

FULL COUNCIL MOTION – 17th December 2019

“The Need to Scrap Bristol’s Directly-Elected Mayor”

“This Council believes that the city’s current governance arrangements of a directly- elected Mayor needs to be brought to an end at the earliest possible opportunity and an alternative form of Administration either Leader & Cabinet or more traditional Committee system reinstated.

Sadly, experience of rule by such Mayors over the last 7 years has failed to deliver many of the potential benefits of a switch to this system – namely significant financial savings, reinvigorating local democracy, more collaborative working and greater scrutiny/accountability of a single figurehead who was above political infighting.

In addition, developments since that time (for example moving from elections-by-thirds to citywide ward elections in 2016) have largely addressed perceived weaknesses in the former political structure which had led to a series of weak and unstable Administrations, and was a major factor in the narrow public vote to adopt an Elected Mayor in May 2012.

Furthermore, the creation of a Regional ‘Metro’ Mayor and West of England Combined Authority as part of the Government’s devolution agenda has rendered the increasingly expensive post of a City Mayor (and costly attendant office) largely redundant.

Under Legislation, the earliest Bristolians can vote again on this issue – through a local referendum - will be 2022 and, failing a formal resolution to hold such a poll, it will require a petition for this to take place raised by 5% of registered electors in the city.

Council supports the scrapping of this post and any move to initiate a referendum for its removal and calls on the present Mayor to reconsider his own commitment to what has proven in practice to be a profoundly divisive and autocratic Office.”

Motion to be moved by: **Councillor Mark Weston**

Date of submission: **4th December 2019**

Gig economy/housing

To be moved by: Councillor Nicola Beech (Labour – St George Central)

Full Council notes:

1. The casualization of terms and conditions, growth of zero-hours contracts within a stagnating national economy, and growing gig economy – including ride-sharing, delivery, and accommodation rental services.
2. That our economy is growing in the high-tech and high-wage sectors, alongside the growth in the gig economy, with a real squeeze on stable, decent, traditional and manual jobs.
3. January and February 2019's meetings of Full Council, where only Labour's Mayor and Councillors backed paying a real Living Wage to Bristolians both in principle and in practice.
4. The housing crisis facing the country and Bristol, where 12,000 people are waiting for council housing, 500 families are in emergency/temporary accommodation, and around 100 people sleep rough.
5. Stronger regulatory regimes in both Ireland and Greater London, where councils have the power to refuse permission for buy-to-let properties to be used for full-time or short-term lettings for more than 90 days per year – reducing loss of housing stock without penalising people who are renting out spare rooms in homes where they live.
6. Short-term lettings, like purpose-built student accommodation, do not pay business rates.

Full Council believes:

1. The Labour administration's expansion of landlord and HMO licensing after the success of pilots will improve housing conditions across the city.
2. The south Bristol construction skills academy, backed by Mayor Marvin Rees, will deliver more well-paid manual jobs and the workforce supply to help further exceed our ambitious housing targets.
3. Cities should have the power to regulate short-term lets and property bought for investment.
4. Take a One City approach, working with innovative gig economy platforms, to better regulate the gig economy and level the playing field.

Full Council resolves

1. To endorse and support efforts by the administration to lobby for greater powers and resources to regulate the gig economy, particularly accommodation rentals by non-owner occupiers.
2. To endorse and support efforts by the administration to secure the legislation and powers needed to levy business rates on short-term letters and student accommodation (not on students).

Full Council Motion – December 17th 2019

Bristol Airport Expansion

This Council notes that:

1. Bristol Airport has applied for planning permission for an extra two million passengers a year (from 10-12 million) and has a published strategy to more than double in size to 20 million passengers a year. A decision is due in the near future.
2. There have been over 3,500 objections on the North Somerset Council Planning website including objections by the vast majority of the local Town and Parish Councils and by Bath and North East Somerset Council.
3. The papers submitted with the planning application by Bristol Airport Ltd (1) show that the expansion would mean:
 - a. up to 10,000 extra cars entering the already congested area every day and a new multi-storey car park on the Green Belt;
 - b. extra toxic pollution in the already polluted air over South Bristol (over which many of the aircraft will approach the airport);
 - c. an enormous increase in night flights during the summer bringing noise and distress to residents;
 - d. more than 623,000 tonnes (2) of carbon entering the atmosphere at high levels where its potential to warm our atmosphere is at least doubled compared with ground level emissions. (3)
4. The New Economics Foundation (a think-tank previously used at governmental level) have produced a report analysing the economic benefits claimed by the airport and concludes that the report submitted on behalf of the airport 'grossly overstates the economic benefits' and 'the extended capacity of Bristol Airport would be redundant...' (4)
5. There would be only 97 extra jobs in South Bristol if the expansion happens (5) many of which are likely to be zero-hours short term contracts in catering.
6. Frequent flyers, rather than families taking an annual holiday, are the problem. 15% of the population take 70% of the flights. (6)
7. The airport is large enough, and already has headroom under existing permissions to expand by another million passengers a year.

