Minutes
COUNCIL

Wednesday, 17th May, 2017 at 7.06 p.m.

PRESENT

Councillors: Ian Adams, Brian Allinson, John Ashe, June Bamford, Nick Barrett, Michael Bell, Janet Biggin, Ian Blair, Ian Boulton, Keith Cranney, Ruth Davis, Mike Drew, Clare Fardell (until Item 9), Heather Goddard, John Goddard, Dave Hockey, Pat Hockey, Sue Hope, Brian Hopkinson, Colin Hunt, Jon Hunt, Roger Hutchinson, Trevor Jones, Dave Kearns, Gareth Manson, Adam Monk, Katherine Morris, John O'Neill, Andy Perkins, Sarah Pomfret, Shirley Potts, Bob Pullin, Steve Reade, Matthew Riddle, Pat Rooney, Ian Scott, Ben Stokes, Maggie Tyrrell (until item 9), Keith Walker, Erica Williams, Claire Young, Judy Adams, Roger Avenin, Kaye Barrett, April Begley, Samuel Bromiley, Ernie Brown, Keith Burchell, David Chubb, Rob Creer, Ken Dando, John Davis, Martin Farmer, Paul Hardwick, Rachael Hunt, Marian Lewis, Martin Manning, Toby Savage, Kim Scudamore and John Sullivan.

Apologies for Absence


1 EVACUATION PROCEDURE (Agenda Item 1)

The Chair, Cllr Erica Williams, drew attention to the evacuation procedure as set out in the agenda papers.

2 ELECTION OF CHAIR FOR ENSUING YEAR (Agenda Item 2)

Councillor Ruth Davis proposed and Councillor Mike Drew seconded the nomination of Councillor Ian Blair for Chair of Council for the ensuing year.

There were no further nominations.

Upon being put to the vote, it was unanimously RESOLVED that Councillor Ian Blair be elected as Chair of Council for the ensuing year.
Councillor Blair then read and signed the declaration of acceptance of office, which was witnessed by the Head of Legal, Governance and Democratic Services & Monitoring Officer, John McCormack. Councillor Blair then received the Chain of Office and took the Chair.

3 ELECTION OF VICE CHAIR FOR ENSUING YEAR (Agenda Item 3)

Councillor Heather Goddard proposed, Councillor Eric Williams seconded the nomination of Cllr Rachael Hunt as Vice Chair.

There were no further nominations.

Upon being put to the vote, it was unanimously RESOLVED that Cllr Rachael Hunt be elected as Vice Chair of Council for the ensuing year.

Councillor Rachael Hunt then read and signed the declaration of acceptance of office which was witnessed by the Monitoring Officer, the Head of Legal, Governance and Democratic Services, John McCormack. Councillor Rachael Hunt then received the Chain of Office of Vice Chair and took the Vice Chair’s position on the dais.

4 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST UNDER THE LOCALISM ACT 2011 (Agenda Item 5)

There were no declarations of interest.

5 MINUTES (Agenda Item 6)

Resolved: That, subject to correcting the spelling of Cllr Ruth Davis’ name (Davis rather than Davies), the minutes of the meeting held on 22 March 2017 be confirmed as a correct record and signed as such by the Chair.

6 CHAIR’S ANNOUNCEMENTS (Agenda Item 7)

The Chair, Cllr Ian Blair, thanked members for the honour of being elected as Chair. He announced that his two Chair’s charities for the year were Off the Record, which supports the mental health and wellbeing of young people, and Borderlands, which helps those seeking asylum or those who have been trafficked. He would provide more information on these at the July meeting of Council.

The Chair then referred to the recent passing of Alderman Sheila Cook - a former district councillor for Almondsbury - about which, he said, all were saddened. Some members of the Council had asked to make their own personal tribute, which were as follows:

Cllr Riddle expressed great sadness and wished to pay tribute to Sheila Cook as a long standing councillor and a ‘great’ colleague who had been an example to all through her achievements, carried out with great cheerfulness despite considerable health issues. Sheila had served as parish councillor
on Almondsbury Parish Council, which she had Chaired, as well as serving South Glos. Council for 19 years – her majority of only 6 votes at her initial election to this Council grew to 1,100 votes by the time of her last election, a testament to the impact she had made. Her early work had been recognised by all three political parties, all of whom had approached her. Sheila had served as the Council’s and the Conservative Group’s Deputy Leader, had Chaired the CYP Select Committee and been Executive Member for Children & Young People. She had also been Deputy Chair of Avon Fire Authority. Cllr Riddle called on members to join him in offering Sheila’s family their deepest condolences on the loss of this remarkable lady and excellent councillor.

