bristol City Council

Minutes of the Full Council

13 December 2016 at 2.00 pm



Present:

Jeff Lovell, Lord Mayor; Marvin Rees, Mayor

Councillors: Peter Abraham, Donald Alexander, Lesley Alexander, Nicola Beech, Harriet Bradley, Mark Bradshaw, Mark Brain, Charlie Bolton, Fabian Breckels, Tom Brook, Clare Champion-Smith, Tony Carey, Craig Cheney, Barry Clark, Jos Clark, Stephen Clarke, Harriet Clough, Eleanor Combley, Chris Davies, Mike Davies, Carla Denyer, Kye Dudd, Richard Eddy, Jude English, Martin Fodor, Helen Godwin, Paul Goggin, Geoff Gollop, Margaret Hickman, Claire Hiscott, Helen Holland, Gary Hopkins, Chris Jackson, Carole Johnson, Steve Jones, Tim Kent, Sultan Khan, Gill Kirk, Cleo Lake, Mike Langley, Brenda Massey, Olly Mead, Graham Morris, Anthony Negus, Paula O'Rourke, Steve Pearce, Celia Phipps, Ruth Pickersgill, Liz Radford, Jo Sergeant, Afzal Shah, Paul Smith, Clive Stevens, Jerome Thomas, Mhairi Threlfall, Estella Tincknell, Jon Wellington, Mark Weston, Chris Windows and Mark Wright

Aldermen: Arthur Massey, John McLaren

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.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Bowden-Jones, Goulandris, Hance, Keen, and Melias.

3. Minutes of previous meetings

a. Minutes – Full Council – 8 November 2016

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



RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Full Council held on 8 November 2016 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Lord Mayor.

b. Minutes – Extraordinary Full Council – 29 November 2016

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

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Extraordinary Full Council held on 29 November 2016 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Lord Mayor.

4. Declarations of interest

None.

5. Lord Mayor's business

Alderman Iris Gillard

The Lord Mayor informed members of the recent death of Alderman Iris Gillard.

Councillor Abraham then addressed the Full Council, paying tribute to Alderman Gillard's life and her work as a former councillor and as an Alderman.

The Full Council then observed a minute's silence in memory of Alderman Iris Gillard.

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

Public petitions:

The Full Council received and noted the following petition:

Petition PP 01 – "Lower the speed limit on the Portway at Hotwells"

Petition organiser – Becky Gilbert

Public statements:

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



PS 01 - Jendayi Serwah – Representation of Afrikan heritage communities in Bristol

PS 02 - David Redgewell – Transport issues

PS 03 - Tom Hathway – Motion 2 – Affordable housing strategy

PS 04 - Nigel Biggs – Tall buildings policy

PS 05 - Christina Biggs & Martin Garrett – Transport / devolution / joint spatial plan

PS 06 - Elinor Ni Chathain – Motion 2 – Affordable housing strategy

PS 07 - Olivia Nunn – Motion 2 – Affordable housing strategy

PS 08 – Elisabeth Winkler – Motion 2 – Affordable housing strategy

PS 09 - John Sergeant – Motion 2 – Affordable housing strategy

PS 10 – Edward Bowditch - Congestion

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 - Ashley Hill station

- submitted by Martin Garrett

PQ 02 - Temple Meads bus stops

- submitted by Martin Garrett

PQ 03 - Getting safely to and from Oasis Academy Brightstowe

- submitted by Head Girl, Oasis Academy Brightstowe

PQ 04 - Getting safely to and from Oasis Academy Brightstowe

- submitted by Head Boy, Oasis Academy Brightstowe

PQ 05 - Trees at Bedminster Green

- submitted by Dianne James

PQ 06 - Council tax arrears

- submitted by Michael Owen



PQ 07 - Bristol wood recycling project / Cattle Market Road site
- submitted by Kaleb Debbage

PQ 08 - Bedminster Green development
- submitted by Nick Townsend

PQ 09 - Controlled parking zones
- submitted by Edward Bowditch

Within the time available, the Mayor responded to the following questions (also responding to supplementary questions when asked): PQ 01, PQ 02, PQ 03, PQ 04, PQ 05, PQ 07 and PQ 08.

