



COUNCIL

MEETING : Thursday, 24th March 2016

PRESENT : Cllrs. Field (Mayor), Beeley (Sheriff & Deputy Mayor), James, Dallimore, Noakes, D. Norman, Organ, Porter, Haigh, Hilton, Gravells, Tracey, McLellan, Smith, Hobbs, Lugg, C. Witts, Hanman, Lewis, S. Witts, Llewellyn, Williams, Brown, Dee, Taylor, Hansdot, Patel, Randle, Toleman, Chatterton, Pullen, Etheridge, Hampson, H. Norman and Pearsall

Others in Attendance

Jon McGinty, Managing Director

Peter Lewis, Solicitor, One Legal

Jon Topping, Head of Finance

Tanya Davies, Democratic and Electoral Services Manager

APOLOGIES : Cllrs. Bhaimia

70. MINUTES

70.1 **RESOLVED** – That the minutes of the meeting held on 25 February 2016 be approved and signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

71. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

71.1 Councillor Smith declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in Agenda Item 12(2), a notice of motion from the Labour Group concerning the grants budget, as she worked at the Law Centre, which received grant funding from the Council. She stated that she would not speak or vote on the item.

71.2 Councillor Lugg declared a personal interest in item Agenda Item 8, a report of the Leader of the Council concerning the appointment of an Honorary Recorder for Gloucester, as she was employed by the Ministry of Justice.

71.3 Councillor Pullen declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 12(2), as his wife worked at Sharp Life and Learning Skills, which received grant funding from the Council.

71.4 Councillor McLellan declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 12(3), a notice of motion from the Labour Group concerning safeguarding training for Councillors, as his wife was a member of the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Board.

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71.5 Councillors Gravells, Williams, Tracey, Brown, Hilton declared personal interests in Agenda Item 12(1), a notice of motion from the Labour Group regarding the ownership of Parry Hall, as they were serving Members of Gloucestershire County Council.

71.6 Councillor Williams declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 12(3) as she was the County Council Cabinet Member with responsibility for safeguarding.

72. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (15 MINUTES)

72.1 Mr Steve Morgan asked the Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning whether he would write to the Cabinet Member for Highways on the County Council requesting, in the strongest possible terms, that an in-depth study be undertaken urgently into the road network around Grange Road looking at congestion, junction capacity and road safety issues, both now and projected, mainly, but not exclusively, along and around Grange Road, Tuffley Lane and Stroud Road?

72.2 Councillor Organ (Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning) undertook to make representations to the County Council. He noted that some work had already been undertaken in the area concerned and agreed that a fuller assessment was desirable in view of proposed plans for development.

73. PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS (15 MINUTES)

73.1 There were no petitions or deputations.

74. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mayor

74.1 The Mayor thanked all Members of the Council for their support during his year in office and wished those Members who were standing good luck in the forthcoming elections, and those Members who were retiring all the best for the future.

74.2 The Mayor announced that Richard Trelfa would be giving a talk on 8 April 2016 on 'People who put Gloucester on the map – and kept it there' in aid of the Civic Charities. The event would be free, with donations welcomed.

74.3 The Mayor announced that a 6s tournament would be held at Gloucester Spa Cricket Club on 10 April 2016 in aid of the civic charities and in memory of his friend Eddie Tomlinson. The event would be free, with donations welcomed.

74.4 The Mayor gave permission for Councillor Chatterton to address the Council. Councillor Chatterton announced that he would be travelling to Paju, South Korea in April 2016 to mark the 65th anniversary of the Battle of Imjin River and continue to strengthen the relationship between Paju and Gloucester. He advised that the Memorial Park would be extended, with plans for a Peace Park that would include a Gloucester Heroes Bridge.

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- 74.5 The Mayor gave permission for the Sheriff to address the Council. The Sheriff reminded former Sheriffs about the forthcoming Annual Sheriffs Meal.

Leader of the Council

- 74.6 Councillor James (Leader of the Council) congratulated all those involved in the successful second stage Heritage Lottery Bids for Project Pilgrim and Llanthony Priory.
- 74.7 Councillor James announced that agreement had been reached between the City Council, Rokeby Merchant and Historic England regarding the development of the Bakers Quay site and that it was hoped work would begin on site during the summer.
- 74.8 Councillor James reported that agreement had been reached between the City Council and the Ministry of Justice in respect of the vacant land on Great Western Road and that it would be used to build a car park to service Gloucester railway station.
- 74.9 Councillor James noted that Councillor Llewellyn would not be seeking re-election. He thanked her for being a committed Councillor and wished her well for the future.