Cllr Mike Drew paid tribute to Sheila Cook as a fellow Deputy Chair of the Avon Fire Authority. She had battled on despite her illness. She had been particularly keen to promote the installation of sprinklers in all buildings and had translated this into policy in South Glos Council, for all new school buildings.

The Chair paid tribute, explaining that he was the Chair of the CYP Select Committee during the period in which Sheila was Executive Member for CYP. While their philosophies differed, their aims were the same i.e. to ensure the best outcomes for children and young people. He added his condolences and called for a minute’s silence as a mark of respect.

The Council observed a minute’s silence.

7 **CONSTITUTION AND ANNUAL COUNCIL BUSINESS (Agenda Item 8)**

Cllr Riddle introduced the item and referred to an update report, previously circulated to all members (copy on the minute book), setting out: the nominations for Scrutiny and Non-Executive Committee Chairs; the reasons for the recommendation to appoint the Manager of Democratic Services as the Council’s Scrutiny Officer; an additional recommendation to replace Cllr Ben Stokes with Cllr Toby Savage as the substitute member to the West of England Combined Authority.

Cllr Riddle added that an urgent motion by the Labour Group, asking for the Chief Officer Management Team (COMT) to deal with the issues raised at the last meeting of CAH Cttee, had been declined for this meeting, but he was happy to agree to the principle of the request and so therefore the Chief Executive, Amanda Deeks, would write to the Labour Group Leader, once the matter had been considered by COMT.

Cllr Riddle moved the recommendations within the report. This was seconded by Cllr Toby Savage.

Cllr Pat Rooney commented as follows:
• The grid summarising committee membership ratios on page 42 transposes the opposition strength on the JCC and Appointment & Employment committees - Labour should have 2 members on the former on 1 on the latter – and therefore needs correcting;
• The Local Enterprise Partnership Scrutiny Committee – clarification was requested over whether this is different from the WECA Joint Scrutiny, whether it would scrutinise just the LEP, whether the scrutiny would cover continuing decisions involving North Somerset, in which case was the Committee accurately titled;
• Standing Order 48 ‘Appointment of Ad Hoc Advisory Panels’ – information on how these will be made up politically was requested.
• Standing Order 58 ‘Advice on Content of Items from Members’ – an explanation of this was requested.

Cllr Riddle said he would respond to these after the meeting.

Cllr Mike Drew stated he would be voting against recommendation 1, set out within the report, as he saw it as a ‘power grab’ which would remove the chance to debate the issues and appropriately challenge proposed decisions - these were things which, he said, improved the quality of decision making and should not be taken away. Under the new system, if decisions are challenged, there is no obligation on the decision maker to change their mind. Even the majority of Conservative members, he continued, would be excluded under the new arrangements. Officer advice to Executive Members, could not alone provide complete and perfect advice. He urged Council to retain the current traditional committee system – a system, he said, which had been tried and tested over centuries - and to vote against recommendation 1, for the sake of democracy.

Cllr Pat Rooney stated that the Labour Group would be abstaining, because the Group wanted to be part of and to review the new system and ascertain how effective it could be. She called for a separate vote to be taken on recommendation 1.

Cllr Monk questioned why this item, which was inherently political and would be financially beneficial to some councillors, was being taken during purdah. John McCormack counselled that the Local Authority must hold its Annual General Meeting in March, April or May. At the point in time when the general election was called, the options of holding the AGM in March or April had lapsed. With regard to remuneration, the proposals had come forward from an independent panel which had reported frequently to this meeting.

Cllr Manson questioned how the minutes of the last meeting of this Council’s service committees would be approved. John McCormack advised that these would follow the appropriate Executive Member and be shared with former committee members for approval. Cllr Drew called for them to be presented for accuracy to Full Council. Cllr Riddle advised that the minutes would be circulated to the members of the former committees as they were the members who could comment on the accuracy of the minutes.
Cllr Hope expressed concern over the overview and scrutiny model proposed, as she understood that shortcomings in this system had been identified nationally, some of which were serious.

Cllr Riddle concluded the discussion by saying that all of the appropriate support for scrutiny had been put in place and that, once in operation, the system could be reviewed and discussed again.

