



Minutes

COUNCIL

Wednesday, 16th May, 2018

PRESENT

Councillors: Ian Adams, Brian Allinson, John Ashe, June Bamford, Nick Barrett, Michael Bell, Janet Biggin, Ian Blair, Linda Boon, Ian Boulton, Keith Cranney, Ruth Davis, Tony Davis, Mike Drew, Clare Fardell, Robert Griffin, Dave Hockey, Pat Hockey, Shirley Holloway, 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, Christine Price, Bob Pullin, Steve Reade, Matthew Riddle, Pat Rooney, Ian Scott, Ben Stokes, Maggie Tyrrell, Sue Walker, Erica Williams, Claire Young, Judy Adams, Roger Avenin, Kaye Barrett, April Begley, Samuel Bromiley, Ernie Brown, Keith Burchell, David Chubb, Ken Dando, Martin Farmer, Paul Hardwick, Paul Hughes, Rachael Hunt, Marian Gilpin, Martin Manning, Toby Savage, Kim Scudamore, John Sullivan and Nic Labuschagne

1 EVACUATION PROCEDURE (Agenda Item 1)

The Chair drew attention to the evacuation procedures as set out in the agenda papers.

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

Councillor Erica Williams **proposed** and Councillor Judy Adams **seconded** the nomination of Councillor Rachael Hunt 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 Rachael Hunt be elected as Chair of Council for the ensuing year.

Councillor Hunt 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 Hunt then received the Chain of Office and took the Chair.

Councillor Ian Blair as outgoing Chair was presented with a past Chairs badge. Councillor Blair thanked members for their support during his year in office, advised it had been an honour and a privilege to have served as Chair and Vice-Chair of Council and wished Councillor Rachael Hunt the best for her year in office.

Councillor Claire Young on behalf of the Liberal Democrat Group thanked Councillor Blair for the energy and enthusiasm he showed during his time as Chair of Council. Councillor Young advised she had particularly enjoyed finding out more about the Chairs chosen charities and the opportunity she and other members had to meet representatives and service users of Borderlands at the charity dinner.

The Chair thanked Ian for the support he had shown her during the previous year when she had been vice-chair.

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

Councillor Ernie Brown **proposed** and Councillor Keith Cranney **seconded** the nomination of Cllr Brian Allinson as Vice Chair.

Councillor Brown commented Councillor Allinson had been a loyal and conscientious member of the authority over the past 15 years and wished him every success in serving as Vice Chair.

There were no further nominations.

Upon being put to the vote, it was unanimously **RESOLVED** that Councillor Brian Allinson be elected as Vice Chair of Council for the ensuing year.

Councillor Brian Allinson 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 Allinson then received the Chain of Office of Vice Chair and took the Vice Chair's position on the dais.

4 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Agenda Item 4)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Rob Creer, John Davis, Heather Goddard, John Goddard, Sue Hope, Eve Orpen, Shirley Potts, Gloria Stephen and Keith Walker.

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

There were no declarations of interest.

6 MINUTES (Agenda Item 6)

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on 14 February 2018 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

7 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS (Agenda Item 7)

Councillor Rachael Hunt thanked members for the honour of being elected Chair. She announced her chosen charities would be Next Link and Freewheelers Blood Bikes. She would provide more information on the work of the charities at the July meeting of Council.

Members were advised this was the last Council meeting before Peter Murphy, Director of Children, Adults and Health and Steve Evans Director of Environment and Community Services left the Council. On behalf of all members the Chair thanked both for their many years of loyal service to the Council.

The Chair then referred to the recent passing of Alderman Jim Cullimore and Alderman Ian Smith, who were both former South Gloucestershire Councillors. Some members of the Council had asked to make their own personal tributes, which were as follows:

Councillor Colin Hunt expressed great sadness at the death of Jim Cullimore. He like other people had only found out Jim's given name was Arthur at his funeral. Members heard that Jim had been adopted at an early age, had met and married his wife Barbara and they had unfortunately not had children. Alongside his interest in the local community and being a Councillor, Jim was a motorcycle fanatic and ran the south west motorcycle club. Members heard how Jim was very lost when his wife Barbara passed away and he had decided to explore his background and write a book. Whilst researching he discovered he had a half-sister who lived in New Zealand. He travelled to meet his half-sister and extended family on a number of occasions. In closing, Councillor Hunt said Jim was a gentleman and would be sadly missed.

Councillor Ruth Davis expressed sadness at the passing of Alderman Cullimore. She spoke about meeting Jim on the setting up of South Gloucestershire and about how she and Tony had got to know Jim and his wife well. Cllr Davis commented Jim didn't look less active on the last occasion she saw him than he had the first time they had met. Alderman Cullimore had kept himself active, could always find a good word to say and would be sorely missed.

Councillor Pat Rooney spoke of her memories of Alderman Cullimore from the Kingswood Borough Council days. Members heard that Jim had been a very decent and pleasant man.

Councillor Matthew Riddle paying tribute to Alderman Cullimore echoed the sentiments of Alderman John Calway, who upon hearing of Jim's death described him as a gentleman who had a heart of gold.

Councillor Ian Scott advised members he had worked with Alderman Cullimore, who had been popular and well regarded by his colleagues.

Councillor Janet Biggin expressed sadness at the death of Alderman Ian Smith. Members heard Alderman Smith had been brought up in Soundwell and had attended secondary school in Staple Hill. He had a long career in local politics, with a particular interest in planning. He had also been a school governor. Alderman Smith had a great sense of civic responsibility and helped widely in the local community. He had been made an Alderman in 2007 in recognition of his service.

Councillor Pat Hockey paying tribute to Alderman Smith commented she had a great deal of respect for him. Councillor Hockey spoke of early meetings between them and of Alderman Smith's determination to hold the executive to account via the scrutiny process. She advised they had gotten on very well and hoped he had the respect for her that she had for him.

8 THE CONSTITUTION AND ANNUAL COUNCIL BUSINESS (Agenda Item 8)

Councillor Matthew Riddle **proposed** the item with the addition of the following bullet point to the Health and Wellbeing Boards terms of reference outlined in appendix A:

- Receive comments and reports from other relevant partnerships and committee's affiliated with the Health and Wellbeing Board.

And the removal of the Leader of the Council from the membership table.

Councillor Riddle explained he had not sought re-election as leader of the Conservative group and therefore would no longer be Leader of the Council. Councillor Riddle:

- Thanked the Executive Members who had served in the Cabinet for their work and achievements during his time as Leader of the Council.
- Thanked the opposition group leaders Councillors Rooney and Davis for keeping him on the straight and narrow. It was noted that despite political differences all cared deeply about residents and communities within South Gloucestershire.
- Thanked Amanda Deeks, Chief Officers and staff of the Council for their hard work and commented they were unsung heroes.
- Advised he would continue to represent residents of Severn Ward as a district councillor.
- Looked forward to spending more time with his family, on his hobbies such as cider making and catching up on household jobs.

