



Minutes

of the Meeting of

The Council

Tuesday, 11 July 2023

New Council Chamber - Town Hall

Meeting Commenced: 6.00 pm

Meeting Concluded: 7.29 pm

Councillors:

Wendy Griggs (Chairperson)
Peter Crew (Vice-Chairperson)

Marc Aplin
Nigel Ashton
Mike Bell
Christopher Blades
Steve Bridger
Peter Bryant
Peter Burden
Ashley Cartman
Annabelle Chard
James Clayton
Andy Cole
Jemma Coles
Ciaran Cronnelly
Stuart Davies
Oliver Ellis
Catherine Gibbons
Jenna Ho Marris
Nicola Holland
Clare Hunt
Patrick Keating
Sue Mason
Hugh Malyan
Stuart McQuillan
Ian Parker
Robert Payne
Marcia Pepperall
Bridget Petty
Lisa Pilgrim
Terry Porter
Michael Pryke
Luke Smith
Timothy Snaden
Mike Solomon

Dan Thomas
Helen Thornton
Joe Tristram
Richard Tucker
Annemieke Waite
Roger Whitfield
Martin Williams
Hannah Young

Apologies: Councillors: Mike Bird, Mark Canniford, Caritas Charles, John Crockford-Hawley, Steve Hogg and Tom Nicholson.

Absent: Councillor David Shopland.

Officers in attendance: Officers in attendance: Jo Walker (Chief Executive), Amy Webb (Director of Corporate Services), Sheila Smith (Director of Children's Services), Nicholas Brain (Assistant Director Legal & Governance and Monitoring Officer), Hayley Verrico (Director of Adult Social Services), Aaron Horner and Katie Park (Infrastructure Lead).

Partaking via Microsoft Teams:

Officers: Matt Lenny (Director of Public Health), Mel Watts (Finance Manager), Hazel Brinton (Committee Services Manager), David McFarlane (external – Chairperson of Members' Allowances Remuneration Panel)

COU Chairperson's Welcome

35

The Chairperson welcomed everyone to the face-to-face meeting and noted that those councillors attending via Teams would not be in attendance formally or able to vote.

COU Public Participation: Steve Voller, local resident - Banwell Bypass

36

Steve Voller addressed members on the need for the Banwell Bypass due to traffic noise, pollution and danger to pedestrians from narrow footpaths. He urged members to support the motion on the agenda to allocate additional capital funds to allow the much needed and locally supported bypass to be built. He noted that the scheme was being debated again not because the need for it had changed but due to inflationary budget pressures requiring additional capital investment.

COU Public Participation: Pauline Trapp, local resident - Banwell Bypass

37

Pauline Trapp addressed members on the need to build the Banwell Bypass due to the increased levels of traffic resulting in frustration for residents and motorists and gridlock on the road. She noted the impact of the traffic issues on health and safety on residents and local school children and the inherent access disadvantages suffered by seaside towns. She highlighted the advantages to the wider local area of building non-motorised networks including cycleways and footways.

COU 38 Public Participation: Roz Willis, local resident - No. 50 bus service

Roz Willis addressed members on the No 50 bus service and the issues faced by older carers who no longer run a personal vehicle. She noted the requirement as a result, for a local bus service and highlighted the problems being faced by residents on Milton Hillside when the No.50 bus service changed adding that some older residents are not able to access electronic devices to use the WestLink service and the landline phone number was not being answered.

COU 39 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (Standing Order 37)

None declared.

COU 40 Minutes

Resolved: that the minutes of the meeting of 23 May 2023 be approved as a correct record.

COU 41 Banwell Bypass - allocation of capital funds to support delivery

Councillor Bell presented the report to members. He explained that Stage 1 of the project was on track and within budget, but construction and design costs had increased because of inflationary pressures due to external events which could not have been predicted. Significant inflationary pressures outside of the council's control had meant that some elements were experiencing 35-50% increases. The project team had been considering mitigations for the cost pressures and he was optimistic that other mitigations would be found. He added that for the project to proceed, the budget shortfall needed to be covered and positive conversations with Homes England had already been taking place. He was asking the Council to support its share of the additional capital funding required (£11.9m). The report identified the sources of the additional capital requirement and Councillor Bell reaffirmed the council's commitment to delivering the elements of the infrastructure put forward as part of the planning application process.