The Chair agreed to a separate vote being taken on each of the recommendations within the officer report and the update paper, each one of which was CARRIED, and it was:-

RESOLVED:

1. That the Constitution, as set out at Appendix A of the officers’ report, including the schedule of responsibility for functions and scheme of delegation contained within it, be approved;

2. That Cllr Matthew Riddle be elected as the Leader of the Council, and shall also be Executive Member for the Local Economy and Devolution, and who shall later appoint Executive Councillors for: Corporate Resources; Adult Care; Children and Young People; Schools, Skills and Employment; Planning, Transportation and the Strategic Environment; Community Services; Housing Delivery and Public Health;

3. That the Council’s Committees and other Council bodies, be appointed, and that seats be allocated to political groups, proportionality be confirmed, and appointments be made to certain external bodies, as detailed in Appendix C of the officer’s report;

4. That the Chairs of Scrutiny Committees and Non-Executive Committees, be appointed, as follows, until the next annual meeting:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Appointee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chair, Health Scrutiny Committee</td>
<td>Cllr Marian Lewis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-Chair of Scrutiny Commission</td>
<td>Cllr Ian Boulton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-Chair of Scrutiny Commission</td>
<td>Cllr Claire Young</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chair, Audit &amp; Accounts Ctee</td>
<td>Cllr Nick Barrett</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chair, DC East</td>
<td>Cllr June Bamford</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chair, DC West</td>
<td>Cllr Trevor Jones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chair, Regulatory</td>
<td>Cllr Keith Cranney</td>
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</tbody>
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5. That the Calendar of Meetings for 2017/18, as detailed in Appendix C & D of the officers’ report, be approved.

6. That joint arrangements with Bristol City Council and North Somerset Council be entered into for establishing a Joint Health Overview and
Scrutiny Committee (JHOSC) of 21 members for the purpose of jointly scrutinising:-

(a) the Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire (BNSSG) Sustainability and Transformation Plan (STP); and
(b) specific projects and proposals emerging from the STP which have cross-boundary implications (within the BNSSG);

7. That the terms of reference of the JHOSC, as set out in Appendix B of the officers’ report, be approved;

8. That the working arrangements of the JHOSC, as set out in Appendix B of the officers’ report, be noted, and that the working arrangements be further negotiated and finalised by officers without the need to return to Council, unless significant changes are proposed; and

9. That the Council retains the power of referral to the Secretary of State of any proposed “substantial variation” of service;

10. That the Manager of Democratic Services be appointed as the Council’s Scrutiny Officer;

11. That Cllr Toby Savage be replacement for Cllr Ben Stokes as substitute member on the West of England Combined Authority.

8 ITEMS FROM THE PUBLIC (Agenda Item 9)

Alex Raikes, representing SARI, spoke in support of the Labour Group Motion at agenda item 14, concerning International Day against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia. She stated that whilst the number of reported incidents linked with the phobias was not high in South Gloucestershire, underreporting was thought to be a significant issue. Known cases were very distressing and included verbal abuse and harassment. Attempts were being made to raise the profile of LGBT within the district, including the launch of the LGBT network this forthcoming Monday: differing backgrounds and diversity should be enjoyed.

The Chair thanked Alex Raikes for her submission, which he said would be taken into account later in the meeting when the motion was considered.

Dave Redgewell addressed Council on the following transport matters:

(i) With regard to the West of England Combined Authority (WECA) –

(a) he stated that the transport function had transferred across but, unlike other combined authorities, the officer team was not sufficient to pick this up. Parts of the District were without a bus corridor as a result of the
transfer: he reported dissatisfaction in Little Stoke due to the withdrawal of the no. 18 bus service – a service on which some medical staff relied for commuting to Southmead Hospital – and likewise with the no. 16 service;

(b) he stated that a public transport forum for WECA should be set up as a matter of urgency so that pressure could be applied to ensure works such as those at Patchway railway station were fit for purpose.

(ii) With regard to the Equalities agenda, he stated that there should be equality issues addressed in ‘works on the ground’ for pedestrians, cyclists, LBGT and disabled users. With this in mind there should be more training for street care staff on the protected characteristics.

The Chair thanked Mr Redgewell for his submission which he said would be passed onto the Director for ECS.

