



MINUTES OF COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING

DATE: Wednesday, 26 June 2019 at 10am

VENUE: Council Chamber - Shire Hall, Gloucester

Present

Membership:

Cllr Phil Awford	Cllr Stephen Hirst	Cllr Steve Robinson
Cllr Matt Babbage	Cllr Paul Hodgkinson	Cllr Rachel Smith
Cllr Robert Bird	Cllr Carole Allaway Martin	Cllr Vernon Smith
Cllr Richard Boyles	Cllr Dr Andrew Miller	Cllr Lynden Stowe
Cllr Chris Coleman	Cllr Patrick Molyneux	Cllr Klara Sudbury
Cllr Dr John Cordwell	Cllr Nigel Moor	Cllr Ray Theodoulou (Chairman)
Cllr Kevin Cromwell	Cllr Graham Morgan	Cllr Brian Tipper
Cllr Iain Dobie	Cllr David Norman MBE	Cllr Pam Tracey MBE
Cllr Ben Evans	Cllr Brian Oosthuysen	Cllr Robert Vines
Cllr Bernard Fisher	Cllr Shaun Parsons	Cllr Eva Ward
Cllr Andrew Gravells	Cllr Sajid Patel	Cllr Simon Wheeler
Cllr Kate Haigh	Cllr Loraine Patrick	Cllr Kathy Williams
Cllr Terry Hale	Cllr John Payne	Cllr Lesley Williams MBE
Cllr Tim Harman	Cllr Alan Preest (Vice- chairman)	Cllr Suzanne Williams
Cllr Joe Harris	Cllr Keith Rippington	Cllr Roger Wilson
Cllr Mark Hawthorne MBE	Cllr Brian Robinson	Cllr Will Windsor-Clive
Cllr Colin Hay		
Cllr Jeremy Hilton		

Apologies: Cllrs David Brown, Stephen Davies and Nigel Robbins OBE

Honorary Aldermen Bill Crowther, Jackie Hall, Bill Hobman, Terry Parker and Gordon Shurmer.

37. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 May 2019 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

38. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

A copy of the declarations of interest is attached to the signed copy of the minutes.

39. ANNOUNCEMENTS

a) Honours

The Chairman congratulated the following people from Gloucestershire who had been recognised in the Queen's Birthday Honours:

- Timothy Hutchinson (Newland, Coleford) – awarded a CBE for services to publishing and literature.
- Professor John Latham (Chipping Camden) – awarded a CBE for services to higher education.
- Former Superintendent Gavin Thomas (Gloucestershire Constabulary) – awarded an OBE for services to policing.
- Tony Allcock MBE (formerly of Cheltenham) – awarded an OBE for services to lawn bowls.
- Julie Dyer (Stonehouse) – awarded an MBE for services to young people with special needs.
- Former District Councillor Jane Horne (Newent) – awarded an MBE for voluntary and charitable services to the community in the Forest of Dean.
- Roger Maggs (Tetbury) – awarded an MBE for services to the economy in Wales.
- Peter Pepys-Goodchild (Cheltenham) – awarded an MBE for public and political service.
- Frances Watson (Painswick) – awarded an MBE for services to people with learning disabilities.
- Dr Peter Whitehead (Priors Norton) – awarded an MBE for services to equestrian sport science and medicine.
- Roger Beard (Newent) – awarded a BEM for services to the community in Newent.
- Bren McInerney (Longford) – awarded a BEM for services to volunteering, the public sector and the community.
- Simon Paul (Lechlade) – awarded a BEM for services to the community.

b) Nelson Trust

The Chairman congratulated the Nelson Trust, a Stroud based charity, on their winning entry at the Charity Awards for the category covering social care, advice and support. The project provided street sex workers in

Gloucestershire, Swindon and Wiltshire with one-to-one support on overcoming addiction, protecting themselves against sexual violence, finding safe and stable homes and leaving sex work.

c) Mental Health First Aid

It was noted that two sessions for members run by Richard Castle, Independent Mental Health and Trauma Rehabilitation Consultant, would be held on Wednesday, 2 October 2019 at 1pm and Thursday, 31 October at 1pm. The Chairman asked members to inform Democratic Services of which session they preferred to attend.

d) Archives and Records Association Volunteer Award

The Chairman congratulated Gloucestershire Archives on winning the National Archives Volunteering Award 2019 for its pioneering work with 200 volunteers. The panel was particularly impressed by the breadth of community partners, the vision and creativity, as well as the level of audience engagement and development achieved.

40. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

Twenty-five questions had been received. A copy of the answers was circulated and is attached to the signed copy of the minutes.

Question 3 – Steve Gower stated that at the last meeting the Cabinet Member had said in relation to his question on homelessness that there were some people she had come across who did not want housing. He provided details of figures around record numbers of deaths in supported living in 2018 and his concerns about a member of the public who had subsequently died. He asked whether the member felt that the homeless provision in Gloucester was fit for purpose and what would be done to change the previous nine years of provision that was not fit for purpose?