In discussing the report, members asked whether the price could be fixed if the additional funding was agreed by the Council and whether the funding was protected for the wider counter measures that needed to be in place before the bypass opening. The s151 officer replied that the budget could not be fully fixed as contract prices had not been received for every element of the scheme. There was still some risk exposure however a contingency was held in the latest forecast. The council had a fixed price in terms of the construction programme but there were still design elements to finalise. Councillor Bell reaffirmed the council's commitment to the wider mitigations of the scheme.

Motion: Moved by Councillor Bell and seconded by Councillor Keating and

Resolved: that the Council

1. Supported progression of the Banwell Bypass scheme and necessary increase in Council funding
2. Approved in principle the allocation of £11.9m of funding to contribute towards the cost of Banwell bypass scheme

3. Approved in principle the increase in the Capital Programme by £11.9m, subject to the scheme being fully funded and progressed as planned.

COU Petitions to be presented by Members (Standing Order No. 16)

42

None received.

COU Question Time (Standing Order No.18)

43

Oral questions were directed to members concerned and the summary notes and topics involved are contained in Appendix 1.

COU Chairperson's announcements

44

The Chairperson informed members that she had visited Blagdon Primary School as the pupils and staff celebrated their School of Sanctuary Award which was given in recognition of the welcome extended to refugees. She congratulated the staff at Yatton Infant School who worked with partners from other schools to put in place a plan to enable their pupils to continue to be educated after the recent fire. She had also started a Walking Football Tournament in the Clevedon Hand Stadium and encouraged members to participate in local events to show support to residents.

COU Leader's announcements

45

None.

COU Chief Executive's announcements

46

The Chief Executive informed members of the retirement of the Director of Children's Services. She invited Sheila Smith to accept flowers on behalf of the council. Sheila thanked members and officers for their support during the challenges faced by Children's Services and wished them well for the future.

COU Forward Plan dated 3 July 2023

47

The Leader presented the forward plan.

Resolved: that the Forward Plan be noted

COU Policy and Scrutiny Panel Report

48

None.

COU Reports and matters referred from the Executive - dated 21 June 2023

49

None.

COU Reports and matters referred from the Policy/Overview and Scrutiny Panels other than those dealt with elsewhere on this agenda

50

None.

COU 51 Reports and matters referred from the other Committees other than those dealt with elsewhere on this agenda

(1) Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel on Members' Allowances

The Chairperson introduced the Panel's Chairperson, David McFarlane who was attending to answer any queries from members. She thanked him for his work over many years and wished him well for his retirement from the panel.

The solicitor introduced the report and outlined the options open to members. He noted that the recommendation for the Basic Allowance would be putting the amount up to a point at which it would have been if the recommendations from previous panels had been accepted at the time.

Councillor Bell echoed the comments and thanks regarding Mr McFarlane's work over the years and extended his thanks to other panel members. He noted that the issue was politically and personally sensitive, but it had been 7 years since the panel's recommendations had been implemented by the council. The issues now needed to be addressed and the purpose of the independent panel was to dispassionately consider the evidence, the roles and responsibilities members undertake and trends around the country for similar authorities and make recommendations. Councillor Bell supported the recommendations in the report save that the increase in the Basic Allowance take place over two years.

In discussing the report, members asked whether any increase going forwards could be tied to the uplift in staff pay to avoid having to accept or reject the panel's recommendations which could result in a large increase at times. Councillor Bell responded that the increases since 2016 had been linked to the staff pay award and this would continue to be the case going forwards. The panel's recommendations sought to address the issue of allowances being out of kilter as a result of previous panels' recommendations not being accepted. The link to the staff pay award in future would allow the allowance to be rebased.

