



MINUTES OF COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING

DATE: Wednesday 25 November 2020 TIME: 10.00 am

VENUE: Council Chamber - Shire Hall, Gloucester

Present

Membership:

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

Apologies: Cllr Keith Rippington, Cllr Rachel Smith and Cllr Eva Ward
Honorary Aldermen Bill Crowther and Gordon Shurmer

12. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 September 2020 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

13. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No additional declarations were made.

14. ABSENCE OF MEMBERS

Section 85(1) of the Local Government Act 1972 requires a member of a local authority to attend at least one meeting of that authority within a six month consecutive period, in order to avoid being disqualified as a councillor. This

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

requirement can be waived if any failure to attend was due to a reason approved by the authority, in advance of the six month period expiring.

Unfortunately, due to illness, Cllr Keith Rippington, who represents the Bisley and Painswick Division, and Cllr Eva Ward, who represents the Stroud Central Division, would be unable to attend meetings for the foreseeable future.

Cllr Rachel Smith, who represents the Minchinhampton Division, was currently on parental leave, and therefore unable to attend meetings.

The Chairman requested that Council suspend the six month rule for the three councillors until further notice, which was seconded.

RESOLVED that Section 85(1) of the Local Government Act 1972, that requires a member to attend at least one meeting within six months, be suspended for Cllrs Keith Rippington, Eva Ward and Rachel Smith.

15. ANNOUNCEMENTS

a) Virtual meeting protocol

Simon Harper, Head of Democratic Services, explained the virtual meeting protocol for the meeting to members, and provided guidance on how to use the WebEx remote meeting software.

b) Honours

The Chairman congratulated all those in Gloucestershire who had received awards as part of the Queen's Birthday Honours. Special mention was made of Cllr Andrew Gravells, who represents the Abbey Division, on receiving an MBE for his services to the local community.

c) Building Excellence Awards

The Council had been named winner of the Best Large Commercial Project in the Local Authority Building Control Building Excellence Awards 2020 for the West of England region for its transformation of Shire Hall into an energy-efficient building, fit for the needs of the 21st Century. The Chairman congratulated and thanked officers working in Asset Management and Property Services (AMPS).

d) Thank you to GCC staff

The Chairman recognised the hard work of staff across the Council, including in Adult Social Care, Children's Services, and Public Health during the second wave of Covid-19, and thanked them for their response to the pandemic.

e) Margaret Willcox, Executive Director of Adult Social Care

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The Chairman thanked Margaret Willcox, Executive Director of Adult Social Care, who would be retiring, for all her efforts on behalf of the Council. Margaret's leadership of Adult Social Care had transformed the Council's approach to Adult Social Care to a strength based approach, and her prestigious position as President of the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS) was recognised.

Cllr Kathy Williams, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care Delivery, praised Margaret's diligent work ethic, expertise, and care of her staff.

Cllr Carole Allaway Martin, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care Commissioning, commended Margaret's visionary thinking, as well as her ability to enable staff to work together cohesively, and to pull together partners together to work with one voice.

f) Minerals Local Plan

The Chairman informed members that the Minerals Local Plan for Gloucestershire had been awarded the 'Commendation' prize in the Excellence in Plan Making Practice category at the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) South West Awards 2020, and thanked officers working in the Environment Planning Team for their hard work.

Cllr Nigel Moor, Cabinet Member for Environment and Planning, praised the achievement of the Environment Planning Team.

16. CORPORATE PARENTING

Cllr Richard Boyles, Cabinet Member for Children's Safeguarding and Early Years, presented the Corporate Parenting report.

Cllr Boyles drew members' attention to the importance of the 'One-Page Profiles' in helping young people in care to access work and career opportunities. He reflected that members, as corporate parents, should help children in care as they would if they were their own.

One member asked for an update on the establishment of a Youth Council, following a motion to Council. In response, it was understood that young ambassadors played a vital role by attending Corporate Parenting meetings, mentoring officers, and working with the care leavers' group. Partners were also working together on the child friendly Gloucestershire project, which worked to promote the voices of young people.