7. Petitions notified by councillors

The Full Council received and noted the following petitions:

Petition CP 01 – “Save the school crossing patrols in Bristol”
Petition presented by Councillor Phipps

Petition CP 02 – “Traffic calming measures on York Road, BS5”
Petition presented by Councillor Pickersgill

Petition CP 03 – “Harden Road car park”
Petition presented by Councillor Jones

ADJOURNMENT – At this point, the Lord Mayor advised that the Full Council meeting would adjourn for a 20 minute refreshment break.

8. Treasury management mid-year report 2016-17

The Full Council considered the treasury management mid-year report 2016-17.

Councillor Cheney, Cabinet member for Finance, Governance and Performance moved the report and the recommendation set out therein.

Councillor Barry Clark seconded the report

Following debate, it was:

RESOLVED:



That the report be noted.

9. Approval of council tax base 2017-18

The Full Council considered a report seeking approval of the amount to be calculated by Bristol City Council as its council tax base for the financial year 2017-18.

It was noted that further to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board's consideration of this matter (meeting held on 8 December 2016), a supplementary note had been circulated providing additional information in relation to student council tax exemptions and comparing previous council tax base forecasts against actuals, as requested by the Board.

Councillor Cheney, Cabinet member for Finance, Governance and Performance moved the report and the recommendation set out therein.

Councillor Smith seconded the report.

Following debate, upon being put to the vote, it was

RESOLVED (57 members voting in favour, none against, and with 1 abstention):

That it be agreed 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 2017-18 shall be 124, 083.

10. Capital receipts flexibility

The Full Council considered a report seeking approval of the strategy for the flexible use of capital receipts.

Councillor Cheney, Cabinet member for Finance, Governance and Performance moved the report and the recommendation set out therein.

Councillor Mead seconded the report.

Following debate, upon being put to the vote, it was

RESOLVED (53 members voting in favour, none against, and with 1 abstention):

That approval be given to the strategy for the flexible use of capital receipts as set out in paragraphs 14 - 18 of the report.



11. Review of Minimum Revenue Provision policy

The Full Council considered a report seeking approval of an updated minimum revenue provision policy.

Councillor Cheney, Cabinet member for Finance, Governance and Performance moved the report and the recommendation set out therein.

Councillor Brook seconded the report.

Following debate, upon being put to the vote, it was

RESOLVED (53 members voting in favour, none against, and with 2 abstentions):

That approval be given to the updated minimum revenue provision policy as set out in appendix B of the report.

12. Appointment of external auditor for 2018-19

The Full Council considered a report from the Audit Committee seeking approval of arrangements for the appointment of the Council's external auditor, for the 5 financial years commencing 1 April 2018.

Councillor Mead, Chair of the Audit Committee moved the report and the recommendation set out therein.

Councillor Stevens, Vice-Chair of the Audit Committee seconded the report.

RESOLVED:

That Full Council confirms the recommendation of the Audit Committee to accept Public Sector Audit Appointments' (PSAA) invitation to 'opt in' to their sector led scheme to enable the PSAA to appoint an external auditor to audit Bristol City Council's financial statements for 5 financial years commencing 1 April 2018.

13. Human Resources Committee - terms of reference

The Full Council considered a report from the Human Resources Committee seeking agreement that the terms of reference of the committee be amended to delegate to the committee the responsibility of agreeing the salary of the Senior Coroner for the Avon coroner area.

Councillor Godwin, Chair of the Human Resources Committee moved the report and the recommendation set out therein.



Councillor O'Rourke, Vice-Chair of the Human Resources Committee seconded the report.

RESOLVED:

That the terms of reference of the Human Resources Committee be amended to delegate to the committee the responsibility of agreeing the salary of the Senior Coroner for the Avon coroner area.