Members also noted that the Special Responsibility Allowance for the Chairperson of the Licensing Committee was based on them chairing all the Licensing sub-committees and this too was supported. Members also noted that the staff pay award last year was a flat amount and not a percentage award. Councillor Bell agreed that whilst the award to staff last year was a flat amount, a percentage increase had been applied to the Basic Allowance for members. This approximated to 4% which he felt was a pragmatic response to the issue of a flat amount being awarded to staff and anticipated this approach would be applied should this happen again in future years.

Motion: Moved by Councillor Bell and seconded by Councillor Gibbons and

Resolved: that the Council

- a) Received the report of the Independent Remuneration Panel and thanked the members of the Panel for their work in producing the report
- b) Approved the Panel's recommendations, subject to the increase in the Basic Allowance being applied over a two-year period and instructed officers to

implement the new allowance scheme as amended

COU 52 North Somerset Environment Company Shareholder Update

Councillor Cartman introduced the report. He informed members that it was an update report following the council's decision to bring waste services within a council controlled company. The report was from the shareholder perspective as the council owned the company. He added that the report was about how to develop a long-term sustainable business rather than about missed collections. The goal was to meld the ethos of the public sector with the entrepreneurship of the private sector. As the shareholder representative of the council, he attended quarterly meetings. He noted the challenges as well as the wins including high recycling rates, a lower rate of missed collections and an improved relationship with the company's employees. He added that there were challenges including the set-up costs, the inflationary environment and driver shortages which had led to a deficit, but the board was focussed on the recovery plan.

In discussing the report, members highlighted areas which the council could do to support NSEC including the issue of parked cars and overgrown foliage leading to missed collections.

Resolved: that the Council noted the report.

COU 53 Corporate Parenting Report

Councillor Gibbons presented the report and thanked Sheila Smith, retiring Director of Children's Services for her support over the years. She reiterated the role of a Corporate Parent to members as they were all one by virtue of their councillor role.

She encouraged members to attend meetings of the Corporate Parenting Panel for which all members had been sent the papers for the upcoming July meeting.

In discussing the report, members asked that places reserved for councillors at the Weston Carnival be given to children and their foster families instead and offered to speak to the Youth Parliament on the issue of climate change.

COU 54 Reports on joint arrangements and external organisations and questions relating thereto

1) **Avon Fire Authority**

Resolved: that Council noted the report given by Councillor Payne

(2) **Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Panel**

Councillor Crew reported on the points of discussion at the recent meeting including the outcome of the Chief Constable's comment regarding her opinion that the Avon and Somerset Police was institutionally racist. The Police and Crime Commissioner and Chief Constable are setting up an independent review panel. Other topics discussed were Operation Bluestone around action being taken in respect of violence against women

and girls and Operation Scorpion involving 11 thousand drug related operations. At the meeting Councillor Crew raised the issue that the two neighbourhood teams in North Somerset should now be fully staffed given the agreed increase in the precept for 2023/24 from the authority was to address this matter.

COU Urgent business permitted by the Local Government Act 1972 (if any)

55

Chairperson

This page is intentionally left blank

**North Somerset Council
Council Meeting 11 July 2023
Question Time (Agenda Item 8)**

Question 1

From Councillor Keating

**To Executive Member for Children’s Services, Families and Life-Long Learning
– Councillor Gibbons**

Update on the status of the Department for Education’s application to build an SMEH School in Churchill

Councillor Keating asked the Executive Member for an update on the status of the Department for Education’s application for a special school in Churchill.

Councillor Gibbons thanked Councillor Keating for his question and responded that she believed the DfE was submitting the planning application in September.

Question 2

From Councillor Thornton

To Executive Member for Culture and Leisure – Councillor Solomon

Weston Odeon Cinema

Councillor Thornton asked the Executive Member for an update on the Weston Odeon cinema.

Councillor Solomon asked the Leader to respond. Councillor Bell responded that he had written to the cinema owners as soon as the closure was announced. He had had a positive meeting with the cinema owners who had advised that they were selling the site and were currently negotiating a sale to another cinema operator. He was optimistic that it would be reopen soon as a cinema.