Several members raised questions regarding the most recent letter from Ofsted on its visit to Gloucestershire children's services in October 2020, and expressed their concerns about its findings. One member commented that debate on the Ofsted letter should take place at Council as all members were responsible for the care of children in Gloucestershire.

In response, Cllr Boyles reminded members of the journey that the Council had been on so far, and of the Council's ambition to continue improving. Members were advised that there would be an appropriate opportunity for members to debate and raise any queries on this topic at Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

One member sought clarity on the process for helping young people to engage in the process of their care, and in supporting them to use technology, where processes have moved online as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. In response, Cllr Boyles explained that the visit rate for Gloucestershire during the pandemic had been the highest in the South West, and that they had been working with the courts on ensuring access to the virtual courts.

17. PETITIONS

Cllr Phil Awford presented Cllr Vernon Smith, Cabinet Member for Highways and Flood, with a petition relating to the concerns of the local community regarding the frequent closure of the A417 at Maisemore due to flooding.

Cllr Mark Hawthorne also presented Cllr Dave Norman, Cabinet Member for Public Protection, Parking and Libraries, with a petition relating to speeding along Elmore Lane, Quedgeley.

18. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

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

Q1 – Steve Gower asked whether it concerned the Council that the City Council Housing Officers who had signposted vulnerable homeless individuals into hotels over the Covid-19 lockdown period didn't know how many had self harmed and attempted suicide when placed there. He asked who was ultimately responsible for safeguarding and the welfare of individuals?

Cllr Kathy Williams replied that a written response would be provided.

Q2 – Paul Ockelton asked if the Cabinet Member could advise how much of library provision from Section 106 money had been spent in Tewkesbury Borough and requested more detail.

Cllr Dave Norman explained that the amount of money had been put in the answer to the original question but could provide any additional information that he requested.

Q3 – Paul Ockelton asked how much of the Section 106 money spent on staff had been spent in Tewkesbury Borough.

Cllr Dave Norman replied he would send a written breakdown.

Q4 – Beccy MacDonald-Lofts asked if the councillor could confirm that this would be looked at as a matter of urgency and she asked when the families could expect to receive an update. She emphasised that six families had moved their children out of school and into a Gloucestershire setting due to these issues.

Cllr Richard Boyles invited the questioner to send the supplementary question in full and he confirmed it was a matter of urgency. The team were looking at other budget opportunities and this was an ongoing matter. The Council would update families when they were in a position to.

Q8 – Declan Wilson asked what measures the Fire and Rescue Service were taking to ensure and encourage more applications from BAME communities in the future.

Cllr Dave Norman replied that the service needed to go out and engage with these communities, and he felt that this could come from existing serving officers from those communities. He would do all he could with the Chief Fire Officer to do more to increase and ensure representation of all Gloucestershire communities.

19. MOTIONS

Motion 867 - Highways trees maintenance

Cllr Jeremy Hilton proposed and Cllr Bernie Fisher seconded the motion included on the agenda.

Cllr Hilton informed the meeting of the benefits that trees brought to the environment, including a positive impact on climate change. He stated that there were 13,000 high priority trees in the county, but that there were insufficient resources to be able to safely maintain them all; officers were overworked. He also questioned the process by which the agency agreement worked. He stated that it was time to fix an overstretched system. Tree stumps should be ground out and trees replaced in a much shorter period of time than at present.

Some members indicated their support for this motion. They agreed that trees were an important part of climate change, and that there were insufficient resources to support this area of work. They also shared their experience of trying to get support from Gloucestershire Highways for tree maintenance in their division(s).

Other members stated that this motion was trying to amend next year's budget without a budget amendment, and did not explain where the money would come from to fund this proposal. It was stated that the council had already agreed to invest in the planting of 35million trees and that the council was working on this project with the Gloucestershire Local Nature Partnership. The council had also been invited by the Woodland Trust to submit a bid to its emergency tree planting fund; a bid has been submitted. Information on this would be included in a report to be received by Cabinet on 16 December 2020.

Cllr Bernie Fisher, seconder of the motion, emphasised that this was about trees, and that if the council kept to its tree planting target it would need the resources to maintain them. This was a skilled job, not one that just anyone could do.