Councillor Riddle commented he frequently made reference to the need to change and innovate during his time as Leader of the Council. He believed the only way to continue to serve our communities was to innovate and change. Councillor Riddle advised his decision not to seek re-election as

group leader gave the opportunity for a fresh perspective and **proposed** Councillor Toby Savage for election as the Leader of the Council.

Councillor Jon Hunt **seconded** the recommendations as moved and the nomination of Councillor Toby Savage as Leader of the Council. Councillor Hunt thanked Councillor Riddle for his support during his time as leader.

Councillor Rooney advised it had been a pleasure to work with Councillor Riddle. She commented that reflection was a term used often by Councillor Riddle and expressed the wish for reflection to remain important to the new Leader of the Council. Councillor Rooney advised that as the Labour group did not agree with the executive decision making model they would be abstaining on this item.

Councillor Ruth Davis supported Councillor Rooney's comments and had appreciated how Matthew had worked with them. It was hoped the groups could continue to work in a constructive way in the future.

Councillor Claire Young thanked Councillor Riddle for his work during his time as Leader of the Council and expressed the hope it would continue under the new Leader of the Council.

Councillor Young advised members that after 13 years as Liberal Democrat Group Leader, Councillor Ruth Davis had stepped down and returned to the back benches. Councillor Young thanked Councillor Davis for her work as group leader, two years of which had been under a three party administration. It was commented that Councillor Davis was very supportive had encouraged, offered advice and wise counsel to members throughout the chamber.

Upon being put to the vote with 37 in favour, 0 against and 24 abstentions it was resolved:

That Council:

1. Approve the amendments to the Constitution set out at Appendix A.
2. Appoint Councillor Toby Savage as the Leader of the Council.
3. Appoint Council committee's and other Council bodies, allocate seats to political groups and confirm proportionality calculations and make appointment to certain external bodies as detailed in Appendix B.
4. Appoint two substitute members to act as a member of the Combined Authority in the absence of the Leader of the Council as detailed in paragraph 11.

5. Appoint the Chairs of Scrutiny Committees and Non-Executive Committees as detailed in paragraph 12 to serve until the next annual meeting.
6. Receive and approve the Calendar of Meetings for 2018/19 as detailed in Appendix C.

Speaking on his election as Leader of the Council, Councillor Toby Savage paid huge personal thanks to Matthew on behalf of the Conservative Group for his sincerity and dedication in serving South Gloucestershire, and its communities over the past four years. Thanks were also given to Councillor Ruth Davis for all her service.

Members heard that under Councillor Riddle's leadership the administration had to take some tough decisions to ensure a balanced approach in the face of constrained finances and when demands on and expectations of public services were rising. In the face of those challenges, Councillor Riddle had ensured the interests of our most vulnerable residents and the communities which all cared for were front and centre of decision making. Councillor Savage advised the strong record and compassionate conservatism Matthew pursued would also form the foundation of his administration.

Councillor Savage explained he understood more than most that the Council had faced challenges improving local education standards, on planning and on 'everyday street life' such as roads, local environment and the feel of our communities. He advised the administration and Conservative colleagues would seek to tackle these issues head on, fighting to improve in each area with a fresh approach. They would renew and redouble their efforts to engage more thoroughly and meaningfully with our communities and reach out to those who currently feel that we do not.

Councillor Savage advised the administration would seek to work constructively with opposition groups on issues where there was shared mutual ground, but would also hold them to account where their proposals were out of step with residents and local taxpayers interests.

9 ITEMS FROM THE PUBLIC (Agenda Item 9)

Jayashri Chandar, representing the campaign to 'Keep Charlton Boulevard Entrance Open to Residents' addressed Council. She commented South Gloucestershire Council were planning to close the Charlton Boulevard entrance to normal traffic and restricting access to a bus only lane. Members heard local residents had started a petition to keep the entrance open. It was commented that during rush hour there was often a 20 minute wait to leave the Charlton Hayes estate via this road. The lack of a yellow box at the junction was highlighted as an issue which caused residents time, money in wasted fuel and increased air pollution. In closing members were urged to reconsider the proposed road closure.

It was agreed the comments made would be referred to Councillor Colin Hunt, Executive Member for Planning, Transportation and Strategic Environment.

Alan Bracey a local resident addressed Council on two transportation issues in Westerleigh. Firstly Mr Bracey spoke to members about the temporary traffic lights on the A46, adjacent to junction 18 of the M4. As a cyclist he had been pleased with the introduction of the lights as they allowed for safer crossing and had hoped their retention would have been a priority. Their recent removal indicated that was not the case.

Secondly, Mr Bracey highlighted issues around the closure of Ruffet Road and Coalsack Lane. Members heard the decision to close these roads had been badly received by residents due to a lack of consultation. At a residents meeting three days before the planned closures a council officer had advised those present that the closures would not take place on the following Monday as had been planned. In closing Mr Bracey asked:

- If the decision to install temporary lights on the A46 had been a decision of the Council or of Highways England
- If the decision to remove the lights had been made by an Executive Member or by officers.
- If the Council believed in consulting residents.
- If highway decisions were being made by elected representatives or unelected officers.

It was agreed the comments made would be referred to Councillor Colin Hunt, the Executive Member for Planning, Transportation and Strategic Environment.

Mr Colin Gardner representing Thornbury Residents Against Poorly Planned Development addressed Council on planning issues. He read a statement which had previously been circulated to members and detailed concerns about proposed changes to the planning decision making process. Views expressed included:

- The proposed changes would go against the sentiment in the Localism Act 2011 that “The Act places significantly more influence in the hands of local people over issues that make a difference to their lives”.
- The proposals were less about seeking procedural efficiencies and more about exerting control over planning decisions.
- The Council’s efforts would be better directed at supporting TRAPP’D consultation proposals on the NPPF to reform the five-year land supply rule.
- It appeared from the proposals that the Executive was questioning the probity of Councillors involved in the planning decision making process. It had been the experience of Mr Gardner that although he may not agree with everything said at development control meetings,

Councillors took their roles seriously, had a wealth of knowledge of local planning history and applied common sense to local needs.

- Mr Gardner had been encouraged by the words of Councillor Savage in the press that he would engage with opposition councillors in a spirit of openness and co-operation.

It was agreed the comments made would be referred to Councillor Colin Hunt, Executive Member for Planning, Transportation and Strategic Environment.