This Council believes that:

1. Bristol City Council, although not the decision-taker in this application, is an important stakeholder and has great influence with its views.
2. Bristol City Council, having declared a Climate Emergency (7) cannot maintain its current support of these destructive expansion plans.

This Council resolves:

1. To withdraw its support for this application and to submit a letter of objection to North Somerset Council immediately.

Motion moved by: Councillor Stephen Clarke
Green Party Councillor for Southville

Submitted 31.10.2019

Footnotes:

1. Who are largely owned by Ontario Teachers Pension Plan
2. For comparison purposes, the expanded airport would have almost exactly the same carbon footprint as the whole of the internal emissions of Bristol at 1.568m tonnes
3. Source for carbon emissions: Bristol Airport Planning Application Environment Statement; Source for doubling effect of carbon emitted at high level: Committee on Climate Change letter to Sec of State 24/9/19
4. www.nefconsulting.com/our-work/clients/cpre-expansion-of-bristol-airport/
5. Bristol Airport's planning documents; Economic Impact Appraisal
6. Committee on Climate Change letter to Sec of State 24/9/19
7. As have North Somerset and WECA

Wood burners

To be moved by: Councillor Don Alexander (Labour – Avonmouth and Lawrence Weston)

Full Council shares the view of Marvin Rees, the elected Labour Mayor of Bristol, that wood burners produce dangerous levels of particulate pollution.

Full Council further endorses the administration signing up to the world's most ambitious clean air plan with UK100, which calls on the Government to adopt World Health Organisation recommended air pollution targets as legally binding.

Full Council believes that the Mayor is right to raise awareness of and enforce the existing Smoke Control Legislation in licensed premises to reduce the illegal burning of wood and solid fuels, including domestic wood burners and bonfire nuisance.

Full Council resolves to ask Party Group Leaders to back Marvin's calls for improved powers, resources, and legislation from national Government to ban particulates in industrial and domestic use, including and private wood burners.

Fireworks

To be moved by Councillor Tom Brook (Labour – Bishopston & Ashley Down)

Full Council notes:

1. [Concerns raised by the RSPCA](#) and others around existing legislation not preventing or sufficiently reducing the risk of fireworks causing distress, injury, or anxiety to vulnerable people, as well as death, injury, or distress to animals.
2. That the Scottish Government has launched an action plan to inform new fireworks restrictions and that the UK Government is also considering taking similar action.
3. That in the meantime other measures can be explored at a local level to mitigate the impact of this issue.

Full Council resolves:

1. To explore the steps needed to require all public firework displays within the local authority's boundaries to be advertised in advance of the event, allowing residents to take precautions for vulnerable people and their animals.
2. To encourage Members to actively promote a public awareness campaign about the impact of fireworks on vulnerable people and animal welfare – including the precautions that can be taken to mitigate risks.
3. To request Party Group Leaders write to their respective national leaders to urge them to introduce legislation to limit the maximum noise level of fireworks sold to the public for private displays to 90dB
4. To encourage local suppliers of fireworks to stock 'quieter' fireworks for public display until the above legislation is passed by Parliament.

Motion for December Council

Bringing democracy back to Bristol 1

Some 8 years ago in a very low poll by a narrow margin Bristol residents voted by a small majority to accept the proposal of having a directly elected mayor. They were told by central government at the time that this would give Bristol extra powers and extra money. These of course did not appear and instead powers and money have gone to the metro mayor.

Since that time powers have been won back to allow Bristol to ditch the mayor system

Evidence from the council's own quality of life survey and polling around the city has shown that a majority of Bristolian's would now wish to ditch the post of directly elected mayor for Bristol.

In addition since the abolition of neighbourhood partnerships the council's quality of life survey confirms there has been a growing feeling of isolation and remoteness.

This council believes that the wish to ditch the mayor system should be expedited with all possible speed as it has failed the people of Bristol and that a community governance review should be instigated to choose the most appropriate structure(s) to revive local decision making and accountability.