In summing up, Cllr Hilton emphasised that this was about maintaining trees on the highway not about planting trees; all that was being asked was that this be looked at in time for the budget proposals.

On being put to the vote the motion was lost.

Motion 868 - 'Planning for the Future' White Paper

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

Cllr Nigel Robbins proposed and Cllr Ben Evans seconded the motion included on the agenda.

Cllr Robbins stated that the White Paper was an embarrassment. Opposition to it was widespread across councils and planning associations. He stated that the advisor to the White Paper was not part of any professional planning association. The White Paper needed a rethink. He acknowledged that it did take time to get housing built, but the solution lies in the hands of developers who were holding onto land. In his view getting consent was not the issue, there were various factors involved. In his view the White Paper offered developers a blank cheque and took away the democratic right to challenge planning applications.

Cllr Evans stated that, in his view, it was inconceivable that councillors would not support this motion. He was of the view that Section 106 (Town and Country Planning Act 1990) and the CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy (Planning Act 2008)) were opaque. We were in the middle of a climate emergency and this paper did not address how we build houses sustainably and quickly. It did not improve the process but instead lowered the barriers.

Some members indicated that they thought that this was a sensible motion, noting that many councillors present had spoken against planning applications in their division(s), this right would go away. It was suggested that what was needed was a completion date for the planning permission. There was a shared concern from some members as to the loss of the democratic right to challenge planning applications.

An amendment to the motion was to be proposed by Cllr Nigel Moor, and seconded by Cllr Mark Hawthorne. However, Cllr Robbins stated that this was a wrecking amendment and questioned whether it was constitutional. The Monitoring Officer informed the meeting that having considered the amendment and that as it asked for a summary of the debate to be included that he was happy for this amendment to proceed. The amendment was therefore tabled: -

This Council notes that:

- *The Government consultation on the 'Planning for the Future' White Paper has recently closed.*
- *The proposals would radically alter the existing planning system for all seven of Gloucestershire's councils.*
- *The changes have been opposed by the all-party Local Government Association, currently led by Conservative Councillors, along with many other interest groups.*
- ***This council further notes that there are more than 16,000 people on housing lists in Gloucestershire, and that there is a serious and long-term need to deliver more housing across our country.***
- ***This council welcomes the government's intention to address this, and the opportunity to comment on the proposals.***

*This Council resolves to ask the Chief Executive and County Council leader to write to the county's six MPs **welcoming the commitment to build more homes across the country to deal with the housing crisis, and noting the areas where the White Paper might be improved following consultation.** ~~to raise strong opposition to the proposed changes in the White Paper, and to request a delay in the publication of the proposals until further consultation has been held with the public, Local Authorities and planning professionals.~~*

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~~The letter must include, but not be limited to, the following objections: a summary of this debate, noting the points made by councillors.~~

~~• The presumption in favour of outline planning approval within 'growth' and 'renewal' areas removes democratic oversight and public scrutiny.~~

~~• The new method for establishing housing requirement figures would mean some districts will be overwhelmed by the new housing.~~

~~• Changes to the affordable housing quotas would significantly diminish the amount of social rent and affordable housing built in Gloucestershire.~~

~~The time-scale of thirty months for producing a Local Plan is unrealistic.~~

Cllr Moor stated that the motion did not address the important issues in the White Paper; it said nothing about the need for positive change. He informed the meeting that the Administration did have concerns with regard to the White Paper and had submitted a 25 page response to the consultation.

Cllr Hawthorne stated that this was not a sensible motion. The consultation on the White Paper had closed; the Liberal Democrat group had had plenty of time to submit a motion on this matter to the September meeting of council. The White Paper was there to elicit debate, and many people would have made a substantial input to the consultation. He acknowledged that the White Paper had many flaws, but it did try and address the question of houses for the next generation. It was important to take action now to support the housing crisis.

It was stated that the motion appeared to be divided along party lines and that there were major issues with the White Paper. Some members felt it disappointing that members had not been able to come up with something that they could all agree on; people needed decent homes that they could afford. Other members felt that the original motion had been in need of amending and the amendment had helped. It was commented that this White Paper fell more in the domain of the district councils; they would have submitted a response to the consultation. There was a concern that this would contribute to land banking by developers.