Olga Taylor, representing Friends of Suburban Bristol Railways, spoke in relation to Pilning railway station which was undergoing modification by Network Rail as part of electrification - a good portion of the station including the bridge had been removed, but Pilning would not be included within future service provision. The Friends group wanted a meaningful commuter service for Pilning, particularly given its proximity to a bus park and the extension of the M49. The Friends group was urging the Council to include the station in its spatial plan and would support the Council with any feasibility studies such as surveys etc.

The Chair thanked Ms Taylor for her submission, adding that her comments would be referred to the Director for Environment and Community Services.

Paul Tanner, on behalf of the Hatchet Road Action Group, having made a submission to Full Council on 22 March, attended the meeting to present a petition – see minute 9.

Debbie Porteous, of Fair Funding for All Schools - a campaign group which, she said, was rapidly expanding, well informed and networked - spoke in support of both motions at agenda item 14. With regard to the second motion, Fairer Funding for All Schools, Ms Porteous thanked Cllr Monk for this motion: there was not sufficient funding in education nationally, she said, and this was impacting now, hard and fast and would be felt by all, particularly the vulnerable. Ms Porteous said there was concern over teachers’ wellbeing and health. There was distress and intense feeling amongst parents, teacher, pupils and governors at the situation. She thanked the CAH Committee for receiving a submission from this group at its last meeting and for providing a statement in response. She urged Council to support the associated motion later in the agenda, over what was becoming a very urgent matter.
The Chair thanked Ms Porteous for her submission and advised this would be referred to the Director for Children, Adults and Health.

9 PETITIONS (Agenda Item 10)

On behalf of the Hatchet Road Action Group, Paul Tanner presented a petition calling for the Council and Metro Mayor to change the decision to install a bus lane on Hatchet Road and instead to install bus stops with laybys – this would first require a review to reduce the number of bus stops on Hatchet Road and, where they were deemed necessary, include a layby facility in all cases. The people of Stoke Gifford, while not opposed to the MetroBus scheme in itself, objected to the decision for a bus lane as it was felt this would hinder rather than relieve traffic flow from the Ratcliffe Drive roundabout to Bristol Parkway Station. The preferred lay-by option would be less expensive and would facilitate better traffic flow for other buses and road users and would impact less on the natural environment and on residents living nearby. The group was calling for a thorough and objective review of the decision taken in view of the overwhelming evidence in favour of the lay-by alternative.

10 QUESTIONS (Agenda Item 11)

There were no questions.

11 REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT MEMBER REMUNERATION PANEL (Agenda Item 12)

Cllr Riddle, in moving the recommendations, as set out within the report, thanked the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) for its work on the members’ allowances scheme and for its work on the remuneration for the West of England Combined Authority and he asked that the Panel be written to and thanked for this work. The motion was seconded by Cllr Toby Savage.

Cllr Drew commented that the Cabinet system would cost more than the committee system and he questioned what provision had been made in the budget for this. He said he was also puzzled by the withdrawal of the special responsibility allowance (SRA) for the lead members on the Regulatory and Development Control committees and moved an amendment, seconded by Cllr Ruth Davis, that the minority lead members’ SRA for the Regulatory and Development Control committees be referred back to the IRP.

Cllr Ruth Davis commented that considerable time and effort had been made in making the case for and obtaining the original agreement of the IRP for appropriate remuneration of the roles referred to by Cllr Drew.

Cllr Rooney supported the amendment, saying that, it was not clear what had led to the withdrawal of this remuneration, particularly given the increased workloads of her Group’s representatives on those committees.
Cllr Dave Hockey emphasised the team effort underlying the work of the aforementioned committees which, he said, took decisions that made a real difference to local people and their lives.

Following a short adjournment, the following phrasing, in accordance with Cllr Drew’s amendment, was put forward:

“(1) That the IRP’s recommendations (1) & (2) be approved, with the exception of the Special Responsibility Allowance for minority lead members on the Regulatory Committee and the Development Control Committees;

(2) That the Independent Remuneration Panel reconsiders the Special Responsibility Allowance for the above minority lead members.”

Cllr Riddle indicated he was happy for the IRP to reconvene to look at the positions referred to in the amendment.

On being put to a vote, the amendment was CARRIED.