Cllr Kathy Williams replied that the question was not a supplementary for the previous question and invited the member of the public to submit it for a written response.

Question 6 – Vicki Hewer raised concerns about the removal of the Pulhams 801 bus service. She asked whether the Council would provide financial support to keep the service going? She stated that there needed to be a service that matches the morning travel and return in the evening for those attending school or college.

Cllr Nigel Moor replied that he would be happy to meet with Northleach Town Council to discuss what options were available. The Council had not received notice from the operator around any proposals for changes at this stage.

Question 10 – Gerald Hartley raised concerns regarding who would make a bid for monitoring equipment for local emissions from the residual waste plant for Hunts Grove School as Hunts Grove would not become a parish until May 2020. He also stated that the ‘well established advice’ detailed in Cllr Moor’s answer to his question had been revealed to have been given in advance of a study that had been commissioning by Public Health England on this matter. He asked for a clear commitment from the County Council that the monitoring of emissions would happen.

Cllr Nigel Moor replied that he would be happy to take the issue away to consider how to progress. He noted that emissions would be regularly monitored with work underway in conjunction with the Environment Agency.

Question 11 – Dr Richard House asked when the County Council would be informing Gloucestershire residents about 5G related risks to health and the environment. What risk assessments were the Council intending to carry out and what precautionary steps would be in place?

Cllr Patrick Molyneux replied that there was no 5G rollout at this stage and that the coordination would be through Central Government. It was too early to consider this in that level of detail.

Question 24 – Lorraine Du Feu stated that the current provision for cyclists was appalling, noting that a recent report had shown that white lines and symbols on busy roads was a pointless gesture. She asked what money was being spent on cycling and with regards to the A417 would it not be better for the Council to invest money elsewhere rather than on cars.

In response, Cllr Nigel Moor stated that the Council was investing a great deal in cycling. He cited the Cheltenham to Gloucester and Cheltenham to Bishops Cleeve cycle routes that were being developed. £30,000 had already been committed to mapping cycle routes in the county and he was proud of the work that was underway. With regards to the A417 Missing Link this was addressing an existing environmental issue.

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Question 25 – Bren McInerney asked what explicit and meaningful measures was the Council planning in order to ensure the achievement of strategic goals around addressing health inequalities.

Cllr Tim Harman stated that the process was ongoing and that this was important work to deal with the inequalities in the County. He would be happy to meet with the Mr McInerney to discuss any ideas he might have.

41. CORPORATE PARENTING

Cllr Richard Boyles, Cabinet Member for Children’s Safeguarding and Early Years, presented the report which provided information on Gloucestershire’s Fostering Service. He explained that the Fostering Service was a key part of the Gloucestershire Sufficiency Strategy including ‘Right Placement First Time’. The strategy set a target of March 2022 to achieve 80% of children who were living with foster carers to be placed with Gloucestershire foster carers, with the remaining 20% placed with independent carers. He recognised that the recruitment and retention of foster carers was critical to the future approach. He encouraged members to attend Fostering Support Groups in their areas to understand the issues that foster parents face.

Members acknowledged the quality of the service offered by the Council’s Fostering Service with an increasing number of foster carers returning to the Council from agencies due to the better level of support. The Chairman asked that staff be thanked for their outstanding work.

Some concern was expressed that the number of children in care continued to rise with a current figure of 717. Members were anxious to better understand why this was happening and they asked for more information on the action that was being taken. They enquired how many of the children in care were under Section 20 voluntary arrangements with families.

Cllr Boyles explained that it was a complex situation that local authorities across the county were facing and there was no easy fix. He said that neglect in early years was a key issue. He undertook to circulate an action plan that had been developed. He noted that around 30% of children in care fell into the Section 20 category. As a result of the poor service in the past more children were coming into care later than they should have. Criminal activity around ‘county lines’ was also a significant factor.

Cllr Boyles noted that the new Corporate Parenting Pledge had been drawn up by the Corporate Parenting Group after a lot of discussion. It had been drafted in such

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a way that all councillors should be able sign it. He assured members that officers would in future be emailing them to raise awareness of events, both in their own area and across the county.

RESOLVED to note the report.

42. PETITIONS

No petitions were presented by members.

43. MOTIONS

Motion 839 – Every Child Matters

Having declared a disclosable pecuniary interest, Cllr Ben Evans left the chamber for this item.

The proposer Cllr Lesley Williams and seconder Cllr Brian Oosthuysen indicated that they wished to make an amendment to their motion (see the highlighted text).

This Council recognises that every child in Gloucestershire deserves the best education possible.

This Council recognises that the county has some schools that do give children an education that equips them for the best possible start in life. However this Council should also recognise that some schools do not meet the required standard to deliver a high quality education.

Gloucestershire County Council continues to play an important part in the education of all young people in the County.

This Council also recognises that it is Central Government's intention that all school should become academies or part of a multi academy trust.

That this Council call upon the Cabinet Member to provide a report to Council on the attainment and achievement of students living and educated in the County and providing an analysis by home district and division. This report to form the basis of the County Council's response to changing need for schools across the county.