Cllr Moor stated that the original motion took us nowhere. The White Paper with amendments could make a positive difference to the housing crisis, and questioned what was wrong with supporting this amendment to write to the Gloucestershire MPs noting the need for more homes to be built and to note the areas where the White Paper could be improved post consultation. If members did not support this it would be noted that they were not signing up to tackling the housing crisis.

Cllr Robbins stated that the motion was not expected to be a response to the consultation; it was about putting political pressure on Gloucestershire's MPs to think of Gloucestershire and their constituents when debating this matter. It was important to protect democracy. He urged members not to support this wrecking amendment.

On being put to the vote the amendment was carried and became the substantive motion: -

This Council notes that:

- *The Government consultation on the 'Planning for the Future' White Paper has recently closed.*
- *The proposals would radically alter the existing planning system for all seven of Gloucestershire's councils.*

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

- *The changes have been opposed by the all-party Local Government Association, currently led by Conservative Councillors, along with many other interest groups.*
- *This council further notes that there are more than 16,000 people on housing lists in Gloucestershire, and that there is a serious and long-term need to deliver more housing across our country.*
- *This council welcomes the government's intention to address this, and the opportunity to comment on the proposals.*

This Council resolves to ask the Chief Executive and County Council leader to write to the county's six MPs welcoming the commitment to build more homes across the country to deal with the housing crisis, and noting the areas where the White Paper might be improved following consultation.

The letter must include, but not be limited to a summary of this debate, noting the points made by councillors.

It was commented that it must be difficult for the Conservative Group to have to defend this White Paper but that this did not mean that this was a reason to push through this motion in its bowdlerised form. The Administration should be looking at freeing up county council land for affordable and social housing. Taking communities out of the consultation process for planning applications was not the way to proceed. It was felt that there had been cross party condemnation of the White Paper and that watering down the motion was not the way to proceed. We all needed to meet the challenge of the housing crisis.

Cllr Hawthorne reiterated that the White Paper has been subject to a huge amount of debate in local government circles, including the LGA, and MPs, and concerns were raised. He hoped that as, through this process, people had spoken with one voice, that the government would listen. Having gone through this process it was not a good idea to ask for it to start again. The amendment had also highlighted the need to tackle the housing crisis. He also stated that the county council was doing a lot to support housing through the investment in improvements to the wider infrastructure.

It was commented that some members were already discussing housing issues with their local MP and applying political pressure, so it was incorrect to infer that members were not already doing this.

Cllr Moor reiterated that if members did not support this motion (as amended) they were indicating their lack of support for tackling the housing crisis.

Cllr Robbins stated that the original motion had not been about a late attempt to engage with the consultation process.

On being put to the vote motion 868 was carried.

RESOLVED that

This Council notes that:

- The Government consultation on the 'Planning for the Future' White Paper has recently closed.
- The proposals would radically alter the existing planning system for all seven of Gloucestershire's councils.
- The changes have been opposed by the all-party Local Government Association, currently led by Conservative Councillors, along with many other interest groups.

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

- This council further notes that there are more than 16,000 people on housing lists in Gloucestershire, and that there is a serious and long-term need to deliver more housing across our country.
- This council welcomes the government's intention to address this, and the opportunity to comment on the proposals.

This Council resolves to ask the Chief Executive and County Council leader to write to the county's six MPs welcoming the commitment to build more homes across the country to deal with the housing crisis, and noting the areas where the White Paper might be improved following consultation.

The letter must include, but not be limited to a summary of this debate, noting the points made by councillors.

Motion 869 – Child food poverty

Cllr Paul Hodgkinson proposed and Cllr Colin Hay seconded the motion included on the agenda.

Cllr Hodgkinson stated that no child should go hungry in the UK in 2020; this was obvious and should not be a debate. Although given that it had been necessary to bring a motion to this council it could be suggested that some in the Conservative party, and maybe even some in this virtual council chamber, considered this a matter of opinion. He was of the view that the Conservative Government does not really believe in getting rid of child food poverty. Cllr Hodgkinson referred to the recent Parliamentary debate on Free School Meals (FSM) which ended with the MPs voting against the bill which would have brought England into line with Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland in that FSM be extended to school holidays. He thought it shameful that MPs had been whipped to vote against this bill.