Councillor Gary Hopkins

FULL COUNCIL MOTION – DECEMBER 2019

Standing up for Responsible Tax Conduct

Proposer: Councillor Eleanor Combley

Full Council notes that:

1. There is a strong desire from people in the UK to see businesses pay the right amount of tax in the right place at the right time.^[1]
2. Polling from the Institute for Business Ethics finds that “corporate tax avoidance” has, since 2013, been the clear number one concern of the British public when it comes to business conduct.^[2]
3. 6 in 10 of the public agree that the Government and local councils should consider a company’s ethics and how they pay their tax as well as value for money and quality of service provided, when undertaking procurement.^[1]
4. 15% of public contracts in the UK have been won by companies with links to tax havens.^[3]
5. A conservative estimate of losses to the UK from multinational profit-shifting is £7bn per annum in lost corporation tax revenues.^[4]
6. The Fair Tax Mark offers a means for business to demonstrate good tax conduct, and has been secured by organisations with a combined annual income of £50bn and more than 6,500 outlets and premises, including many social enterprises and co-operatives.^[5]

Full Council believes that:

1. Paying tax should not be presented as a burden, but as the way we provide for a society we would want to live in.
2. Tax enables us to provide services from education, health and social care, to flood defence, roads, policing and defence. It also helps to counter financial inequalities and rebalance distorted economies.
3. As the budget of the council relies largely on public finance which is gained through taxation, we should take the lead in the promotion of exemplary tax conduct; for example by ensuring contractors are paying their proper share of tax, or by refusing to go along with offshore tax dodging when buying, selling or leasing land and property.
4. Where substantive stakes are held in private enterprises, then influence should be wielded to ensure that such businesses are exemplars of tax transparency and tax avoidance is shunned - e.g., no use of marketed schemes requiring disclosure under DOTAS regulations (Disclosure Of Tax Avoidance Schemes) or arrangements that might fall foul of the General Anti-Abuse Rule.
5. More action is needed, however, current law significantly restricts councils’ ability to either penalise poor tax conduct or reward good tax conduct, when buying goods or services.

6. UK cities, counties and towns can and should stand up for responsible tax conduct - doing what they can within existing frameworks and pledging to do more given the opportunity, as active supporters of international tax justice.

Full Council resolves to:

1. Approve the Councils for Fair Tax Declaration.
2. Lead by example and demonstrate good practice in our tax conduct, right across our activities. This applies to what we buy, what we sell, our own businesses, our choice of partners and our investments.
3. Ensure contractors implement IR35 robustly and pay a fair share of employment taxes.
4. Not use offshore vehicles for the purchase of land and property, or allow their use when selling or leasing, especially where this leads to reduced payments of stamp duty.
5. Undertake due diligence to ensure that not-for-profit structures are not being used inappropriately as an artificial device to reduce the payment of tax and business rates.
6. Demand clarity on the ultimate beneficial ownership of suppliers, including care homes, schools, developers of council land and organisations and people we sell to, and their consolidated profit & loss position.
7. Promote Fair Tax Mark certification for any business in which we have a significant stake and where corporation tax is due.
8. Support Fair Tax Week events in the area, and celebrate the tax contribution made by responsible businesses who say what they pay with pride.
9. Support calls for urgent reform of EU and UK law to enable local authorities to better penalise poor tax conduct and reward good tax conduct through their procurement policies.
10. Ask the Mayor to instruct officers to bring back a report to Full Council within one year about the current situation, the practical problems and barriers and potential solutions, such as publishing a register or other mechanisms. And then to report back annually on progress towards the long term goal that all monetary transactions of the Council are with people and organisations who pay fair tax.

References:

- [1] <https://fairtaxmark.net/trust-in-hmrc-on-the-increase-but-record-levels-of-concern-on-businesses-tax-behaviour/>
- [2] https://www.ibe.org.uk/userassets/briefings/ibe_survey_attitudes_of_the_british_public_to_business_ethics_2016.pdf
- [3] <https://fairtaxmark.net/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Intro-to-CFFTD.pdf>
- [4] <https://www.taxresearch.org.uk/Blog/2017/11/08/the-uk-loses-20-of-total-corporate-profits-to-tax-havens-but-hmrc-are-in-denial-about-the-missing-7-billion/>
- [5] <https://fairtaxmark.net/>