Mr Keith Woosnam a local resident addressed Council on planning issues. Although consideration of changes to the planning decision making process had been deferred to a later meeting Mr Woosnam felt the need to raise concerns now. Mr Woosnam had attended many meetings and site visits and had been impressed with the development control committee's willingness to consider all views before reaching its decisions. It was his view they worked with diligence and took their responsibilities seriously. Clear they work with diligence and take their responsibilities seriously.

Mr Woosnam argued the proposals which were written by unelected officers, sought to remove rights of residents, looked to reduce rights of town and parish councillors to be heard, reduced the number of councillors considering planning matters and restricted the decision making powers of those members. In closing Mr Woosnam asked where the democracy, transparency and fairness were in the proposed changes and questioned whether there was any understanding of the concept of elected representatives as adverse to the duty of public employees.

It was agreed the comments made would be referred to Councillor Colin Hunt, Executive Member for Planning, Transportation and Strategic Environment.

Martin Hatter and Malcolm Davies addressed Council on the UNITE the union Construction Charter. Mr Hatter urged the Council to sign up to the charter and explained it was about ensuring the highest training and health and safety standards. Mr Hatter advised the charter had not been politically motivated; it was about safe working practices and ensuring high standards on all construction sites.

Mr Davies addressed Council in support of the charter and advised of 1000 UNITE members had lost their lives on construction sites in the past ten years. He commented all site workers deserve a safe working environment and to go home to their families at the end of each working day. Mr Davies urged Council to consider and support the Charter.

It was agreed the comments made would be referred to Councillor Rob Creer, Executive Member for Corporate Resources.

Mr Stuart Hadley-Clark a resident of the Siston Hill estate addressed Council on the Mangotsfield Sort-It Centre. Mr Hadley-Clark explained the difficulty

residents experienced entering and leaving the estate due to long queues of people trying to access the sort-it centre. He commented the road network was insufficient to cope with the volume of traffic wishing to use the site. Councillors were urged to investigate ways of improving the sort-it centre to relieve the current issues.

It was agreed the comments made would be referred to Councillor Colin Hunt, Executive Member for Planning, Transportation and Strategic Environment.

The Chair thanked members of the public for taking time to attend the meeting and make their statements to councillors.

10 PETITIONS (Agenda Item 10)

Councillor Claire Young presented a petition urging the Council to reinstate the traffic lights on the A46 junction. The petition, which had over 500 signatures, asked South Gloucestershire Council to work with Highways England to find a solution which would allow for permanent traffic lights to be installed at the Tormarton junction.

Councillor Ian Adams presented three petitions to Council. The first petition, presented on behalf of the postmaster at Warmley Post Office urged the Council to amend the parking restrictions on spaces outside of the post office. The post office had experienced a reduction of 20% in footfall since the introduction of the residents parking zone.

The second petition related to the access arrangements for eight proposed properties in planning application PK17/2778/0. The petition raised concerns about current access arrangements and urged the Council to consider alternatives.

The third petition presented on behalf of local residents urged the Council to consider changes to the Mangotsfield Sort It Centre site and access routes to alleviate the problems being experienced by residents.

It was agreed to refer all petitions to the Executive Member for Planning, Transportation and Strategic Environment.

11 QUESTIONS (Agenda Item 11)

The following questions were asked and answers provided:

To the Leader of the Council

Question 1 of 2018/19 asked by Councillor Ian Scott

What is the Leader's view of the criticisms recently made in Parliament by the MP for Filton & Bradley Stoke of the salaries and number of senior officers employed by South Gloucestershire Council?

Answer

I am a great believer in efficiency and I believe South Gloucestershire has a reputation for being well-run with a focus on delivering high quality front-line services.

I would draw members' attention to our Corporate Peer Challenge report from the Local Government Association, which stated:

"South Gloucestershire Council (SGC) is well led. It has strong, stable, political and managerial leadership and a track record for delivering its priorities..."

The report then later adds:

"In tandem with the council's financial savings it has also reduced its headcount. We were told that in the last 3-4 years SGC had absorbed significant reductions in leadership numbers (35%) and yet despite this it is as one stakeholder told us 'still on top of the current change agenda'. In terms of capacity the council's senior leadership team (COMT) has been a very stable, capable cohesive but small leadership team...the peer team's view was that COMT, while reflecting all of the positive attributes above is lean and spread thinly.."

Supplementary Question

What steps will he take to convey this information to our MP?

Answer

I plan to meet regularly with our MP's and will share issues like this with them and also my views.

Question 2 of 2018/19 asked by Councillor Ian Boulton

What is the Leader's view of the suggestion recently made in Parliament by the MP for Filton & Bradley Stoke that Council Tax increases should be subject to a local referendum?

Answer

Council tax is presently subject to a local referendum if the general increase is above 2%, which I believe is absolutely right. I would be happy to meet with the Honourable Member if he has specific plans to lower this threshold so that I can hear his views.

Supplementary Question

Please will you report back to let us know if our MP is seriously calling for the 2% threshold to be lowered and could you also ask him to support this Council by opposing future funding cuts to local government and the services that many of his most vulnerable constituents rely on?

Answer

I would advise members the correct threshold is 3% and not the 2% indicated in response to the original question. I will feedback responses I receive and will encourage our MP's to take up the views that we as a Council have previously expressed about this issue.

Question 3 of 2018/19 asked by Councillor Adam Monk

What is the Leader's interpretation of the statement recently made in Parliament by the MP for Filton & Bradley Stoke that he hopes that

'South Gloucestershire Council takes this opportunity to look carefully at the governance of the council and how effectively it works'?

Answer

It would not be for me to speculate on the MP's intentions with this statement.

Supplementary Question

Rather than speculate, will the leader contact our MP to ascertain the precise nature of his concerns and report back to the rest of us?

Answer

I refer you to my responses to supplementary questions 1 and 2.

Question 4 of 2018/19 asked by Councillor Andy Perkins

The Executive Councillor for Corporate Resources told Cabinet on 23rd April that, in being replaced as the Cabinet member, he was "the subject of ageism". How does the Leader respond to this accusation and what is he doing to combat age discrimination at all levels of the Council?

Answer

I was disappointed at the comments made, as this was the first time such concerns had been raised in any forum. I have been very clear why our decision was made, the Cabinet Member in question indicated he would not be standing in 2019 and my view was that to ensure his successor had as strong a start as possible, and could discharge his duties as effectively as his predecessor, he should serve a year's apprenticeship, followed by a full year in the job before the election. That would be my view whether the retiring member was 18 or 80 and I am clear I believe this is in the best interests of the Council and our taxpayers and service users.