14. Motions

a. Motion 1 – Bristol's schools funding

Councillor Hopkins moved the following motion:

“Council views with great concern the impending cuts in funding to Bristol schools' budgets.

Over the last 15 years, Bristol schools have dramatically improved, being previously judged one of the worst services it is now performing far better than equivalent areas. Huge effort, over a prolonged period, with all party support, has produced a dramatic positive change and over the last few years the pupil premium has helped to reduce inequalities in results and improve funding in Bristol schools.

The freezing of school budgets by the new government has presented challenges to schools but this is added to dramatically by the huge threat that the reallocation of school grants present.

Bristol will be the hardest hit authority in the country. A cut of £28m to the city's schools' budgets will see the loss of around 1000 teachers and teaching assistants. A loss on average of £577 per pupil in the city.

Bristol Cathedral Primary School, just recently praised as part of the Council's Ofsted report, will see a funding cut of over £1600 per pupil, over a quarter of their funding. Ashley Down Primary school will see a funding cut of over £1000 per pupil and Oasis Academy John Williams over £700 per pupil.

Council also notes with concern the pressure on the SEN budget, that large cuts to SEN funding continue to be implemented to cope with increasing demand and underfunding by Westminster.

Council condemns the proposed cuts in Bristol's schools funding by the Conservative Government.

Council calls on the Mayor and the Cabinet member for Education to meet with Government Cabinet Members and negotiate a better deal for Bristol's schools.

Council requires the Mayor and Cabinet member to report back with a written report to Full Council within 4 months detailing the results of any talks, and the impact of any changes on Bristol's schools.”

Councillor Kent seconded the motion.

Councillor Pickersgill then moved that the motion be amended to read as follows:



“Council views with great concern the impending cuts in funding to Bristol schools’ budgets.

Over the last 15 years, Bristol schools have dramatically improved, being previously judged one of the worst services it is now performing far better than equivalent areas. Huge effort, over a prolonged period, with all party support, has produced a dramatic positive change and over the last few years the pupil premium has helped to reduce inequalities in results and improve funding in Bristol schools.

The freezing of school budgets by the new government has presented challenges to schools but this is added to dramatically by the huge threat to school grants at present. Along with most core cities, Bristol has been funded above the national average of all local authorities. However a move to a single national funding formula is likely to result in a substantial reduction in funding for Bristol schools.

The Council notes the previous coalition Government and the current Government have not increased the national allocation to the Schools Block. With pressure from staff increments and other inflationary pressures, this freeze on income represents a real terms cut for our schools.

Council also notes with concern the pressure on the SEN budget, that large cuts to SEN funding continue to be implemented to cope with increasing demand and underfunding by Westminster. We further note Bristol, along with most local authorities, is experiencing pressure on its High Needs block spending. As a result, we note the Schools Forum has agreed to reduce the funding allocated for individual top up applications. This represents an additional cut in income for most schools in Bristol.

In addition we note the Council has historically received an Education Services Grant to fund the Council’s education duties. The Government has announced that this Grant will be ended. In 2017/18 the Grant level will reduce significantly and be taken from the Dedicated Schools Grant which will further reduce the funding available for per-pupil formula.

The Council Resolves to:

Calls on the Mayor and the Cabinet member for Education and Skills to meet with Government Cabinet Members to argue that funding for Bristol schools is increased to take into account inflationary pressures and levels of deprivation, and is protected in the proposed revisions to the National Formula.

Calls on the Mayor and the Cabinet member for Education and Skills to join with other core cities to lobby for a more realistic level of funding for students with High Needs, based on their explicit needs.

Calls on the Mayor and Cabinet member to report back with a written report to Full Council within 4 months detailing the results of any talks, and the impact of any changes on Bristol’s schools.”

Councillor Massey seconded the amendment.

Following debate, upon being put to the vote, the amendment was CARRIED.



It was then

RESOLVED:

Council views with great concern the impending cuts in funding to Bristol schools' budgets.