Cllr Williams stated that, although some schools were performing well, there were too many schools rated by Ofsted as poor or inadequate. She referred to the scrutiny reviews of school exclusions and secondary school performance in the

Forest of Dean which identified a number of serious concerns. At the last Children and Families Scrutiny Committee, the Regional Schools Commissioner highlighted that Gloucestershire historically had a high rate of exclusions and the Council had taken a neutral position in terms of the action it had taken.

Cllr Oosthuysen noted that local authorities had a long and proud history of involvement in schools. He said that too many schools were in desperate need of support and guidance. A detailed analysis of the attainment and achievement of students across the county was needed to assess the position properly. He was anxious that the Council did whatever it could to ensure that every child in Gloucestershire got the best opportunity.

A member referred to the poor state of some school buildings and he feared that unless urgent action was taken some schools might be forced to close.

Cllr Patrick Molyneux, the Cabinet Member for Economy, Skills and Growth, recognised that a good education in the county was essential for a good start in life. He proposed an amendment that the report be presented to the Children and Families Scrutiny Committee so that members could look at the issues in greater depth. He said that he was aware of the difficulties suffered by some schools including a number of secondary schools in the Forest of Dean.

In seconding the amendment, Cllr Mark Hawthorne, Leader of the Council, noted that Gloucestershire had been leading the F40 campaign for fairer funding for schools. He was concerned that despite extensive lobbying children in the county received significantly less funding than many other areas. He hoped that the Government's fairer funding review would result in a more equitable distribution of funding. He recognised concerns around school exclusions but he said that the position was improving. Secondary school exclusions were down by 23% and primary school exclusions had fallen by 50%.

After a short adjournment, Cllr Williams and Cllr Oosthuysen accepted the amendment as friendly. She accepted that the report would be presented to scrutiny but was anxious that the outcome of the review was presented to full Council.

A member expressed concern that the rate of exclusions remained high and published figures indicated that they were much higher than elsewhere.

Another member advised that 70% of children in two secondary schools that served his division were from outside the area with a significant number travelling to the schools from outside the county. This resulted in a real problem with the provision of quality secondary education in the North Gloucester area. He believed that a

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critical look at the fundamentals of the education system was required as there were a number of failing secondary schools where children were not getting the education they deserved.

A member expressed particular concern about the number of children being educated at home. She noted that the two grammar schools in Stroud attracted a large number of children from Swindon and other areas outside the county.

Another member stated that schools were haemorrhaging staff because the education system had been neglected and had not received the funds it needed for a number of years. He also referred to home to school transport and the money that parents were having to spend getting their children to school.

Cllr Richard Boyles, Cabinet Member for Children's Safeguarding and Early Years, believed that it was important that the grammar schools in Gloucestershire were accessible to children from across the county. He was concerned, however, about the number of children travelling into the county but he said that was a matter for the grammar schools to address themselves.

On being put to the vote, the amended motion received unanimous support.

RESOLVED that

This Council recognises that every child in Gloucestershire deserves the best education possible.

This Council recognises that the county has some schools that do give children an education that equips them for the best possible start in life. However this Council should also recognise that some schools do not meet the required standard to deliver a high quality education.

Gloucestershire County Council continues to play an important part in the education of all young people in the County.

This Council also recognises that it is Central Government's intention that all school should become academies or part of a multi academy trust.

That this Council call upon the Cabinet Member to provide a report to Children and Families Scrutiny Committee on the attainment and achievement of students living and educated in the County and providing an analysis by home district and division. This report to form the basis of the County Council's response to changing need for schools across the county.

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Motion 840 – Terminally ill employees

The proposer Cllr Kate Haigh and seconder Cllr Lesley Williams indicated that they wished to make an amendment to their motion (see the highlighted text).

This Council notes that terminally ill employees are not ~~currently~~ always protected under national disability legislation and can therefore be dismissed if they are no longer able to conduct their role with reasonable adjustments. This can mean that terminally ill people can be subjected to stressful assessments, subsequent dismissal and the loss of death in service benefits – all following the diagnosis of a terminal illness.

This Council believes that those receiving a terminal diagnosis are entitled to dignity at work.

This Council resolves to:

- *Review sick pay and sickness absence procedures, with specific reference to those with a terminal diagnosis.*
- *Make a commitment not to dismiss a member of staff with a terminal illness, due to their condition, ~~other than by agreement.~~*
- *Ensure that the Council has a competent programme with the capacity to provide support to any person with a terminal diagnosis.*
- *Provide staff training on dealing with terminal illnesses*
- *Ensure that Human Resources have procedures in place to make necessary adaptations to work arrangements for staff with a terminal illness.*
- *Sign and adopt the TUC's dying to work charter*

Cllr Haigh explained that she was not bringing the motion because there was anything wrong with Council practices but to show leadership and support for the TUC's Dying to Work Charter. The charter included a set of principles which ensured that members of staff with a terminal diagnosis were treated in the right way.