Supplementary Question

In light of the value that the Leader places on members of his Cabinet serving an apprenticeship, does he share my concerns that the apprenticeship for the role of Leader of the Council ought to be a little more than just 3 years as a ward member and 1 year as a Cabinet member?

Answer

I do not share those concerns.

Question 5 of 2018/19 asked by Councillor Pat Rooney

How does the Leader intend to deal with the recent approach from Unite to sign up to their Construction Charter?

Answer

This is something I am willing to consider and look forward to engaging with trade union colleagues in the future.

Supplementary Question

Now that we have all learned a bit more from the public forum contribution this evening, would the leader like to add anything to his holding answer?

Answer

I am keen to find out more about the Charter. As the newly appointed Leader of the Council I will be meeting with Councillor Riddle to arrange a handover of any outstanding business. Prior to this evening I had not seen the Charter and will pick this up as part of the handover.

Question 6 of 2018/19 asked by Councillor Martin Farmer

The Leader last month told BBC Radio Bristol that he would return in July to describe which services will face further cuts. What plan does he have to discuss with residents where the axe will fall before they hear about it on local radio?

Answer

As with any proposals which may potentially involve changes to services we will carry out full consultations in line with Council policy. Our detailed plans for how and when and how long we will consult will be laid out when proposals are brought forward later this year.

Supplementary Question

“Later this year” is a little vague as the Administration has previously said that its detailed plans would be in the reports going to July Cabinet. Will the July Cabinet papers provide full details in terms of spelling out the savings and their impact on services?

Answer

I will be meeting with the Chief Executive and Chief Financial Officer as we work towards these decisions, including consultation which will be discussed with other group leaders.

Question 7 of 2018/19 asked by Councillor Pat Rooney

As this Council's appointee to the West of England Combined Authority, what is the Leader's assessment of WECA's first year in terms of its achievements?

Answer

When South Gloucestershire Council took the decision to enter into the devolution deal and become a member of the Combined Authority, there were two critical reasons for supporting the deal. The first was that it would provide access to £1bn of investment over the next thirty years and the second was that it would give the West of England a seat at the table with Government to discuss our biggest challenges and investment priorities.

In this respect WECA has been very successful. We have received Gainshare payments of £60m and have begun to allocate this money to strategic schemes across the region, not least to the business case

development of JSP transport mitigation schemes which will build our evidence base for the Examination in Public. WECA has also committed funding important schemes for highway and cycle infrastructure in South Gloucestershire at Wraxall Road and Great Stoke Way Roundabout Junctions, Freezing Hill Lane and CPNN.

Alongside this, WECA has secured additional investment in the form of £80m Transforming Cities Fund and the Mayor is working closely with Ministers to set out a vision for suburban rail for which this could be the first instalment of vital investment.

Other WECA achievements in Year One include;

- Business, Infrastructure and Skills Advisory Boards have been established ensuring political engagement and leadership across each of the three key themes within which the WECA has taken new powers. Alongside Members and officers from each of the UAs, LEP Board members are also providing a business voice to these advisory boards.
- £5m investment for 5G Smart Tourism – WECA secured this competitive funding pot to develop 5G capability for projects at tourist destinations in Bristol & Bath
- Housing Deal – £3m has been secured in phase 1 of the Housing Deal and officers are working closely with officials at MHCLG to develop this further. The deal also includes Government support to take two Housing Infrastructure proposals to the next stage of development. These proposals are worth a combined £330m
- £4m Employment Support Innovation Pilot ‘Future Bright’ – This is the recently commenced project to support residents, who are receiving in-work benefits, into more secure and rewarding careers. Future Bright will deliver a bespoke service, based on participants’ needs and aspirations in life and in work. It is anticipated that support will reach up to 3,000 individuals.
- Joint Spatial Plan – Although this is a project led by the West of England Joint Committee, the project management resource now lies with WECA. The plan has been submitted to the SoS for Examination in Public.
- Joint Transport Study – This project was completed with project management resource from WECA.
- Joint Local Transport Plan & Bus Strategy – Work is underway now to deliver these Plans and consultation will follow
- Operating Framework & Business Plan – These documents follow work undertaken to develop a Regional Strategy, which in turn will inform West of England work on a Local Industrial Strategy with the Government. The Business Plan sets out the immediate WECA and WoE priorities over the next 12 months.
- Local Industrial Strategy – WECA expect to be working with BEIS as one of the first regions to produce a Local Industrial Strategy
- Digital Study – A study has been undertaken of the existing West of England digital capacity and challenges which will be used to inform a West of England Digital Strategy and support further funding bids for the likes of ‘Local Full Fibre Networks’ and the 5G Urban Connected Cities Pilot.
- Adult Education Budget & Skills Strategy – WECA are working with Government on the readiness conditions to take full control of an Adult

Education Budget worth circa £17m from the 2019/20 academic year. This will be supported by an emerging skills strategy

The above success stories also represent significant hard work undertaken by South Gloucestershire Cabinet Members and Officers throughout development and delivery phases.

Supplementary Question

We are all aware of the number of false starts within the year with regard to the skills delivery programme. How does this new set up differ from the previous structures and what lessons have been learnt from the numerous failed attempts?

Answer

I disagree and sincerely believe the setting up the West of England Combined Authority to be a transformative opportunity for this authority and the wider region.

Question 8 of 2018/19 asked by Councillor Pat Rooney

As this Council's appointee to the West of England Combined Authority, what is the Leader's assessment of WECA's first year in terms of its ambition and vision?

Answer

WECA and the LEP have now published a Business Plan and Operating Model for 2018/19 which is beginning to shape the broader ambitions for the region around business, infrastructure and skills. The annual business plan process follows the government advice not to proceed with a Regional Strategy in advance of co-production commencing on a Local Industrial Strategy. The Business Plan however, clearly identifies WECA support for the Joint Spatial Plan and ambition to back this with a Housing package and a series of other measures to get affordable homes built in this region and the transport infrastructure in place to get communities moving. The Joint Spatial Plan and emerging Joint Local Transport Plan set out the vision and ambition for the region over the long term and have had the buy-in of all 4 Unitary Authorities. These will be supported by the likes of Skills, Energy and Digital Strategies identified in the Business Plan.

Supplementary Question

You say that the Government advice is now to proceed with the Industrial Strategy rather than the Regional Strategy. Can you advise how local members of this council and our communities will be able to influence this and at what stage?

Answer

I shall be meeting with Tim Bowles, Mayor of the West of England Combined Authority on Friday and this will be one of the issues discussed.

Question 9 of 2018/19 asked by Councillor Pat Rooney

As this Council's appointee to the West of England Combined Authority, what is the Leader's assessment of WECA's first year in terms of its organisation and structure?