Question 3

From Councillor Ellis

To Executive Member for Highways and Transport – Councillor Hannah Young

Bus lane A370 Long Ashton bypass

Councillor Ellis asked the following question of the Executive Member:

“Many people on the doorstep raised the issue that they haven’t seen any buses or only one or two buses using the bus lane whilst cars are queuing now it is down to one lane. This doesn’t sound like it is helping with reducing climate change but adding to the problem. Will this be looked at for example, it being a time limited bus lane rather than 24/7?”

Councillor Young thanked Councillor Ellis for his question and noted that the reason for the bus lane was so that a reliable bus service could be put in place on that route. She had received a number of queries of this nature and the team had explored the possibility of the lane not being 24/7 but the Minister for Transport had fed back to a local MP that the government's national bus strategy, Bus Back Better, recommended that bus lanes should be full time and as continuous as possible. She added that the recommendation was that they should be part of a whole corridor approach including other physical measures. She would continue to keep a close eye on the project with the team to understand the impact although it was early days.

Question 4

From Councillor Cronnelly

To Executive Member for Highways and Transport – Councillor Hannah Young

Closure of face-to-face rail ticket offices

Councillor Cronnelly asked the Executive Member what the council could do with the news that face-to-face rail ticket offices were being closed.

Councillor Young thanked Councillor Cronnelly for his question and noted that the plan was under active consultation currently. She was liaising with the West of England Combined Authority leads for the area. A response to the consultation would be given based on feedback received as ticket offices were critical for a range of users who would be disadvantaged if they were closed. There were concerns over the lack of informal surveillance. She would be happy to request a meeting with GWR or the Rail Delivery Group which was running the consultation to put forward the council's concerns. She would be happy to feed through concerns if people contacted her direct.

Question 5

From Councillor Payne

To The Leader – Councillor Bell

Management of waste bins on Weston seafront

Councillor Payne asked the following question of the Leader:

“We had some great weather throughout June, and it was lovely to see such large numbers of visitors come to enjoy Weston seafront.

But unfortunately, we still don't seem to have got to grips with the management of waste on the beach and on the prom whenever we have a large influx of visitors. The overflowing bins and waste just abandoned where people have been sitting, is regularly left overnight to be scattered by animals and ending up in the sea.

I appreciate of course that it's a very difficult problem to solve. Ideally, we want to reduce the amount of waste that is produced in the first place and for people to deal with it responsibly, but do you agree with me it's essential that we manage effectively all the waste that is produced, and will you commit the council to getting to grips with this ongoing problem once and for all?”

Councillor Bell thanked Councillor Payne for his question and responded that he agreed with him and that it had been an issue for many years. He did not believe the problem would ever be solved as it was down to human behaviour, respect for the environment and respect for each other. In conjunction with Councillors Solomon and Waite, he would work with officers to address the challenges including extra resource for the summer including later collections and weekend cover. This would be for Clevedon and Portishead seafronts also. Additional measures around enforcement, signage and behaviour change would also be looked at. Work would involve local ward members and consideration of the budget to support measures.

Question 6

From Councillor Williams

To Executive Member for Safety in the Community – Councillor Clayton

Antisocial behaviour in Worlebury Woods

Councillor Williams asked the Executive Member what work was being done to address the issue of antisocial behaviour including the setting of fires in Worlebury Woods. Would Councillor Clayton work with resident and him to look at Public Space Protection Orders and other measures to counteract the antisocial behaviour?

Councillor Clayton thanked Councillor Williams for his question and replied that he was willing to work with Councillor Williams and residents. He had informed officer of the antisocial behaviour in the woods. He was looking for patrols in the area by the council's Community Response Officers and would encourage residents and the ward member to report the issues on StreetSafe. This would direct the council's officer and the police in where the issues were occurring.