He stated that it was only after being hauled over the coals of the court of public opinion that the Government, earlier this month, committed yet another U-turn and took tentative steps to address child food poverty. He acknowledged that the Government has, despite believing the state has no role to play, pledged to support those on Free School Meals during holidays until Christmas next year; and has increased the value of Healthy Start vouchers to £4.25

However, while these were critical steps which were welcome, the Government has not expanded free school meals to every child from a household on Universal Credit or equivalent; and has not committed to permanently expand holiday food and activities to all children on free school meals. He reminded the council that these were some of the recommendations from a taskforce that this Government had set up.

He stated that these particular recommendations had been brought to even sharper prominence by the vigorous campaign from Marcus Rashford; and have been further supported by a taskforce set up by Marcus Rashford which includes Fareshare, the Food Foundation, Kelloggs and all the major supermarkets.

Cllr Hodgkinson asked council what were they going to do about this and discussed the points made in the motion. He stated that the eyes of history were upon us; people would judge those who stood by and allowed children to go to bed hungry in 2020. He concluded by stating that we could do the right thing, we could do what we can, and we could vote for this motion.

Cllr Richard Boyles welcomed the motion and the opportunity that it gave for him to describe exactly what the Conservative administration had already done and the plans in

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

place. He stated that they had taken great strides to protect the vulnerable and rebuild children's services to make sure that we could identify and support those in need and take proactive steps to support.

He reminded the meeting that the Administration had supported the financing of individual councillors to tackle holiday hunger and provide food parcels to families in previous years. They had continued, through existing services to provide hot meals and food parcels to children, and had partnered with a local chain restaurant to provide meals for qualifying families and also provided breakfast provision.

He stated that during the pandemic the Government had stepped in to finance county councils and schools so that they could support those most vulnerable. The Conservative Administration has used its emergency assistance fund to support families over the recent half term – 5276 children were identified and supported. Plans were already in place to support these identified children through to the February 2021 half term.

He informed the meeting that the Government had provided £170m nationally of which Gloucestershire received £1.54m. This would pay for the Covid-19 winter grant to support families over Christmas; an extension to the holiday activities and food programme to cover Easter, Summer and Christmas 2021. There would also be an increase of the healthy start payments to £4.25.

Cllr Boyles proposed an amendment to the motion, seconded by Cllr Patrick Molyneux: -

This Council:

- *Believes that it is shameful that children still go hungry in the UK.*
- *Commends the initiative of Manchester United footballer Marcus Rashford who has successfully campaigned on school holiday hunger and has recently formed a taskforce with some of the UK's leading food retailers and charities to help reduce child food poverty.*
- *Notes that this taskforce has called upon the government to fund three policy recommendations from the National Food Strategy to end child food poverty for good:*
 - *The expansion of free school meals to every child from a household on Universal Credit or equivalent, reaching an additional 1.5m children aged seven to 16*
 - *The expansion of holiday food and activities to support all children on free school meals, reaching an additional 1.1m children*
 - *Increasing the value of the Healthy Start vouchers from £3.10 to £4.25 per week and expanding it to all those on Universal Credit or equivalent, reaching an additional 290,000 children under the age of four and pregnant women*
- *Further notes that the government has provided the council with £1.54m to support vulnerable families in our county, including those on free school meals.*
- *Note no previous government, of any party, has previously funded free school meals during school holidays in this manner.*

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

- ***Calls on all councillors to make sure people who need help in their areas know it is available, and avoid the risk of causing confusion with inaccurate, or misleading political messages.***

~~This Council concurs with the conclusion of the taskforce in calling upon the Government to immediately fund these recommendations, and resolves to ask the Chief Executive to write to:~~

- ~~• Mr Marcus Rashford commending him for his initiative and offering this Council's support for his work.~~
- ~~• The Chancellor of the Exchequer calling upon him to fund these three recommendations, as a matter of great urgency.~~
- ~~• Our six local MPs, chastising them for their recent votes/abstentions, and asking them to make urgent representations to the Chancellor on this issue.~~

Cllr Hodgkinson stated that he did not think that this change was constitutional and requested the Monitoring Officer to clarify the position. The Monitoring Officer indicated that he was happy that this amendment was within the rules of the council's constitution.