Answer

As presented in the West of England Report to this Council Meeting, two key appointments have been made at a senior management level in recent weeks as the recruitment process continues to populate the WECA organisational structure. In the meantime LEP staff have transferred and a revised organisational setup has been designed so as to complement UA structures and avoid the duplication of existing functions. It is also welcome to note that the Government has invested some £4m in additional capacity funding for the WECA this year and this is supporting investment in staff to deliver our housing ambitions.

Supplementary Question

This is a rather upbeat answer but does he not think that this is painfully slow progress a year in?

Answer

I disagree. When you consider we have been trying to create and set up a whole new organisation and way of doing things, I consider we have made good progress. There remains work to do and I am keen to see how we can ensure that delivery is more apparent to members and our residents.

Question 10 of 2018/19 asked by Councillor Pat Rooney

As this Council's appointee to the West of England Combined Authority, what is the Leader's assessment of WECA's first year in terms of its profile and communications?

Answer

WECA has a steadily growing profile and it is important that we work with the Combined Authority to help to continue to raise this during the coming year. There are a number of very important projects coming through WECA in various stages of development and it is important that we promote the big success stories in terms of investment and delivery.

The Mayor has developed an excellent relationship with Ministers in Central Government and is sharing the challenges and ambitions for the region, particularly around suburban rail, digital and skills at the moment, but the next step will be to present the scale of this ambition to a wider audience.

Supplementary Question

Do you think our Metro Mayor has the same profile and clout as the Metro Mayors in other Combined Authorities? If not, why not?

Answer

The Mayor of the West of England Combined Authority has at least as much influence and the same profile with central government as other metro mayors.

Question 11 of 2018/19 asked by Councillor Pat Rooney

As this Council's appointee to the West of England Combined Authority, what is the Leader's assessment of WECA's first year in terms of its sub-regional leadership?

Answer

The WECA has enabled a strategic governance model to operate across the region such that 4 organisations (and often 5 with North Somerset) are meeting regularly as Leaders, Portfolio holders, CEOs, Directors and as officers through specific steering groups. That is facilitating a strong and consistent approach to strategic delivery and to relationships with government. That is a position that we could not realise to the same degree as 4 Unitary Authorities working together and has been a substantial reward for the devolution deal.

Supplementary Question

As this council's new appointee to the WECA, how will you differ from your predecessor?

Answer

I am already a member of WECA as I sit on the Skills Advisory Board and was one of Councillor Riddle's appointed deputies and will continue with my own way of working.

Question 12 of 2018/19 asked by Councillor Pat Rooney

As this Council's appointee to the West of England Combined Authority, what is the Leader's assessment of WECA's first year in terms of it developing relationships and partnerships?

Answer

WECA is developing relationships with a number of influential partners. The likes of Network Rail have been supporting the development of the suburban rail vision and the likes of MHCLG, DfT, Homes England and Housing Providers have all been engaged in framing a housing deal. The creation of three Advisory Boards, plus the refresh of the LEP Board has enabled the UA member and the business relationships to develop and those boards are now beginning to shape policy and investment strategy moving forward. WECA has also been able to engage a much broader range of stakeholders through smaller bespoke Steering Groups, for example bringing together broadband and mobile operators to discuss 5G ambitions and challenges; or bringing school and college leads together to discuss the WoE career development offer.

Supplementary Question

Whilst structures are important, what really matters is the culture of an organisation. Does WECA have the best culture for developing partnerships and relationships?

Answer

There is a developing culture at WECA as you would expect. There are understandably areas to improve upon and I will work with the Mayor on those areas.

Question 13 of 2018/19 asked by Councillor Claire Young

At the last meeting of Council in February, the Leader informed me that the administration would be seeking to meet with the new owners of the Stover Trading Estate to discuss the redevelopment of the site. Can he tell me what progress has been made on this?

Answer

My predecessor had a very productive meeting on Monday (14th May) with the new owners of the Estate – they have assured us of their long term intentions for the site. They are very open to have a constructive relationship with the Council to deliver a long term vision for the site.

Supplementary Question

What will you do to bring together the owners of all business parks in the Western Gateway area of Yate?

Answer

I need to become more involved in this to understand the issues. As mentioned in response to an earlier question I shall be meeting with the former Leader of the Council and any outstanding actions will be passed across to me.

Question 14 of 2018/19 asked by Councillor Ruth Davis

It has now been over a year since Tim Bowles was elected as Mayor of the West of England but the Combined Authority still does not have a publically available forward plan of future decisions extending beyond its next meeting. Does the Leader agree with me that this is unacceptable from a strategic authority entrusted with millions of pounds of public money, and will he agree to raise this issue formerly at the Combined Authority's Annual General Meeting on 1st June?

Answer

A formal letter was sent to WECA when concerns about the lack of a Forward Plan were expressed at previous Council meetings. A response has been received from the WECA Chief Executive which indicates that a longer term Forward Plan is now being prepared and it is anticipated that this will be worked up in time for the AGM. A copy of the response from the WECA Chief Executive is provided with the Council papers.

Supplementary Question

I note the response received from Patricia Greer, WECA Chief Executive on this issue. It is frustrating that despite the commitment to provide 28 days' notice there are still no meetings listed on the meetings page of the WECA website.

Would you take on the responsibility for asking the Mayor who is also a resident of South Gloucestershire if he will undertake to ensure that all future agendas and a transparent forward plan is made available on the WECA website?

Answer

I am aware that Councillor Riddle has raised this issue at WECA and I will pick up the baton from him.

To the Executive Councillor for Children & Young People

Question 15 of 2018/19 asked by Councillor April Begley

How and in what ways does the council work with young people to ensure that its youth services are responsive to the diversity of their needs?

Answer

It is an expectation that council funded youth provision (regardless of provider) respond to the diverse needs of young people. Information regarding the characteristics of young people who are engaging in youth services is collected and can inform future programming. We know that we have young people engaged in provision from a range of ethnic and cultural backgrounds, young carers, young people at risk of offending, LAC, NEET young people and young people with disabilities.

Young people are actively involved in the development of activity and educational programs to ensure they best meet their needs. An aspect of the youth workers' role is to build positive relationships with young people which enables them to better understand the diverse needs of young people and ensure that programs are appropriate and accessible. Youth workers network closely with community based services and settings such as schools, local police and other providers to ensure a wider perspective of the needs of young people in the area and to enable the development of collaborative initiatives to meet those needs.

There is provision specifically for young people who identify as LGBTQ.

There are sessions specifically for young people with learning difficulties and disabilities enabling engagement in a wide range of fun and challenging activities.