Cllr Lynden Stowe, Cabinet Member for Finance and Change, supported the motion and was pleased to report that Council practices were better than those included in the TUC charter. He assured members that the Council would only end a contract if it was in the best interests of the member of staff concerned. He believed that this confirmed the Council's commitment as a sympathetic and compassionate employer.

Cllr Williams stated that he was reassured that the Council acted in the best interests of staff at all times.

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Cllr Haigh requested that Cllr Stowe join her to formally sign the TUC Dying to Work Charter on behalf of the Council.

On being put to a vote, the amended motion received unanimous support.

RESOLVED that

This Council notes that terminally ill employees are not currently always protected under national disability legislation and can therefore be dismissed if they are no longer able to conduct their role with reasonable adjustments. This can mean that terminally ill people can be subjected to stressful assessments, subsequent dismissal and the loss of death in service benefits – all following the diagnosis of a terminal illness.

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- *Ensure that the Council has a competent programme with the capacity to provide support to any person with a terminal diagnosis.*
- *Provide staff training on dealing with terminal illnesses*
- *Ensure that Human Resources have procedures in place to make necessary adaptations to work arrangements for staff with a terminal illness.*
- *Sign and adopt the TUC's dying to work charter*

Motion 841 – Gloucestershire Youth Council

Cllr Paul Hodgkinson proposed and Cllr Jeremy Hilton seconded the motion on the agenda.

Cllr Hodgkinson read out the following quote from Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child: 'Children who are capable of forming their own views must have the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting them. And children should be provided the best opportunity to be heard in any proceedings that affect them.'

He believed that as elected members, county councillors had a responsibility for ensuring that young people were given an opportunity to express their views. He

noted that the average county councillor in the country was a white male aged 59. He said that it was important to hear the voice of young people on a range of issues including knife crime, drugs awareness, climate change, education, voting age and why so many of them left the county.

He was aware of a number of successful youth councils across the county but believed that there would be real value in establishing a Gloucestershire Youth Council by the time of the next County Council election in May 2021.

Cllr Hilton said that it was important that young people were able to interact with the County Council and other public bodies and express their views. An election process that coincided with the County Council election would allow young people to participate in voting at an early age.

Cllr Mark Hawthorne moved the following amendment (see the changes in highlighted text):

This Council notes that:

- *There are nearly 40,000 young people, aged 11-18 in Gloucestershire, representing a significant proportion of the county's population.*
- *Youth councils have the potential to benefit those involved by giving participants a sense of control in decision-making processes as well as developing participants' skill-sets.*
- *Youth councils have the potential to benefit the wider community by bringing fresh ideas and solutions to the Council.*

The Council also notes the work of District Councils, the Police and Crime Commissioner and the NHS to engage more effectively with young people in Gloucestershire.

This Council further notes that Gloucestershire's inability to retain and attract young adults has been identified as one of the critical challenges to the economic viability of the county.

This Council therefore resolves to work towards establishing a Gloucestershire Youth Council by 2021 to coincide with the wider Gloucestershire County Council elections with Leadership Gloucestershire to establish a Youth Council to give young people a voice on the issues that affect them across Gloucestershire, irrespective of which body is responsible for those services.

He welcomed the sentiments of the original motion to ensure that the young voice in Gloucestershire was heard but he said that it was about more than just the County Council. He noted the importance of young people having a voice in the

decision making of other public agencies including Health, Police and the District Councils. He believed that the Council should not try to reinvent the wheel but build on the good arrangements that were already in place. He stated that Leadership Gloucestershire with representation from key public sector partners in the county was well placed to coordinate this process. He hoped that it would be possible to engage with young people across the county and not just those that wanted to stand for election. He questioned why it was necessary to wait two years and suggested that the process start now.

The amendment was seconded by Cllr Richard Boyles who reserved his right to speak.

A number of members believed that the County Council should lead the process in setting up a Gloucestershire Youth Council. They expressed concern that the involvement of Leadership Gloucestershire would blur the lines of accountability and it might not be clear who was responsible. They were supportive of an election process that coincided with the County Council elections in 2021 and were anxious that adequate resources were provided to set up and run the Youth Council.

Cllr Roger Wilson, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care Commissioning and Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board, highlighted the Board's commitment to engaging with young people and ensuring that their views were taken account of in the decision making process. He noted that children from 96% of schools in the county had participated in the last pupil survey and the results had been published.

In seconding the amendment, Cllr Richard Boyles said that the Council was currently engaging with young people as part of an overarching strategy with the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Health Wellbeing Board. He also noted the role of the Ambassadors for Children's Services in providing feedback on Council services.

On being put to the vote, the amendment was carried. The amended motion received unanimous support.

RESOLVED that

This Council notes that:

- *There are nearly 40,000 young people, aged 11-18 in Gloucestershire, representing a significant proportion of the county's population.*
- *Youth councils have the potential to benefit those involved by giving participants a sense of control in decision-making processes as well as developing participants' skill-sets.*

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- *Youth councils have the potential to benefit the wider community by bringing fresh ideas and solutions to the Council.*

The Council also notes the work of district councils, the police and crime commissioner and the NHS to engage more effectively with young people in Gloucestershire.