Over the last 15 years, Bristol schools have dramatically improved, being previously judged one of the worst services it is now performing far better than equivalent areas. Huge effort, over a prolonged period, with all party support, has produced a dramatic positive change and over the last few years the pupil premium has helped to reduce inequalities in results and improve funding in Bristol schools.

The freezing of school budgets by the new government has presented challenges to schools but this is added to dramatically by the huge threat to school grants at present. Along with most core cities, Bristol has been funded above the national average of all local authorities. However a move to a single national funding formula is likely to result in a substantial reduction in funding for Bristol schools.

The Council notes the previous coalition Government and the current Government have not increased the national allocation to the Schools Block. With pressure from staff increments and other inflationary pressures, this freeze on income represents a real terms cut for our schools.

Council also notes with concern the pressure on the SEN budget, that large cuts to SEN funding continue to be implemented to cope with increasing demand and underfunding by Westminster. We further note Bristol, along with most local authorities, is experiencing pressure on its High Needs block spending. As a result, we note the Schools Forum has agreed to reduce the funding allocated for individual top up applications. This represents an additional cut in income for most schools in Bristol.

In addition we note the Council has historically received an Education Services Grant to fund the Council's education duties. The Government has announced that this Grant will be ended. In 2017/18 the Grant level will reduce significantly and be taken from the Dedicated Schools Grant which will further reduce the funding available for per-pupil formula.

The Council Resolves to:

Calls on the Mayor and the Cabinet member for Education and Skills to meet with Government Cabinet Members to argue that funding for Bristol schools is increased to take into account inflationary pressures and levels of deprivation, and is protected in the proposed revisions to the National Formula.

Calls on the Mayor and the Cabinet member for Education and Skills to join with other core cities to lobby for a more realistic level of funding for students with High Needs, based on their explicit needs.



Calls on the Mayor and Cabinet member to report back with a written report to Full Council within 4 months detailing the results of any talks, and the impact of any changes on Bristol's schools.

b. Altered Motion 2 – Affordable housing strategy

Councillor Clarke moved the following altered motion:

“This Council notes that:

1. The Mayor of London has set out a long-term strategic objective to make half of all new homes built in London affordable.
2. In Bristol, the figure for permissions granted for affordable homes in 2015/16 is only 21% and, of those actually built, less than 10% were affordable.
3. There have been a number of very high profile recent developments where the schemes have included very few affordable homes (culminating in the Chocolate Factory scheme in Easton which initially offered zero).
4. The current viability reporting process which is used to decide on the percentage of affordable housing delivered through the planning system is secretive, open to varying interpretation and widely mistrusted by citizens affected by these decisions.

This Council believes that:

5. The Mayor of Bristol should be no less ambitious than the Mayor of London in his vision for affordable homes in this city.
6. The viability process needs a significant overhaul to make it fit-for-purpose.
7. A ‘one size fits all’ approach does not help achieve our ambition of more balanced communities.

This Council resolves:

8. In the case of schemes which do not comply with the Council’s guidance on affordable homes; to instruct planning officers to make all information used in the viability process, whether it arises from a council appointed surveyor or a third party, available publicly in good time before a planning application is to be considered.
9. To instruct council planning officers to continue to look for innovative ways to encourage and incentivise developers to include a mix of affordable and mixed tenure homes in their plans.
10. To make strong representations to central government to:
 - a. remove the borrowing cap on the Housing Revenue Account and
 - b. allow the council to charge Council Tax on plots in Bristol with planning permission which have not been built on if they have not been developed within a reasonable timescale.
 - c. provide greater flexibility to spend right-to-buy income on developing or commissioning new homes.
 - d. devolve more authority to Bristol over the spending and priorities of the Homes and Communities Agency.



11 To develop a programme of compulsory purchase orders for stalled housing sites where the owners have no clear intention to develop new homes.”

Councillor Smith seconded the altered motion.