A commissioning process for council funded youth provision from April 2019 will take place over the coming months. The specification has been informed by an EQIA with a particular focus on young people who may experience additional barriers. It has also been informed by young people themselves who responded to a consultation in 2017 on the future of youth provision. Their feedback included wanting a varied range of activities and learning opportunities, particularly around life skills such as budgeting and sexual

health and some bespoke provision for young people with disabilities and LGBTQ young people. Prospective providers will need to demonstrate how they will respond to the needs of young people and how they will link with other services who may be able to support young people with very specific needs.

Supplementary Question

Would he agree that, as is so often the case, our good intentions don't match our poor finances? Does he believe that we have sufficient resources to ensure that our youth services can meet the need?

Answer

Funds are in place and working in partnership and the new procedures are opening up additional avenues for funding.

To the Executive Councillor for Schools, Skills & Employment

Question 16 of 2018/19 asked by Councillor Gareth Manson

Is the executive councillor concerned about the performance of South Gloucestershire schools at KS4 and KS5?

Answer

I am concerned about the performance of some of the schools in South Gloucestershire and recognise that some recent Ofsted inspections (Digitech, Mangotsfield and Hanham Woods) have also highlighted that outcomes should be better. I would also like to recognise that some schools are performing well; Bradley Stoke and The Castle had positive progress 8 scores last year and Brimsham Green and Kings Oak recorded improved outcomes.

I am not satisfied with the overall standards in South Gloucestershire schools. I take a very close interest in the outcomes of all students in South Gloucestershire and chair the Local Schools Standard Board. The Board is overseeing the strategic priorities for school improvement and has been fully supportive of the two successful bids to the Strategic School Improvement fund; this has brought over £0.5m into the area to improve standards. The Board has representation from every Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) and the Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC).

In addition to this, the Administration has:

- provided an additional £50K to the school improvement budget to address the 5-8 pathway and to work with the MATs
- re-established an Awards Event where achievement and aspiration will be celebrated
- secured funding to provide school visits to Aerospace Bristol to support STEM to mark its first full-year of operating

Supplementary Question

In December and January the forward plan indicated that a decision on standards in education was scheduled for January 2018. No decision was made in January 2018 or, for that matter, February 2018 and the decision then disappeared of the forward plan. Could you explain why no decision was made, why this decision disappeared from the forward plan and how members were made aware of this disappearance?

Answer

The report you refer to on standards in education is a factual presentation of information already in the public domain. I have asked officers to progress the Education Plan rather than simply produce a report which re-presents information already available.

Question 17 of 2018/19 asked by Councillor April Begley

What affect is the transfer of funds from the schools block to the high needs block reported at Cabinet last month having on the schools and their pupils?

Answer

The funding context for South Gloucestershire schools continues with a number of challenges but there have been some welcome developments that have improved this outlook:

- The Government's funding settlement for education did include an additional £4.4m funding for South Gloucestershire within the Schools Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) as a result of the Government implementing the new Schools National Funding Formula. This increase was one of the highest in the country representing the 14th highest increase out of 150 local authorities.
- With the support of all schools, the Council secured the Secretary of State for Education's approval to transfer £2.9m of this increased funding from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block of the DSG thus supporting and protecting funding for some of our most vulnerable children and young people. The Secretary of State approved the request and also acknowledged the strong local support from schools and that a multi-disciplinary High Needs Working Group has overseen a clear DSG sustainability strategic plan and is continuing to monitor progress. That successful partnership working with the Schools Forum and the strategic approach taken by all Schools in South Gloucestershire towards funding decisions is welcome and positively acknowledged by the Council.
- The Council with the support of the majority of local schools shifted the local schools formula towards the national funding formula taking into account funding availability. To reduce funding turbulence from this change the minimum funding guarantee was adjusted to offer greater transitional protection to schools that would be negatively impacted by the National Funding Formula.
- Through the introduction of the National Funding Formula and after transferring £2.9m from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block, school

budget shares in total will increase by over £2.8m in 2018/19 compared to 2017/18, but it should be recognised that this increase will need to cover pupil number changes, cost pressures and other changes impacting individual school budgets. This very welcome and positive position has only been possible due to the move to the National Funding Formula, which delivered an additional £4.4m before pupil number and formula factor changes for South Gloucestershire.

- The transfer of £2.9m has little impact on the level of overall funding for Schools as the funding flows back to schools but just in a more targeted way to support pupils with Education and Health Care Plans.

Supplementary Question

I note the improvement to the situation but is the funding sufficient for this 'robbing Peter to pay Paul' merry-go round?

Answer

I do not agree that it is 'robbing Peter to pay Paul'. Funds moved do flow back to schools with children who have Education and Health Care Plans.

Question 18 of 2018/19 asked by Councillor Adam Monk

Given that our schools routinely report that they are struggling to balance their budgets, how is the council monitoring what is happening to the range and number of curricular and extra-curricular opportunities that they are offering?

Answer

All maintained schools are required to provide the statutory curriculum where it is the responsibility of the governing body to ensure the school provides this. In academies, the curriculum is designed by the school and is monitored by the Board of Trustees. All secondary schools have the same end of KS4 exams, regardless of curriculum design and are included in the performance table.

Extra-curricular opportunities are non-statutory and are usually provided through staff on a voluntary basis or through financial support from parents/carers. These experiences can range from an after-school club to a residential visit. I am fully supportive of the benefits extra-curricular activities can bring and would encourage schools to continue to offer these opportunities.

Supplementary Question

This is a disappointingly complacent response because many parents and carers care passionately about having a wide curriculum and extra-curricular activities which enrich their kids' school experience. Even though the council may not be directly responsible, should it not be maintaining a concerned overview of the situation?

Answer

The provision of extra-curricular activities is the responsibility of head teachers of individual schools. You will note the Council budget made provision to fund visits to the Aerospace Bristol Museum for pupils.

To the Executive Councillor for Corporate Resources

Question 19 of 2018/19 asked by Councillor Adam Monk

How and in what ways will the executive councillor build strong relationships with South Gloucestershire's major business rate payers?

Answer

The Council seeks to have good working relationships with major businesses across South Gloucestershire. There are many routes in which we seek to develop these relationships, including through being a partner on the Local Enterprise Partnership, working with the West of England Combined Authority and through our engagement with major businesses in respect of economic development and facilitating South Gloucestershire having a sustainable and healthy local economy, and through our skills strategy development work.

From my perspective as the new Cabinet Member, I feel it is important to not just focus on the excellent major business rate payers of our Authority but also the small to medium sized enterprises that are vital in making up our local economy. Personally, running a small business myself, I already engage with a number of business groups across South Gloucestershire and will continue to do so.

Supplementary Question

Can you tell us how and in what ways the Executive Member for Corporate Resources will go about this task?

Answer

Now the new Executive Member has been appointed I will sit down with him and relevant officers to discuss how this engagement is undertaken in the future.

