

Appendix 1

FULL COUNCIL MOTION – 18 July 2017

Motion: Mitigation of University Expansion

Full Council notes the benefits that the Universities bring our City: vibrancy, earnings, new value added businesses, employment opportunities and a source of civic pride. But there are downsides too and as recent growth has been high and is expected to reach 60,000, these new generally short term residents are increasing the severe strain on council services, the housing market and longer term residents in high-density student areas.

Particular groups are disproportionately affected:

- Anyone renting, due to increased demand for accommodation and so paying higher rents, and this includes university staff and their post and undergraduates too.
- Residents living in communities which are affected by high concentrations of this one demographic,
- Council finances; the provision of services to tens of thousands of students. These services used to be funded by the Government from a block grant but this is being cut to zero.

Full Council therefore asks the Mayor to:

- 1) In conjunction with other Council Leaders, engage with the Government, to highlight that the current approach to university growth is creating unsustainable pressure on Council resources; having to service 100% of its population with only 85-90% of them paying council tax. Adequate funding arrangements will probably require changes to planning obligation and taxation advantages given to university and student accommodation of all sizes. A grant or a means of local collection and redistribution of taxes needs to be put in place so Councils can provide services like street cleaning and implement the housing and transport solutions required to ensure balanced communities and mitigate the effects of university expansion on the housing market.

In addition Full Council agrees that necessary work should be done locally in Bristol and in the Combined Authority to update the Universities' masterplans so as to deliver sustainable future expansion, housing and transport solutions. Co-operative recording and planning policies need to be updated and true recognition given to the impact that unbalanced communities bring to all residents.

Further Full Council requests the Mayor to instruct officers to:

- 2) Develop a bespoke SPD which looks at best practice around the country, uses up to date data from Universities on their impact, both positive and negative and seeks to improve the amenity of everyone's lives in areas hard hit by current and future growth in numbers.
- 3) Require the Universities to support transport and housing solutions for more than just first years.

- 4) Set up an all-party commission to oversee the above processes and liaise with Universities to progress other possible approaches, and keeping members informed.