Group Leaders

- 74.10 The Mayor invited opposition Group Leaders to speak in respect of their retiring Councillors.
- 74.11 Councillor Hilton thanked Councillors Field, C. Witts, S. Witts and Jim Beeley for serving as Councillors and wished them well in their future endeavours.
- 74.12 Councillor Haigh praised Councillors Chatterton, Hobbs and Smith for their hard work during their time as Councillors wished them all the best for the future.

Members of the Cabinet

- 74.13 Councillor Porter (Cabinet Member for Environment) referred Members to the Members' Information Briefing that had been circulated; it contained details of achievements within his portfolio over recent months.

Chairs of Committees

- 74.14 Councillor Lugg (Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee) reported that the call in of the decision on regarding Voluntary and Community Sector funding 2014-16 and proposals for 2016-17 funding had not been referred back to the Cabinet to be reconsidered. She also report that the report of the Task and Finish Group on standards in the private rented sector had been praised by the Centre for Public Scrutiny and would feature in a forthcoming blog.

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Head of Paid Service

74.15 The Head of Paid Service noted that Ross Cook, Corporate Director would formally leave the Council at the end of the week. He thanked Ross his service to the Council and wished him well in his new role at Wolverhampton City Council.

75. APPOINTMENT OF HONORARY RECORDER

75.1 Council considered a report of the Leader of the Council proposing that Gloucester City Council appoint to the role of Honorary Recorder for Gloucester and that the appointment of Judge Jamie Tabor to the role be approved.

75.2 Councillor James moved the recommendation set out in the report.

75.3 Councillor Dallimore (Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods) seconded the motion.

75.4 **RESOLVED** - That Judge Jamie Tabor be appointed to the role of Honorary Recorder for Gloucester during his tenure as Resident Judge at Gloucester Crown Court.

Note: Judge Tabor was presented with a certificate by the Mayor to mark his appointment as Honorary Recorder for Gloucester and he thanked the Council for recognising the importance of the relationship between the judiciary and the local authority.

76. MEMBERS' QUESTION TIME

Cabinet Members' Question Time

76.1 Councillor Haigh asked the Leader of the Council if he would confirm whether he intended to continue to honour the long-standing agreement to de-politicise the role of the Mayor by rotating it amongst the political on annual basis.

76.2 Councillor James stated that it was not possible to say who would be Mayor in 2016-17 as all Members were up for election. He explained that positions would continue to be offered across all Groups, but that it was important to reflect the relative size of the Groups when making appointments.

76.3 Councillor Haigh asked the Leader to confirm that the next Mayor would be from the Labour Group and explain why there had been no cross-party discussions about changing the existing approach.

76.4 Councillor James reiterated that it was not possible to give a definite answer until the outcome of the elections was known, but that the civic roles would continue to be offered on a cross-party rotational basis.

76.5 Councillor Haigh asked the Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning if he agreed with the views of the City MP Richard Graham in respect of homeless people in Gloucester and in particular his statements about Eastern Europeans going back to their own countries.

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- 76.6 Councillor Organ (Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning) advised that he had not seen the comments made by Richard Graham MP and that homelessness in Gloucester was a sensitive issue. He explained that officers worked closely with the relevant agencies to find solutions for the genuinely homeless individuals with complex needs, but that there were also a number of beggars with access to accommodation and that presented different challenges, including a detrimental impact of tourism and residents. He advised that it would take time to find solutions to both issues, but that they were being looked at carefully.
- 76.7 Councillor Haigh asked the Cabinet Member if he agreed with Richard Graham MP that Eastern Europeans should head home.
- 76.8 Councillor Organ stated that he did not consider issues of homeless in general terms; it was necessary to look at individual circumstances.
- 76.9 Councillor Hilton asked the Leader of the Council if he had received any further contact about the empty former Trident Life Building from Pall Mall Estates.
- 76.10 Councillor James reported that he had not received any direct contact from the owners of the building; he had spoken to the agent and also asked the City's MP to write to the Chairman of Pall Mall Estates and hoped it would result in some positive progress towards the building being brought back into use.
- 76.11 Councillor Hilton asked the Leader to ensure that City Councillors would be informed of any progress by the City MP before the media were informed.
- 76.12 Councillor James stated that he could not be held responsible for what the City's MP said to the press.
- 76.13 Councillor Hilton asked the Leader of the Council if he expected Stanhope to submit a valid planning application for the Kings Quarter scheme by the deadline of 31 March 2016.
- 76.14 Councillor James stated that he could not discuss commercially confidential matters in a public matter and noted that a private briefing for Members would take place at the end of the meeting.
- 76.15 Councillor Hilton asked the Leader if he agreed that, should a planning application not be received, efforts should turn to progressing an alternative course of action on a cross-party basis.
- 76.16 Councillor James noted that all Members had received a statement regarding a revised approach to the scheme and advised that the Council was committed to delivering the transformation of the area and restoring Kings Quarter as the City's primary public space.
- 76.17 Councillor McLellan asked the Cabinet Member for Environment whether he agreed that the garden waste collection service should operate on a cost neutral basis.