Cllr Molyneux stated that he felt that we could all agree with the way that Marcus Rashford had shone a light on this issue. However, targeting those most in need was the way to manage this situation.

Some members commented that the amendment airbrushed the original motion, and did contravene the constitution. Children going hungry was an adverse childhood experience (ACE) and that this council had committed to reduce ACEs. This motion was not just about Covid-19 but also the wider issues; extending this to people on universal credit was important. Problems with poverty ran deep in this county. It was disappointing that the Government could find £29m for a Brexit festival but could not find £20m for food poverty.

Cllr Hodgkinson shared his disappointment with the amendment and its dismissal of the motion's recommendations, and the fact that the Gloucestershire MPs either abstained or voted against the bill in the Parliamentary debate. He was of the view that the Monitoring Officer's advice was incorrect.

Cllr Boyles reiterated that the council was working hard to develop schemes to support vulnerable young people and their families, and that members should be proud of what is being done in Gloucestershire.

On being put to the vote the amendment was carried and became the substantive motion: -

This Council:

- *Believes that it is shameful that children still go hungry in the UK.*
- *Commends the initiative of Manchester United footballer Marcus Rashford who has successfully campaigned on school holiday hunger and has recently formed a taskforce with some of the UK's leading food retailers and charities to help reduce child food poverty.*
- *Notes that this taskforce has called upon the government to fund three policy recommendations from the National Food Strategy to end child food poverty for good:*

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

- *The expansion of free school meals to every child from a household on Universal Credit or equivalent, reaching an additional 1.5m children aged seven to 16*
- *The expansion of holiday food and activities to support all children on free school meals, reaching an additional 1.1m children*
- *Increasing the value of the Healthy Start vouchers from £3.10 to £4.25 per week and expanding it to all those on Universal Credit or equivalent, reaching an additional 290,000 children under the age of four and pregnant women*
- *Further notes that the government has provided the council with £1.54m to support vulnerable families in our county, including those on free school meals.*
- *Note no previous government, of any party, has previously funded free school meals during school holidays in this manner.*
- *Calls on all councillors to make sure people who need help in their areas know it is available, and avoid the risk of causing confusion with inaccurate, or misleading political messages.*

Cllr Hay stated that this had been an unfortunate debate; we could have been working together. He asked that Cllr Boyles extend an invitation to the other groups so that we could work together on this issue. We needed to sort out hunger in the longer term as this was an Adverse Childhood Experience. It did not matter where the ideas come from, the important factor was that children came first.

Cllr Hodgkinson thanked those members who had spoken in favour of the original motion. He did however think that there was an element of denial in place, and was angry about the way in which the recommendations had been removed. He indicated that he would not be supporting the amended motion as it had destroyed what was originally proposed.

On being put to the vote the substantive motion was carried.

RESOLVED that

This Council:

- *Believes that it is shameful that children still go hungry in the UK.*
- *Commends the initiative of Manchester United footballer Marcus Rashford who has successfully campaigned on school holiday hunger and has recently formed a taskforce with some of the UK's leading food retailers and charities to help reduce child food poverty.*
- *Notes that this taskforce has called upon the government to fund three policy recommendations from the National Food Strategy to end child food poverty for good:*
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Minutes subject to their acceptance as a correct record at the next meeting

- *The expansion of holiday food and activities to support all children on free school meals, reaching an additional 1.1m children*
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- ***Further notes that the government has provided the council with £1.54m to support vulnerable families in our county, including those on free school meals.***
- ***Note no previous government, of any party, has previously funded free school meals during school holidays in this manner.***
- ***Calls on all councillors to make sure people who need help in their areas know it is available, and avoid the risk of causing confusion with inaccurate, or misleading political messages.***

20. MEMBER QUESTIONS

Forty five member questions had been received (including an Urgent Question). The following supplementary questions were asked:

Q1 – Cllr Bernie Fisher asked the member to read the email exchange he had sent him on the issue and asked for a reply.