This Council further notes that Gloucestershire's inability to retain and attract young adults has been identified as one of the critical challenges to the economic viability of the county.

This Council therefore resolves to work with Leadership Gloucestershire to establish a Youth Council to give young people a voice on the issues that affect them across Gloucestershire, irrespective of which body is responsible for those services.

Motion 842 – SkillZONE

The proposer Cllr Colin Hay and seconder Cllr Dr John Cordwell indicated that they wished to make an amendment to their motion (see the highlighted text).

This Council notes:

- *That children newly-going to secondary school are expected to travel with much more independence than they were at primary school.*
- *That these children are particularly vulnerable to pedestrian related road traffic accidents.*
- *That Gloucestershire's SkillZONE centre is an interactive learning environment which, amongst a range of other life skills, teaches road-safety to school pupils.*

This Council further notes:

- *That for two financial years, up until 2016, Gloucestershire County Council covered the admission and transportation costs incurred by schools following a budget amendment proposed by the Liberal Democrats; enabling identified Key Stage Two and Three students to attend SkillZONE to learn road safety skills or to become safe journey ambassadors.*
- *That the lessons learned by pupils attending SkillZONE benefitted not just themselves but also their classmates and the wider school.*
- *That school finances are particularly stretched at this moment, leaving little money for non-essential activities.*
- *That after this scheme ended there was a near halving in the number of school children able to attend SkillZONE*

This Council resolves to ask the Cabinet to explore opportunities to reintroduce the scheme to cover the admission and transportation costs for all identified schools wishing to send Key Stage 2 and 3 students to SkillZONE from September 2019.

Cllr Hay advised that one child died on the road every day and more than 30 were seriously injured. He noted that there was a marked increase in the number of injuries to children between the ages of 11 and 12 with most accidents happening between 3pm and 6pm. The accidents had a dreadful impact on children and their families along with schools and the local community. There was strong evidence that education and awareness had a significant impact on reducing casualties.

Gloucestershire was fortunate in having SkillZONE which had a strong record in educating children on critical life skills including road safety. For 2015-16 and 2016-17 additional funding had been included in the Council budget through a budget amendment for school children to go to SkillZONE. Without dedicated funding since 2018-19 the number of school children visiting had dropped dramatically. He hoped that in-year funding could be secured to allow free travel and attendance to start again in September 2019.

Cllr Dr Cordwell noted that three of the four motions being considered that day related to children and he believed that it was important that the SkillZONE facility was fully utilised. He said that as well as road safety, children had the opportunity to learn about safety near railway lines, stranger danger and safety around water.

Cllr Dave Norman, Cabinet Member for Public Protection, stated that he had been involved in the development of SkillZONE when he was working for Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service. He recognised that SkillZONE did vital work in educating children about safety in a number of life-like situations. He undertook to explore opportunities for providing the necessary funding and report back to members on progress. He encouraged members to visit SkillZONE themselves and offered to provide them with a guided tour. He hoped members would encourage people in their own communities to visit.

A member indicated support for the motion but she called on the Council to take action on the ground by making more space available for walking and cycling. She said that in itself would go a long way to improving road safety.

Another member stated that he was surprised that providing funds for year 5 children to visit SkillZONE had not been incorporated in the Council's base budget. He noted that children who visited the facility often educated their own families so there were wider benefits.

A member said that research indicated that one of the main reasons why 11 and 12 years olds starting secondary school were more likely to be injured in road accidents was that they had little or no experience of travelling to school when they were at primary school.

Cllr Mark Hawthorne, Leader of the Council, noted that the Cabinet Member had made an undertaking to look at the issue and to keep members informed. He stated that SkillZone was an excellent facility which was built by the Council when it was facing serious financial constraints. He confirmed that the Council remained committed to ensuring that as many children as possible visited the facility.

Two members raised particular concerns about the County Council's inability to address road safety issues around schools in their own divisions. They said that proposals had been put forward with the support of the local community but they had either not been implemented or were taking too long to be put in place.

On being put to the vote, the amended motion received unanimous support.

RESOLVED that

This Council notes:

- *That children newly-going to secondary school are expected to travel with much more independence than they were at primary school.*
- *That these children are particularly vulnerable to pedestrian related road traffic accidents.*
- *That Gloucestershire's SkillZONE centre is an interactive learning environment which, amongst a range of other life skills, teaches road-safety to school pupils.*

This Council further notes:

- *That for two financial years, up until 2016, Gloucestershire County Council covered the admission and transportation costs incurred by schools following a budget amendment proposed by the Liberal Democrats; enabling identified Key Stage Two and Three students to attend SkillZONE to learn road safety skills or to become safe journey ambassadors.*
- *That the lessons learned by pupils attending SkillZONE benefitted not just themselves but also their classmates and the wider school.*
- *That school finances are particularly stretched at this moment, leaving little money for non-essential activities.*
- *That after this scheme ended there was a near halving in the number of school children able to attend SkillZONE*

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This Council resolves to ask the Cabinet to explore opportunities to reintroduce the scheme to cover the admission and transportation costs for all identified schools wishing to send Key Stage 2 and 3 students to SkillZONE from September 2019.