Submitted 31.10.2019

Full Council Motion – December 17th 2019

Take Back Our Buses

Full Council notes:

- That congestion in Bristol causes frequent and severe delays to public transport. The chair of First Bus has stated it is “the single biggest obstacle to running a reliable bus service.”(1)
- That slow and unreliable buses compound the city’s traffic problems by causing more people to opt for private vehicles over buses, creating a vicious cycle;
- Recent quarterly figures which showed a decline in rider numbers - half a million fewer bus journeys over the previous year’s quarter;(2)
- The petition by ACORN Bristol (<https://actionnetwork.org/petitions/take-back-our-buses>) which calls on Mayors Tim Bowles and Marvin Rees to support a worker-led buyout of First Bus or launch a consultation as a first step to introducing a franchising system.

Full Council believes:

- That franchising or a worker-led buyout would give local authorities the ability to deliver better buses through increased control over bus routes, priorities, fares and ticketing;
- That privatisation has failed to improve bus services for most people and that bus companies should be accountable to their employees and the public that travel on them rather than shareholder interests;
- That no matter who owns the buses, significant improvements in journey times and reliability will not happen without bold steps to tackle congestion in the city centre.

Full Council resolves:

- To support the aims of ACORN Bristol’s petition and call on the Mayor and WECA Mayor to:
 - o Support a worker-led buyout of First Bus, with the Councils each taking a stake to bring buses back into partial public ownership;
 - o Launch a consultation as a first step to introducing a franchising system if a worker-led buyout doesn't happen;
 - o Manage contracts carefully under any franchising arrangement to guarantee workers' conditions and good levels of service for the most deprived areas in the region.
- To take steps towards establishing a Congestion Charge and/or Workplace Parking Levy in order to reduce congestion and raise funds to improve Bristol’s buses.

Sources

1. ‘First Bus boss reveals cause of delays after driving bus for a day’ - *Bristol Post* <https://www.bristolpost.co.uk/news/bristol-news/first-boss-reveals-cause-delays-2134184>
2. Growth and Regeneration Scrutiny Commission, 26/09/19, Quarterly Performance Progress Report (Quarter 1 2019/20)

Motion moved by: Councillor Carla Denyer

Submitted 31.10.2019

Mitigating the effects of the Clean Air Plan on the most affected and most deprived residents.

Council notes that there is now only one Bristol plan that will reportedly deliver the governments clean air criteria in the period required and so despite many reservations from scrutiny, cabinet has given its approval.

Council regrets that no public consultation was carried out on the specific plan adopted by the Cabinet which was different to the two options put forward to the public.

Council has concerns about how this will impact on the way that goods and people move within and around the clean air zones, and anticipating and mitigating potential poor outcomes.

Council is concerned that the capability of the present system of 'public' transport to sustainably accommodate is inadequate, certainly in the short and medium-term.

Council is concerned about the effects of greater vehicle movements outside the zones to avoid charges on small roads not designed for this and the impact on safety, congestion, necessary infrastructure work and migrated poorer quality air.

Council is concerned that deprivation being given the highest rating alongside public health in the approach to the clean air problem – rather than confronting the central issue and mitigating any poor outcomes- there are no meaningful exemptions or concessions for people in the central zone except a possible £2000 grant to enable replacement for a diesel car.

This council resolves to ask the Mayor to examine meaningful ways to ease the transition into this new plan for those people most affected and least capable of coping with the outcomes including, but not exclusively, the following:

- A longer transition period for phasing out ownership by residents in the inner zone of all private diesel cars, focusing on pre-Euro6 models.
- Preparation and consultation on an impact analysis, and resulting mitigation, for the closure of the eastbound Cumberland Road to all vehicles except buses.

- Alternative provisions for access to the many hospitals (including sufficient information and warnings) within the zone including the extension of the present hospital bus network to collect from car parks outside the zone.
- Examining how to provide additional funds where needed to top up the likely £2000 so-called scrappage scheme in order that this may deliver more sustainable and cleaner private cars held in the zone.
- Developing transitional arrangements for alternative travel by bus
- Exempting disabled people from zone restrictions
- Exempting Diesel vehicles that meet Euro6 standards from the diesel ban, to allay risk that these may be replaced by poorer quality older petrol vehicles, delivering worse outcomes.

Council instructs the Head of Paid service to write a letter to Government with the resolution of Council.

Motion to be moved by: Cllr Anthony Negus Cotham Ward (Lib Dem)

Date of submission: 5th December 2019