Cllr Vernon Smith replied that he would.

Q3 – Cllr Paul Hodgkinson asked how many of the 35 million trees had been planted since 14 October 2020. He suggested that the Council were behind schedule.

Cllr Nigel Moor replied that this was about planting trees and their long-term maintenance. It was important to have the right processes in place and that this was a decade long commitment.

Q4 – Cllr Paul Hodgkinson referred to a press release on 5 October 2020 and questioned the progress that had been made in planting 1 million trees. He asked whether the strategy was really focussed on planting 35 million trees given the lack of progress.

Cllr Nigel Moor replied that the Tree Strategy set out the vision and this involved a whole range of partners. A report would be coming to Cabinet in December setting out how this would be started in the spring.

Q5 – Cllr Paul Hodgkinson asked for figures for the number of tree planted as had been requested in his initial questions. He suggested that trees had been removed but not planted and that the Council was behind on their plans.

Cllr Nigel Moor again referred to the Tree Strategy, which would be published in December.

Q7 – Cllr Jeremy Hilton stated that he had forwarded the email complaint relating to London Road to officers and the Cabinet Member, and he asked that an acceptable solution be found. He asked if, in the meantime, whether the council could take action to stop takeaway delivery drivers parking on the footways in that area.

Cllr Nigel Moor explained that the Council was working with the individuals to provide loading facilities close by. He welcomed the feedback from the member.

Q11 – Cllr Jeremy Hilton referred to flooding in parts of his division and asked for a written report from the multiagency meeting that would be taking place.

Cllr Vernon Smith replied that he would update the member following the meeting.

Q14 – Cllr Jeremy Hilton explained that a public consultation exercise for the Kingsholm parking review had still not been carried out. He asked that this be scheduled in as soon as possible as people wanted to express their views.

Cllr Dave Norman replied that there were two other areas of the County also awaiting surveys and that these would be carried out as soon as it was safe to do so.

Q15 – Cllr Jeremy Hilton asked that, if there were plans to make changes to the roundabout off Escourt Road, that he be invited to a site visit when held. He asked whether changes were planned in the near future.

Cllr Nigel Moor replied that there would be no imminent changes and that the Council was learning from the trial and considering a range of options. Any proposals in the new year would be shared with the member.

Q16– Cllr Jeremy Hilton asked that no Covid-19 NHS patients be transferred into care homes. He suggested that instructions from Government were to prepare for such transfer and he urged the Cabinet Member to resist this.

Cllr Kathy Williams replied that no one would be transferred into a care home who had tested positive for Covid-19.

Q17 – Cllr Jeremy Hilton stated that based on FOI requests he understood that from 19 March and 15 April there had been 113 discharges into care homes, and that 42 of those individuals had tested positive for Covid-19. He felt that the County Council had failed to act then to stop the transfers and looked for assurances that this would not happen in the future.

Cllr Kathy Williams replied that the member was aware that this was a complex situation but that the Council would never knowingly transfer people with Covid-19 into a care home.

Q23 – Cllr Paul Hodgkinson expressed concern regarding Fosse Cross HRC closing for another 6 weeks for essential work. He asked why the essential work had not been carried out while the site had been closed during the pandemic?

Cllr Nigel Moor replied that when the Country went into lockdown there had been disruption and it had been challenging to find a partner to do the work at that time. He reassured the member that the work would not be started until there was confidence it could be done safely and with minimal disruption.

Q25 – Cllr Iain Dobie asked, since the answer to his question outlined that no schemes to enhance cycling would be abandoned despite receiving only a small percentage of the tranche 2 money, where would the money be found to deliver everything ?

Cllr Nigel Moor replied that the Government had committed to major investment in cycling. He felt there would be opportunities over the next year and the best way to bid for funding was to develop the schemes.

Q26 – Cllr Iain Dobie asked where they would find the missing money to complete the Cheltenham to Gloucester cycle link

Cllr Nigel Moor replied there was financing from Highways England for the design work and there were other ideas being explored as to where finance could be obtained. Officers were working hard on this scheme.