To the Executive Councillor for Communities and Tourism

Question 20 of 2018/19 asked by Councillor Michael Bell

Could the executive councillor outline the recent problems with web cameras at the council's Sort It centres and explain how he will ensure that they get resolved?

Answer

There has been a technical issue with the camera lenses regarding the quality of the recording, which we are working with Suez to overcome. We hope to have this work completed by the end of May when it is envisaged that the cameras will be operational again.

Supplementary Question

How long have the cameras been out of action as rumours are that it has been a couple of years?

Answer

I will provide a written response.

Question 21 of 2018/19 asked by Councillor Marian Lewis

What changes in the amount of waste being thrown away have come as a result of implementing the new waste strategy?

Answer

From June 2017, when the weekly recycling was introduced, to March 2018 black bin waste fell by 1,687 tonnes, a 4% drop, and food waste and mixed recyclables increased by 2,640 tonnes, a 12.5% increase. The full impact of the smaller bins will become apparent over the coming months, with the rollout of new bins having been completed earlier in the year.

To the Executive Councillor for Planning, Transportation and Strategic Environment

Question 22 asked by Councillor Pat Hockey

I understand that, when it launches, the Metrobus will not be stopping at Parkway Station or the Park & Ride side at Hunt's Ground, as had previously been promised. While I understand the reasons given for the delay at Parkway, can the Executive Member explain why it is not stopping at the Park and Ride site, which was constructed at considerable public expense, in large part, to serve the Metrobus?

Answer

The intention is that in future there will be a MetroBus service that serves Parkway Station and the MetroBus stops on Hunts Ground Road stops adjacent to the Parkway North Park and Ride site.

At present, the bus operators have not come forward with a commercial offer to serve the Parkway North Park and Ride site and Parkway Station. We will be working with the bus operators over the coming months to explore opportunities for these stops to be served, without cost to the Council. As previously mentioned, we also require GWR to complete their station forecourt works and to install MetroBus stops at Parkway Station before services can start. We expect the GWR work to start later this year.

The Parkway North Park and Ride site was opened in 2011. The facility currently serves as a rail based park and ride site for Parkway Station in advance of bus services starting and revenue from parking charges goes to SGC.

Supplementary Question

In your capacity as Executive Member and sitting on the WECA Infrastructure Board you must have had some involvement in determining the operator of Metrobus. Are you serious about tackling traffic congestion through an integrated transportation system?

Answer

Of course we are very serious about tackling congestion and support the Metrobus project. As you know the services are run by a commercial operator and at present it is not commercially viable to include Parkway Station. The operators do not wish to go into the station at present due to the problematic configuration; they are waiting for the front of the station to be redesigned and made fit for Metrobus vehicles to go in and around the station.

Question 23 asked by Councillor Shirley Holloway

The administration's current consultation on Winter Maintenance proposes the reduction of the council's gritter fleet by two, in order to cut costs. Is the Executive Member able to assure us that this will not diminish the authority's ability to cope with serious cold weather events, such as we saw earlier this year?

Answer

Through route rationalization the highways team have been able to reduce the winter maintenance fleet by one lorry with minimal impact on the treated network. To achieve the second lorry reduction, the team have assessed the treated network and are proposing to remove streets from lower end of the network hierarchy. These are roads where there are "main road" alternatives and where there are no schools or bus activity.

At times of extreme weather, teams work round the clock to keep roads open, including secondary parts of the network. This will include those roads removed from the current historical list.

Supplementary Question

It was my understanding that no roads which were direct routes to schools would be removed from the precautionary gritting list, however the consultation shows this is not the case.

Will the administration promise that not roads which are direct routes to schools will be removed from the precautionary list?

Answer

We have previously committed that if a road is a direct route to a school or a bus route to a school we will not remove them from the gritting list. If you would provide me with a list of the roads you are referring to I will look into the issue.

To the Leader of the Labour Group**Question 24 asked by Councillor Nick Barrett**

Will the Leader of the Labour Group apologise on behalf of Kingswood Labour to Juice, a charity based in Cadbury Heath in my ward who have been wrongfully mischaracterised and suffered reputational damage having been falsely claimed as being co-host of an event in Kingswood which has

attracted negative attention internationally due to comments made trivialising antisemitism?

Answer

This question is based on a false premise. Juice have confirmed to us that they have not suffered from reputational damage, so no apology is sought or appropriate.

I take the issue of antisemitism most seriously. I signed the council statement last February that *“We reaffirm our commitment to fighting against racism, and combating discrimination based on national origin, race, sexuality, and disability”* and this includes my commitment to fighting antisemitism specifically.

Supplementary Question

Has an apology been made to Juice?

Answer

I have spoken to Juice and they feel that no further action is appropriate, and I believe we should all respect their wishes.

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

Councillor Toby Savage introduced the item and opened the floor to questions.

Clarification was sought on whether there had been a change in the 2+ policy along the Bromley Heath Viaduct as the signs marking the lane had not been re-erected following completion of the viaduct works. In response, the Executive Member for Planning, Transportation and Strategic Environment apologised to the public for any confusion. He confirmed it was a mistake not to put the signs back up and they would be re-erected asap.

Councillor Riddle when he was the Leader of the Council had spoken about the prospect of an arena at Filton on the former airfield site. Councillor Savage as the new Leader was asked for his views on the issue. Councillor Savage responded advising when we knew what Bristol City Council wished to do about the arena we would meet with them to understand the implications and opportunities.

Councillor Martin Farmer welcomed the Future Bright project but asked for a briefing on the future sustainability of the project and how it linked with public transportation. In response Councillor Savage advised a briefing had already taken place on Future Bright and a commitment had been made to provide an update briefing when the scheme had bedded in. In relation to the Joint Local Transport Plan Bus Strategy, clarification was sought on the inclusion of Metrobus. The Executive Member for Planning, Transportation and Strategic Environment confirmed the strategy included all buses and bus operators across the district.

The report was received for information.

13 MOTIONS (Agenda Item 13)

Motion 1 of 2018/19

Liberal Democrat Motion – The Elimination of Disposable Cups

Councillor Claire Young **moved** the Liberal Democrat motion, as set out in the agenda papers on the elimination of disposable cups. The motion was **seconded** by Councillor Mike Drew.

In proposing the motion Councillor Young advised the issue had already been discussed at an Integra board meeting and expressed the view that the Council should take the lead in our area on eliminating the use of disposable cups.

Council Jon Hunt advised the use of disposable cups was expected to increase by one third in future years and saw an opportunity for the Council to lead by example on this issue.