On being put to a vote, the motion was CARRIED, and it was:

RESOLVED:

1. That the recommendations set out within the report of the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) be adopted, with the exception of the Special Responsibility Allowance for the minority Lead Members on the Regulatory Committee and the two Development Control Committees;

2. That the IRP be asked to reconsider the Special Responsibility Allowance for the minority Lead Members mentioned in (1) above;

3. That the Monitoring Officer amends the existing Members’ Allowance Scheme in accordance with (1) above;

4. That the IRP be written to, thanking its members for their work.

12 WEST OF ENGLAND PARTNERSHIP AND REGIONAL ISSUES (Agenda Item 13)

Cllr Riddle introduced the item and opened the floor to questions. The following points and questions arose in response:

Cllr Rooney asked when the Skills Advisory Board would be established and what the outcomes of its work would be. Cllr Riddle explained that none of the advisory boards had been set up yet, but when they were, he would inform members of this and would supply the associated terms of reference.
Cllr Hope stated that more clarity was needed about the working of the West of England Combined Authority (WECA), the staffing issue referred to by Mr Redgewell in his public submission and the financial and human resource implications associated with the venture. She also sought confirmation over whether the daily start time for concessionary fares would change from 0900hrs to 0930 hours. Cllr Riddle confirmed that the concessionary start time would remain at 0900hrs and then explained that there will be three advisory boards on WECA – for infrastructure, skills and business – on which members of the Council’s Conservative Group would sit. These boards would also advise the West of England Joint Committee, on which North Somerset is represented. There would also be an Audit Committee and Overview and Scrutiny Committee, on each of which there would be 2 Conservative Group members and one Lib Dem member, but, due to proportionality, no labour representatives. The Local Enterprise Partnership board was being reconfigured with new members and a new interim Chair. WECA, he said, needed to be properly funded, but in a lean way, and its costs needed to be monitored. The Combined Authority would afford an opportunity to combine teams on key issues such as transport, in order to realise efficiencies and to share best practice.

Cllr Pat Hockey, referencing paras. 19 and 20 in the officers’ report and the link with these to paras. 17 & 18, questioned whether the WECA would commission back the socially necessary bus services – clarity was needed over what the ‘joint powers’ referred to in the report meant. She also asked about the information strategy and ‘real time’ bus information (RTI). Cllr Riddle confirmed that WECA would effectively transfer the grants back to the local authorities to provide these services. He added that a lot of work was underway on the provision of RTI at bus stops.

Cllr Dave Hockey enquired about Metrobus, seeking specific information on a start date. Cllr Colin Hunt explained that the scheme was on schedule but, because until the works to the Bromley Heath viaduct were complete, it would not be possible to run the service through to Embers Green. He apologised for this, but added that the works to the viaduct were vital. The Metrobus would run in a cashless way, with all tickets paid for prior to boarding, to ensure the rapidity of the service. Cllr Hunt added that from hereon he would be advising on the scheme rather than making decisions as future decisions would be the responsibility of the West of England Combined Authority.

13 MOTIONS (Agenda Item 14)

Cllr Ian Boulton moved the Labour Group motion, as set out within agenda papers, on International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia. The motion was seconded by Cllr Ruth Davis.

Cllr Boulton explained that this was a largely tolerant society and he and his partner could live their lives without fear of favour, but this contrasted sharply with other countries where people’s lives could be under threat such as in Chechnya and Africa. This international day, he said, shined a beacon of
hope and solidarity across the world. There were thought to be c16,000 LGBT residents in South Glos, over a third of whom were believed to have experienced hate crime and over half had either thought of or tried to commit suicide. Fragile self-esteem could be affected by detrimental comments. There would be the launch of the LGBT network this forthcoming Monday. He had asked the Leaders of the other political parties to support this motion, so that there would be unanimous support today and that this it would be communicated to SGC officers and widely to the world at large.

Cllr Riddle thanked Cllr Boulton for bringing this to members’ attention and stated that he was happy to fully support the motion, adding that there needed to be celebration all types of relationships and that diversity is our strength. However, although this country is fairly tolerant, there is no room for complacency on this issue, and also other governments should be pressed to support this agenda.

Cllr Ruth Davis commented that it was crucially important to support young people, as they are typically fragile and any comments can have a massive impact on them. She added that LGBT are part of our community as much as anyone else.

Cllr Rooney stated that she supported the motion - this was something which she and her group really believed in – it was not a token gesture.

Cllr Adams spoke in support of the motion, citing an elderly lesbian couple in a residential home who were re-living the intolerance they experienced when younger, which was coming from other residents in the home. He called for this deep rooted homophobia and intolerance in society to be driven out.

Cllr Creer spoke in support of the motion, citing two people known to him at opposite ends of the age spectrum who had ‘come out’ as transsexuals. People in their situation were living with this every day, he said, and they should be helped by ‘building them up’.