Q30 – Cllr Iain Dobie asked if the Leader would agree that the failure to review the disintegration of health scrutiny and adult social care scrutiny showed how scrutiny was failing in Shire Hall.

Cllr Mark Hawthorne replied that he did not agree with this and stated that Democratic Services had been busy setting up virtual meetings during the lockdown period and it was understandable that a review had not been undertaken. He stated that there was nothing to stop scrutiny undertaking this review itself.

Q31 – Cllr Iain Dobie asked whether the Leader agreed that district members who sat on committees would be disappointed to not have their views heard in relation to a review of scrutiny.

Cllr Mark Hawthorne replied that it would be a matter for scrutiny as to how they wished to conduct a review.

Q37 – Cllr Bernie Fisher referred to the West Yorkshire combined authority's strategy and targets related to carbon reduction and encouraging active travel and public transport usage. He detailed the progress they planned to make by 2030, including reducing private car travel by 21% and increasing bus usage by 39% and rail travel by 53%. Looking at those plans, he asked whether Gloucestershire's limited proposals should be taken seriously.

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

Cllr Nigel Moor replied that Gloucestershire was a rural county with ambitious figures. Carbon emissions across the estate had been reduced by 97%.

Q38 – Cllr Bernie Fisher asked whether the member agreed that ‘if you start slowly you fail fast’. He felt that progress in Gloucestershire’s plans for carbon reduction had been slow.

Cllr Nigel Moor replied that he had given his answer to the previous question on the ambitious targets and the progress being made.

Q40 – Cllr Colin Hay explained that he had wanted the answer to his question to detail children starting school, but that it was good to hear the work being carried out in Early Years. He asked when it would be rolled out throughout the County because it was such an important stage for the child.

Cllr Patrick Molyneux replied that he agreed that this was an important stage of a child’s life and that across the County there needed to be identification of those families that needed that extra help and support.

Q42 – Cllr Colin Hay stated that his question included an assessment from a head teacher on children not being ‘school ready’ and he wondered how many schools were in the same position.

Cllr Patrick Molyneux replied that he agreed it was an important issue. He did not recognise the 6% figure that had been give in the question as he had records of only two schools being under 25% of pupils achieving a good level of development as measured by the Early Years Foundation Stage profile. He would send further details to the member.

20.1 Scrutiny

Cllr Shaun Parsons, Chair of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee, introduced the report which detailed scrutiny activity throughout September and October 2020.

It was understood that the report on rainbow crossings had now been sent to the Leader of the Council for his consideration. It was also noted that two scrutiny task group reports for single-use plastics and public participation, were due to be presented to the Cabinet on 16 December, and the report on taxi licensing would go to Cabinet in January.

Additionally, the scrutiny annual report would be presented to Corporate Scrutiny on Friday 27 November. This report provided a summary of activities since the scrutiny review in 2018 and would give members an opportunity to express their views on the shape of scrutiny moving forward.

21. CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE

Cllr Mark Hawthorne, Chair of the Constitution Committee, presented the report from the meeting held on 12 October 2020.

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

It was noted that a complete review of the Constitution had been carried out, and a number of amendments and changes had been made.

One member suggested that there should be a reference in the Constitution for a written response to a supplementary question asked at Council to be provided within a reasonable timeframe.

Another member proposed that the Constitution should set out that written responses to supplementary questions be published.

It was agreed that these proposals would be considered at the next Constitution Committee meeting.

RESOLVED that the recommendations from the Constitution Committee as included in the report be approved.

22. CABINET

23. CABINET 14 OCTOBER 2020

RESOLVED to note the Cabinet Decision Statement for the meeting held on 14 October 2020.

23.1 Cabinet 11 November 2020

RESOLVED to note the Cabinet Decision Statement for the meeting held on 11 November 2020.

23.2 Individual Cabinet Member Decision Statements

RESOLVED to note the Individual Cabinet Member Decision Statements for the period 1 September to 31 October 2020.

CHAIRPERSON

Meeting concluded at 3.10 pm