44. MEMBER QUESTIONS

Thirty questions had been received. A copy of the answers was circulated and is attached to the signed copy of the minutes.

Question 1 – Cllr Klara Sudbury asked whether the Cabinet Member would support the suggestion for an increase in investment for road safety in the 2020/21 budget with a dedicated budget to use in divisions for traffic calming measures.

Cllr Dave Norman replied that he could not make that commitment today but that he would speak to Cabinet colleagues about how to take things forward.

Question 2 – Cllr Klara Sudbury asked what the specific barriers were that were preventing members getting traffic calming schemes up and running.

In response, Cllr Dave Norman replied that often there were delays due to needing to put Traffic Regulation Orders in place. He would be happy to discuss any particularly issues with the member outside of the meeting.

Question 3 – Cllr Klara Sudbury asked if the policy to support traffic calming could be reviewed to help empower members to make the changes needed.

Cllr Dave Norman stated he would be happy to discuss this with the member.

Question 4 – Cllr Klara Sudbury asked how the member would look to support investment for walking, cycling and public transport going forward.

Cllr Nigel Moor replied that there would be consultation on the strategy later in the year.

Question 5 – Cllr Klara Sudbury asked that the County Council issue a media release to clarify the situation regarding the Experimental Traffic Regulation order as part of the Cheltenham transport Plan Phase 4. She also asked that the website show the correct information.

Cllr Nigel Moor stated he had approved a press release which would be released.

Question 6 – Cllr Klara Sudbury asked for the representations that had been made with regards to Phase 4 be published immediately on the website.

Cllr Nigel Moor replied that a summary had been published on the website and that the detailed report would go to the Traffic Regulation Order Committee.

Question 7 – Cllr Klara Sudbury asked if the Cabinet Member would meet with herself and highways officers during rush hour to examine the displacement of traffic as a result of the work at Boots Corner.

Cllr Vernon Smith replied that he would be happy to do this.

Question 8 – Cllr Klara Sudbury referred to the design of the junction at St George's Place and asked if the Cabinet member would support her request to make this 'two-way' in order to make the route safer and more accessible.

Cllr Vernon Smith replied that best practice was being followed but that he would be happy to discuss this when they met and go into more detail.

Question 9 – Cllr Klara Sudbury asked if the Cabinet Member would consider making St James' Square a School Street?

Cllr Dave Norman replied that he had provided a response and that he was happy to have a wider discussion around road safety with the member outside of the Council Chamber.

Question 10 – Cllr Klara Sudbury asked if the Cabinet Member felt that the Gloucestershire Highways Inspection manual was fit for purpose given complaints around some potholes being left untouched. Would he agree to review and update the policy?

Cllr Vernon Smith replied that the only way to reduce pot holes was through major resurfacing and he referenced the £150m investment that was being made.

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Question 11 – Paul Hodgkinson asked if the Cabinet Member could give a timescale as to when a response would be able to be given about the intention of Pulhams to cut the bus service in Moreton and Northleach

Cllr Nigel Moor replied that Pulhams had not notified the Council of their intentions and that he would be happy to meet with the member and Town Council to explore options. He would ask officers to speak to Pulhams and seek an update.

Question 12 – Cllr Colin Hay asked how specifically the Cabinet Member would be dealing with those individual children with multiple social workers. How was the Council mitigating the issue for those children?

Cllr Richard Boyles said that manager and advanced practitioners worked closely to ensure the impact of change in social workers was as small as possible. Changes to Liquid Logic, the IT system being used, would help to make this easier to manage. More staff were being recruited and the focus was on reducing the number of agency workers.

Question 13 – Cllr Colin Hay asked how the Cabinet Member was planning to get more information about off-rolling in order to get a better understanding of the issue.

Cllr Patrick Molyneux stated that it was a national issue, but that Gloucestershire had a high number of exclusions. Home education could be an excellent way to educate young people, but there were safeguarding considerations as well. He was speaking to officers about how best to work with schools and understand the pressures. It was important to make sure the Council had the right mechanisms in place.

Question 14 – Cllr Colin Hay suggested that those pupils going off roll should have an exit interview to help identify trends. This information could help schools and the Regional Commissioner in their roles.

Cllr Patrick Molyneux replied that this was an interesting idea that he would take away.

Question 15 – Cllr Colin Hay stated that he felt more could be done in terms of following up and asking the Environment Agency to ensure that none of the County's plastic was being dumped or burnt in developing countries.

Minutes subject to their acceptance as a correct record at the next meeting

Cllr Nigel Moor replied that there was no evidence of that happening but he would look into it.

Question 16 – Cllr Dr John Cordwell asked whether there were any ongoing claims from car drivers for damage as a result of potholes.