Cllr Boulton thanked his fellow Councillors for their comments, which he found moving. He said he would like to report back to Full Council regularly on this matter.

The motion, on being put to a vote, was CARRIED unanimously and it was – RESOLVED:

Council notes that today (17 May) marks the 13th annual International Day against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia. IDAHOBIT Day draws the attention of policymakers, opinion leaders, social movements, the public and the media to the violence and discrimination experienced by LGBT+ people internationally.

We believe that at this time of shocking reports of homophobic murder, torture and intimidation around the world, our Council should
use this opportunity to make it clear that we value our LGBT+ residents and the importance of diversity.

We therefore welcome the launch event of the South Gloucestershire LGBT+ Forum next Monday (22 May 2017) and resolve to redouble our commitment to work with our strategic partners to support the Forum and send out a clear message of support to them in their work to make South Gloucestershire a great place for all to live and work.

Cllr Monk then moved the Labour Motion, set out within the agenda papers on Fairer Funding for Schools. He stated that some schools were writing to parents asking for financial contributions or were reducing their curriculum options. Pupils, he said, would not get the quality of education they deserve. There needed to be more funding in the pot. Cllr Monk said he welcomed the proposed Conservative Group amendment (as set out below).

The motion was seconded by Cllr Manson who thanked Debbie Porteous for her submission under items from the public and who too welcomed the proposed Conservative Group amendment.

Cllr Jon Hunt said his group supported the motion and were clear that extra funding is needed. They supported the Fair Funding for All Schools campaign group and would keep campaigning but taking a more active role. He moved the following amendment:

“Council notes that the Department for Education has been written to on three previous occasions on this subject, and requests that, after the June 8th General Election, the Chief Executive writes a fourth time to the Schools Minister in the new Government, whichever Party is in power, to urgently request a meeting between him/her, the Council Leader and the Cabinet Members for Children and Young People, and Schools, Skills, and Employment to discuss the issue of school funding.”

This was seconded by Cllr Jones.

Cllr Lewis spoke in support of the amendment, stating that the Council had been investing, and would continue to do so, in school infrastructure, but that this alone was not enough because there needed to be sufficient revenue funding. While the education budget nationally is the largest it has been, this was not sufficient to offset the increasing number of pupils and associated costs.

On being put to a vote, the amendment was CARRIED unanimously.

Cllr Drew cited Brimsham Green School where a budget reduction of £420k would lead to a reduction in staff and reduced hours for others. He added that while the Government reports that it is committing the highest ever budget for education, the experience of schools ‘on the ground’ is key – and
with increasing pupil numbers, schools are stretched. He urged members to talk to their parliamentary candidates and press them about this funding issue and urge them not to vote down motions seeking to address the matter.

Cllr Young said she was saddened by the current situation, because the way we educate our children now, shapes our future. She cited the example of the Olympus Academy who had issued a letter to parents outlining options being considered, which included reducing teaching hours and asking for contributions from parents. She expressed concern that we might be moving to a situation where the state provided a core curriculum only, and those parents who can afford it pay to supplement this.

In summing up, Cllr Monk urged all members to lobby their parliamentary candidates and ensure they take action.

On being put to a vote the motion was CARRIED unanimously and it was –

RESOLVED:

Council notes the perilous state of funding being reported by schools which has led the Leader of the Council to write to government ministers on more than one occasion. Council also notes with concern the possibility that schools face resorting to requests for parental financial contributions or scaling back pupil activities as a consequence of their financial pressures.

Council believes that the current level of funding for schools is inadequate and unsustainable.

Council welcomes the emergence of the local Fairer Funding For Schools Campaign and its high-profile efforts to lobby national policy-makers to increase school budgets. Council endorses the aim of the Fairer Funding For Schools Campaign for adequate funding and resolves to work with its members to make the case to central Government for increased funding for all schools.

Council notes that the Department for Education has been written to on three previous occasions on this subject, and requests that, after the June 8th General Election, the Chief Executive writes a fourth time to the Schools Minister in the new Government, whichever Party is in power, to urgently request a meeting between him/her, the Council Leader and the Cabinet Members for Children and Young People, and Schools, Skills, and Employment to discuss the issue of school funding.

14 ANY OTHER ITEM THE CHAIR DECIDES IS URGENT (Agenda Item 15)

There were no urgent items.
The meeting closed at 2120 hrs

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