Councillor Eddy then moved that the altered motion be amended to read as follows:

“This Council notes that:

1. The Mayor of London has set out a long-term strategic objective to make half of all new homes built in London affordable.
2. In Bristol, the figure for permissions granted for affordable homes in 2015/16 is only 21% and, of those actually built, less than 10% were affordable.
3. There have been a number of very high profile recent developments where the schemes have included very few affordable homes (culminating in the Chocolate Factory scheme in Easton which initially offered zero).
4. The current viability reporting process which is used to decide on the percentage of affordable housing delivered through the planning system can be perceived as secretive, open to varying interpretation and widely mistrusted by citizens affected by these decisions.

This Council believes that:

5. The Mayor of Bristol should be no less ambitious than the Mayor of London in his vision for affordable homes in this city.
6. The viability process needs a significant overhaul to make it fit-for-purpose.
7. A ‘one size fits all’ approach does not help achieve our ambition of more balanced communities

This Council resolves:

8. In the case of schemes which do not comply with the Council’s guidance on affordable homes; to instruct planning officers to make all information used in the viability process, whether it arises from a council appointed surveyor or a third party, available publicly (providing such disclosure is not contrary to law, planning guidelines or reveals commercially-sensitive material) in good time before a planning application is to be considered.
9. To instruct council planning officers to continue to look for innovative ways such as the Bristol Housing Delivery vehicle secured in the last annual budget to encourage and incentivise developers to include a mix of affordable and mixed tenure homes in their plans. Here, emphasis needs to be given to the supply of ‘key-worker’ housing in new developments.
10. To make strong representations to central government to:



- a. remove the borrowing cap on and other restrictive features of the Housing Revenue Account and
 - b. Provide greater flexibility to spend right-to-buy income on developing or commissioning new homes.
 - c. Devolve more authority to Bristol over the spending and priorities of the Homes and Communities Agency.
11. To assess best practice on housing delivery through the planning system in London and other cities and how it may be applied in the Bristol context.”

Councillor Jones seconded the amendment.

Following debate, upon being put to the vote, the amendment was LOST.

The Full Council then voted on the altered motion (as moved by Councillor Clarke and seconded by Councillor Smith) and

RESOLVED:

This Council notes that:

1. **The Mayor of London has set out a long-term strategic objective to make half of all new homes built in London affordable.**
2. **In Bristol, the figure for permissions granted for affordable homes in 2015/16 is only 21% and, of those actually built, less than 10% were affordable.**
3. **There have been a number of very high profile recent developments where the schemes have included very few affordable homes (culminating in the Chocolate Factory scheme in Easton which initially offered zero).**
4. **The current viability reporting process which is used to decide on the percentage of affordable housing delivered through the planning system is secretive, open to varying interpretation and widely mistrusted by citizens affected by these decisions.**

This Council believes that:

5. **The Mayor of Bristol should be no less ambitious than the Mayor of London in his vision for affordable homes in this city.**
6. **The viability process needs a significant overhaul to make it fit-for-purpose.**
7. **A ‘one size fits all’ approach does not help achieve our ambition of more balanced communities.**

This Council resolves:

8. **In the case of schemes which do not comply with the Council’s guidance on affordable homes; to instruct planning officers to make all information used in the viability process, whether it arises from a council appointed surveyor or a third party, available publicly in good time before a planning application is to be considered.**



9. To instruct council planning officers to continue to look for innovative ways to encourage and incentivise developers to include a mix of affordable and mixed tenure homes in their plans.
10. To make strong representations to central government to:
 - a. remove the borrowing cap on the Housing Revenue Account and
 - b. allow the council to charge Council Tax on plots in Bristol with planning permission which have not been built on if they have not been developed within a reasonable timescale.
 - c. provide greater flexibility to spend right-to-buy income on developing or commissioning new homes.
 - d. devolve more authority to Bristol over the spending and priorities of the Homes and Communities Agency.
- 11 To develop a programme of compulsory purchase orders for stalled housing sites where the owners have no clear intention to develop new homes.

Meeting ended at 4.55 pm

CHAIR _____