Cllr Vernon Smith replied that he was not aware of any ongoing cases.

Question 17 – Cllr Dr John Cordwell asked if he could have the information for the previous year regarding claims from cyclists for damage as a result of potholes.

Cllr Vernon Smith replied that he would ask officers to provide a response.

Question 18 – Cllr Jeremy Hilton asked that when Horton Road was resurfaced that the work was properly costed and the foundations of the road strengthened to cope with the heavy lorries.

Cllr Vernon Smith replied that he was happy to ensure that highways followed national best practice.

Question 19 – Cllr Jeremy Hilton asked if the Cabinet Member felt that it was a good use of Highways Local to spend £3,000 to put up a sign to reduce speed limits on Sandhurst Lane.

Cllr Vernon Smith stated that he was keen for Highways Local to be used by members, but there was a criteria that would need to be followed. He would work with the members and officers to look at this together.

Question 21 – Cllr Iain Dobie stated that he felt that the County Council Highways Team should take the lead regarding the underpasses at Elmbridge Court Roundabout to resolve the inadequate lighting.

In response, Cllr Vernon Smith stated that this was the responsibility of Highways England and that it had been raised with them.

Question 22 – Cllr Iain Dobie asked that the cycle route between Cheltenham and Gloucester be continuous and separate from the other traffic on the road.

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Cllr Vernon Smith replied that there had been £1.6 million design investment in this area and he would look to move this work forward as part of the strategic plan.

Question 23 – Cllr Iain Dobie asked what width was considered safe for cycle routes?

Cllr Nigel Moor replied that in relation to the route between Cheltenham and Gloucester he would provide the member with more detail.

Question 24 – Cllr Iain Dobie asked regarding Leckhampton Primary School whether it would have new technology to heat the building, either ground or air source heating.

Cllr Patrick Molyneux would provide a response to the member in writing.

Question 25 – Cllr Eva Ward explained that a number of residents were concerned about the advent of 5G technology. She asked whether lampposts were going to hold transmitters and if trees would be chopped down.

Cllr Patrick Molyneux replied that there was no roll out at this stage and that the Council was considering its assets which included lampposts. This was with the Government at the moment. He understood the concern raised by some residents but stated that technology could enhance people's lives but needed to be done properly with consideration of health and safety.

Question 27 – Cllr Colin Hay stated that the Council had been told that there would be a post-implementation review within 6 months of the changes to countywide parking, 7 years previously. He asked when there would be a post implementation review on the schemes.

Cllr Dave Norman replied that he could not answer the question having not been on the Council at that time but that he would look into it.

Question 30 – Cllr Rachel Smith asked if the Cabinet Member could provide detail of what the greenhouse gas emissions per annum from the incinerator would be?

Cllr Nigel Moor stated that this would be published when the facility was up and running which would be shortly.

45. INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL

Cllr Mark Hawthorne, Leader of the Council, left the Council Chamber for the consideration of this item.

The Chairman invited Richard Blamey, Chair of the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP), to present the panel's recommendations for the 2019-20 financial year.

Mr Blamey advised that the IRP was independent of the Council and undertook a series of interviews with members each year. He explained that the IRP report had been presented to the Constitution Committee earlier in the year but it had not been brought forward to Council to allow the IRP to consider the outcome of the scrutiny review. The scrutiny chairs and vice-chairs would be interviewed during the Autumn to better understand how the new scrutiny arrangements were working and to consider whether any changes to special responsibility allowances were necessary. The panel had been concerned for some time that the Special Responsibility Allowance for the Leader of the Council was far too low in comparison with other county councils. A recommendation was therefore made that it should be increased to £33,500.

Members indicated support for the recommendations and thanked Mr Blamey and his fellow IRP members for the work they had undertaken. They recognised that it was important to evaluate the role and not the person when assessing allowances. They noted that it was important that allowances were set at a level which did not discourage people from putting themselves forward. It was evident that some people, who chose to become a councillor, were left significantly out of pocket. A suggestion was made that the annual increase in allowances be linked directly to the pay award for staff to prevent the necessity for councillors to approve increases each year.

On being put to a recorded vote, it was

RESOLVED

- a) To increase the Basic Allowance to £10,300, in line with the national staff pay award of 2%, for the 2019-20 financial year.*
- b) To increase the Special Responsibility Allowance for the Leader of the Council to £33,500.*
- c) To increase all other Special Responsibility Allowances in line with the national staff pay award of 2%.*

Minutes subject to their acceptance as a correct record at the next meeting

d) To note the revised Members' Allowances Scheme for 2019-20 at Appendix B to the report.