Question 7

From Councillor Pilgrim

To Executive Member for Culture and Leisure – Councillor Solomon

Access to services via the library teams

Councillor Pilgrim asked the Executive Member whether the promotion of access to services via the library could be improved as some residents were still unaware that they can go into libraries to get advice and assistance. She asked that the scheme be promoted in other ways than online

Councillor Solomon thanked Councillor Pilgrim for her question and agreed to bring the matter up with the library team so that residents were made aware that the scheme existed. He could not promise extra resources due to the council having to make cuts, but he would talk with the library team. He would also take up the matter of awareness of the scheme amongst library staff.

Question 8

From Councillor Petty

To Executive Member for Highways and Transport – Councillor Hannah Young

A38 Major Road Network scheme

Councillor Petty noted that the A38 MRN scheme had been on the agenda for a number of years and that an aspect of the decision had been postponed. She asked for clarification on which Executive Member was responsible for the scheme and who would be the point of contact going forward.

Councillor Young confirmed that the scheme fell into her portfolio but that a final funding decision had not yet been received. She had raised the issue at the Weston Gateway Strategic Transport Board at which there was a representative from the Department for Transport. They could not clarify when the decision regarding funding would be made but it was likely to be in September. She would keep a watching brief on the relevant Forward Plan items and keep relevant ward members informed.

Question 9

From Councillor Pryke

To Executive Member for Highways and Transport – Councillor Hannah Young

Parklets in Hill Road, Clevedon

Councillor Pryke asked the Executive Member whether residents and businesses had been consulted on the two recently installed parklets before they were built. Councillor Pryke also asked a follow up question around the promotion of the consultation on the Clevedon seafront scheme as he and other residents had only found out via Facebook.

Councillor Young confirmed that there had been consultation as part of the initial consultation on the public realm scheme and that the parklets are licensed to businesses so businesses can approach the council if they wish to take advantage of the parklet licensing scheme. There had also been a more recent session with the traders on Hill Road, Bellevue Road, and Alexander Road. Most traders had said they welcomed parklets; three businesses had requested licenses and two were currently being installed. Consideration had been given to holding back on the installation given the review being carried out, but businesses had asked that they be installed as they had built their financial models over the summer based on the opportunity to license the parklets. To compensate for parking spaces lost to the parklets, additional spaces had been made available in the Herbert Road/Hill Road area. Councillor Young apologised personally for the lack of communication around the planning of the public meeting. She said that ward members were noted on the communications plan for the meeting and apologised if there had been an error in timing but would personally ensure that ward members would receive advance notice going forward.

Question 10

From Councillor Smith

To Executive Member for Highways and Transport – Councillor Hannah Young

Clevedon Seafront

Councillor Smith asked the Executive Member whether there would be a postal survey of all Clevedon residents on the future of the parking scheme considering the issues highlighted during the June update.

Councillor Young replied that there was a public meeting as requested by Clevedon residents on 20 July at 7pm. The purpose of the meeting was to inform residents and other stakeholders of next steps including how the council would engage with them over the summer. The council was intending to appoint independent consultants to carry this out, The consultants would determine the mix of engagement methods and the council had put together a specification around the consultation. Councillor Young has asked via the specification that specific groups have a genuine opportunity via mixed methods to contribute to the review and that she wanted the widest possible involvement of the people of Clevedon. A conclusion would be reached based on the evidence gathered and she was awaiting the results of the independent review, the Active Travel England visit, the safety audit, and the independent audit. She accepted there were lessons to be learned and possible changes to be made. The scope of the review had not been limited to avoid any options. If there was a case for reversing the scheme, that was in the specification and would be shared. A page was being put together on the North Somerset Council website to include information on the review, the project brief, and the specification to give the public assurance that the matter was being considered seriously.

Question 11

From Councillor Pepperall

To Executive member for Culture and Leisure – Councillor Mike Solomon

Fly tipping in Worle

Councillor Pepperall asked the Executive Member what the council could do about fly tipping at the BT telephone exchange behind St Marks Church as it had recently cost the company £5000 to clear the site.

Councillor Solomon replied that the land was private and therefore the responsibility lay with BT to police and clear fly tipping on their land. The council had limited officer availability in any event.

This page is intentionally left blank