Councillor Jon Hunt moved an amendment, seconded by Councillor Toby Savage so that the motion reads:

Council Notes:

That at last meeting of Council it was revealed that the authority used over 36,000 disposable cups at its offices in 2017;

That, at present, the authority has no means of recycling these cups, due to the material used in their manufacture;

That, while the Executive Member for Resources has said that he hopes that the authority will have the means to recycle such cups in future, it would be better for the environment to reduce the production of this waste rather than adding to recycling;

That the café chain, Boston Tea Party, has recently announced that it is banning the use of disposable cups at all of its branches;

And, that if it is possible for a commercial venture to take this step for the good of the environment, public bodies such as South Gloucestershire Council should demonstrate no less commitment.

Therefore:

This Council calls upon the Administration to continue its work with Integra to eliminate the use of disposable cups at all council facilities and to bring a

report to a future Cabinet meeting with a financially viable solution to implement this as soon as possible.

Councillor Mike Drew commented the amendment did not provide sufficient impetus for the change to take place as it removed the deadline, which could allow for drift in the timescale for stopping the use of disposable cups.

Councillor Toby Savage speaking in support of the amendment advised the amendment acknowledged that work had been underway for some time to understand how the Council could move to another position on disposable cups as quickly as possible.

Upon being put to the vote with 37 in favour, 20 against and 4 abstentions the amendment was **CARRIED**.

Councillor Mike Drew advised he would support the motion as although it had been weakened, it was an improvement on current council policy.

Debate returned to the motion as amended and upon being put to the vote with 60 in favour, 0 against and 1 abstention it was **RESOLVED** that:

Council Notes:

That at last meeting of Council it was revealed that the authority used over 36,000 disposable cups at its offices in 2017;

That, at present, the authority has no means of recycling these cups, due to the material used in their manufacture;

That, while the Executive Member for Resources has said that he hopes that the authority will have the means to recycle such cups in future, it would be better for the environment to reduce the production of this waste rather than adding to recycling;

That the café chain, Boston Tea Party, has recently announced that it is banning the use of disposable cups at all of its branches;

And, that if it is possible for a commercial venture to take this step for the good of the environment, public bodies such as South Gloucestershire Council should demonstrate no less commitment.

Therefore:

This Council calls upon the Administration to continue its work with Integra to eliminate the use of disposable cups at all council facilities and to bring a report to a future Cabinet meeting with a financially viable solution to implement this as soon as possible.

Motion 2 of 2018/19

Liberal Democrat Motion – Badger Culling

Councillor Ruth Davis **moved** the Liberal Democrat motion, as set out in the agenda papers on badger culling. The motion was **seconded** by Councillor Pat Hockey.

An amendment was **moved** by Councillor Matthew Riddle, **seconded** by Councillor Ben Stokes so that the motion reads:

Council notes:

That the Government has decided to extend its policy of badger culling to the West of England, including South Gloucestershire;

As a country we might need to reduce the badger population, even if the issue of TB in cattle and badgers did not exist, in order to help protect the hedgehog population, as badgers are the main predator of hedgehogs.

The fact that in cattle, TB testing can identify infected cattle very early, before clinical signs develop and then they can be quickly culled. This is in contrast to badgers with TB that have a long, chronic illness and then in many cases a slow death.

It is recognised that in ‘hot spot areas’ culling of badgers in the short to medium term is the only effective way to reduce TB in cattle quickly.

That in the long term, vaccinations could provide a sustainable answer.

A vaccination for CATTLE is 10 years away.

There are two potential ways of vaccinating BADGERS:

1. The only vaccine currently available for use on badgers is in an injectable form. The badgers need to be cage-trapped to vaccinate them and this has to be done annually for a period of at least five years. The process is costly and needs to be carried out by people who have been on accredited courses. Every trap has to be visited early in the morning, every day.

2. An oral bait vaccine is likely to offer the most successful route forwards. But this option is still some years away from becoming a part of any badger control plan, because there is no licensed or proven oral vaccine currently available.

That vaccinations will not cure badgers that are already infected with TB.

Therefore, the Council calls upon the Secretary of State, Michael Gove, to continue to develop vaccines and vaccination policies to reduce TB in both cattle and badgers for the long term, as an urgent priority.

In moving the motion Councillor Riddle commented the original motion sought to simplify an extremely complex situation. Points made during his explanation of the amendment included:

- A cull was recommended in hotspots where one third or more of the badger population are infected with TB. In these circumstances culling helped reduce the disease in the badger population and also helped reduce incidents of bovine TB.
- Cattle could be tested for TB and if infected culled quickly, however, badgers were not tested and those infected could carry the disease for a long time and it led to a slow, painful death.
- Protection for badgers had led to an increase in the population, which had impacted lower down the food chain with a 50% reduction in the hedgehog population in the past 15 years. Anecdotally it was noted there had been increased incidents of badgers being run over.
- Agreeing with the sentiment to control animal TB through vaccination as a long term aim.

Councillor Mike Drew commented badger culls in other areas had not resulted in reduced TB within the cattle population and added the cost of such measures was huge. He advised the Government might be under pressure from the farming community to do something, but culling badgers was not the answer.

Councillor John O'Neill advised he knew farmers who had lost entire herds to bovine TB. He commented there was no hard evidence that badgers were the cause of this and noted other animals such as deer also carried and spread the disease.

Councillor Roger Hutchinson commented scientific evidence did not show that badger culling solved the problem of bovine TB. He advised he would be unable to support the amendment as it didn't make sense.

Councillor Ben Stokes speaking as seconder to the amendment commented that although there were different perspectives on the issue, no one wanted to see the inappropriate suffering of animals. He added cattle were being sent to early deaths and this was causing problems in the industry and there was a pressing financial imperative to dealing with the problem. Councillor Stokes expressed the view that the original motion fell short of providing a realistic answer to the problem.

Upon being put to the vote with 37 in favour, 24 against and 0 abstentions the amendment was **CARRIED**.

A further amendment was **moved** by Councillor Pat Hockey, **seconded** by Councillor Ruth Davis so that the motion reads:

The Council calls upon the Secretary of State, Michael Gove, to continue to develop vaccines and vaccination policies to reduce TB in both cattle and

badgers for the long term, as an urgent priority and also promoting research into a cure for bovine TB.

Upon being put to the vote with 60 in favour and 1 abstention the amendment was **CARRIED**.

A vote was then taken on the substantive motion and with 58 in favour and 3 abstentions it was **RESOLVED**:

The Council calls upon the Secretary of State, Michael Gove, to continue to develop vaccines and vaccination policies to reduce TB in both cattle and badgers for the long term, as an urgent priority and also promoting research into a cure for bovine TB.

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

There were no urgent items.

The meeting closed at 9.35pm

.....Chair of the Council