The voting was as follows:

For (42) – Carole Allaway Martin, Phil Awford, Matt Babbage, Rob Bird, Richard Boyles, John Cordwell, Kevin Cromwell, Iain Dobie, Ben Evans, Bernard Fisher, Andrew Gravells, Kate Haigh, Terry Hale, Tim Harman, Colin Hay, Jeremy Hilton, Stephen Hirst, Andrew Miller, Patrick Molyneux, Graham Morgan, Dave Norman, Brian Oosthuysen, Shaun Parsons, Sajid Patel, Loraine Patrick, John Payne, Keith Rippington, Brian Robinson, Steve Robinson, Rachel Smith, Vernon Smith, Lynden Stowe, Klara Sudbury, Brian Tipper, Robert Vines, Eva Ward, Simon Wheeler, Kathy Williams, Lesley Williams, Suzanne Williams, Roger Wilson and Will Windsor-Clive

Against (2) – Cllrs Nigel Moore and Pam Tracey

Abstentions (5) – Cllrs Chris Coleman, Joe Harris, Paul Hodgkinson, Alan Preest and Ray Theodoulou

46. AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE

In the absence of Cllr Nigel Robbins, Chair of the Audit and Governance Committee, Cllr Brian Oosthuysen, vice-chair of the committee, presented the annual report summarising activities of the committee.

In answer to a question relating to the Grant Thornton value-for-money report, Cllr Oosthuysen advised that it was not yet available although he understood that work was ongoing.

RESOLVED to note the report.

47. CABINET MEMBER DECISION STATEMENTS

Consideration was given to the Cabinet Member Decision Statements for the period 1 March to 31 May 2019.

Cllr Iain Dobie, the member for Leckhampton and Warden Hill, expressed concern regarding the decision of the Cabinet Member for Economy, Skills and Growth to delay a decision on the expansion of Warden Hill Primary School until March 2020.

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He noted that the buildings at the school were in a desperately poor condition and he asked the Cabinet Member to visit the school with him.

Cllr Patrick Molyneux, Cabinet Member for Economy, Skills and Growth, regretted that it was necessary to delay the decision but the Council was governed by strict rules on how it spent money on repairs and refurbishment of schools. He said that he would be prepared to visit the school with Cllr Dobie.

RESOLVED to note the report.

48. SCRUTINY

Consideration was given to a report on the activities of the scrutiny committees since the Annual Meeting of the Council.

Cllr Shaun Parsons, Chair of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee, stated that the first round of meetings under the new scrutiny structure had been held and the feedback from members was generally positive. He noted that a number of scrutiny task groups were underway covering a range of areas including youth strategy, single-use plastics, public participation and taxi licensing.

He presented a recommendation from the meeting held on 12 June 2019 that there should be six ordinary meetings of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee each municipal year (in line with the other scrutiny committees). He noted that this would be considered as part of the next agenda item (item 14) which related to changes to the Constitution.

RESOLVED to note the report.

49. CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE

Cllr Mark Hawthorne, Chair of the Constitution Committee, presented the recommendations from the meeting held on 29 May 2019. These related to the employee code of conduct, Monitoring Officer changes to the Constitution and a tidying up exercise to reflect the new scrutiny arrangements.

A member referred to the election of scrutiny chairs and content of the new National Scrutiny Guidance around their appointment by secret ballot.

Cllr Hawthorne stated that the appointment of scrutiny chairs had been considered in some detail during the review and a position had been reached.

Cllr Kate Haigh moved an amendment to the Constitution for six meetings of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee to be held each year and removing references to a minimum of four ordinary meetings each year. She noted that this would bring the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee in line with the meeting schedule for the other scrutiny committees. She said that the committee fulfilled a critical role in helping to develop policies, considering cross-cutting issues and following the council taxpayers' pound in Gloucestershire.

The amendment was seconded by Cllr Joe Harris.

Cllr Hawthorne did not support the amendment as he felt that it was wrong to make changes to the Constitution without giving proper notice. He said that one of the main findings of the scrutiny review was that the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee should not duplicate the activities of the other scrutiny committees. It was expected that it would have less business and hold fewer meetings. He believed that the matter should be referred back to the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Cllr Shaun Parsons, Chair of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee, advised that the Constitution stated that there should be a minimum of four meetings each year. He believed that it is important that individual committees were empowered to look at issues themselves and there was not duplication. He noted that the committee was in the process of developing a work plan and this would provide an opportunity to consider the number of meetings required.

Cllr Haigh advised that the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee had already held a discussion regarding this issue and made a recommendation that the number of ordinary meetings should be increased to six each year. She said that she could not see any reason why it needed to be referred back to the committee for discussion again.

A member stated that it was a simple change which had already been supported by the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

On being put to the vote, the amendment was lost.

RESOLVED

- a) *To ratify the changes to the Constitution made by the Monitoring Officer relating to the Employee Code of Conduct (please refer to Appendix 1 of the report).*

Minutes subject to their acceptance as a correct record at the next meeting

- b) To ratify the changes to the Constitution made by the Monitoring Officer relating to Cabinet Member responsibilities and friendly amendments (please refer to Appendices 2 and 3 of the report).*
- c) To ratify the changes to the Constitution in respect of the scrutiny review (please refer to Appendix 4 of the report).*

The meeting ended at 2.40pm

CHAIRMAN