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- 76.18 Councillor Porter explained that it was policy for the garden waste service to be cost neutral, however, over the previous 12 months a profit of in excess of £100,000 had been made as a result of an unanticipated number of new subscriptions. The 2,000 new sign ups had meant that that the collection vehicles were at capacity and at the top end of their efficiency, which had resulted in a profit. If a further 2,000 new subscriptions were achieved, it would be necessary to purchase a third vehicle and this would wipe out the profit made to date.
- 76.19 Councillor McLellan accepted that a new vehicle would be required in due course, but stated that a profit of £30,000 would still be made and asked whether the Council would hand money back to customers to return the service to a cost neutral position.
- 76.20 Councillor Porter stated that the price for the service had been set some time ago and that, with the exception of one district, it was at the same level or less than that all of the other districts in the County, some of which operated less weeks of the year. He reported that the existence of a surplus had been known, but that there were currently no plans to review the price of the service.
- 76.21 Councillor Lugg referred to the recent call in of a Cabinet decision and asked the Leader of the Council to ensure that papers for Overview and Scrutiny meetings were, in future, circulated in good time.
- 76.22 Councillor James advised that officers would take note of the comments made.
- 76.23 Councillor Hampson asked the Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods to confirm that all decisions made in respect of the Members' Allocation Fund were adequately vetted to ensure that the allocations made were appropriate.
- 76.24 Councillor Dallimore gave an assurance that adequate checks were in place. She referred to the Terms of Reference for the fund and the form Members were required to complete, which was reviewed by offers prior to release of any funding. She welcomed any suggestions for amendments to the process and highlighted the positive outcomes achieved from the allocations made.
- 76.25 Councillor Hampson stated that he understood that the forms were for record-keeping purposes and were not scrutinised and therefore it was possible that allocations could be an inappropriate use of Council funds; he asked whether there should be a more robust process in place to ensure adequate scrutiny.
- 76.26 Councillor Dallimore noted that examples of the type of scrutiny undertaken had been given at a recent Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting, but advised that it was for individual Councillors to decide how best to spend their allocation within the terms of reference of the fund. She stated that there was an appropriate process to follow, but explained the intention was to remove barriers to funding for groups who might not meet the criteria for the traditional grant funding schemes.
- 76.27 Councillor Etheridge asked the Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure to explain what was happening in the refurbished unit that had recently opened near the bus station.

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- 76.28 Councillor Noakes reported that an empty unit had been transformed into a cultural hub and was attracting significant attention. She explained that much work had gone into opening the unit and that support had been received from a number of organisations.
- 76.29 Councillor Tracey noted a recent incident asked the Cabinet Member for Environment who was responsible for cleaning up police horse excrement in the City.
- 76.30 Councillor Porter stated that the officers ensure that cleaning was undertaken in respect of the incident mentioned, but that he would be exploring whether those responsible were liable for a fine.

77. GLOUCESTER CULTURAL STRATEGY

- 77.1 Council considered a report of the Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure concerning the proposed draft Cultural Strategy 2016-2026 for the City of Gloucester.
- 77.2 Councillor Noakes moved the recommendations set out in the report. She explained that the strategy aimed to change the City's cultural offer by changing the approach and putting art and culture at the heart of everyday life. She thanked the members of the Interim Culture Board, the consultants, Members and Officers for their involvement in developing the strategy and referenced the extensive consultation process undertaken. She acknowledged that the actions and objectives were ambitious and that the creation of a Culture Board was necessary to oversee delivery. The Council's commitment to arts and culture would secure significant funding and support from the Arts Council, helping to ensure successful delivery of the strategy.
- 77.3 Councillor James seconded the motion.
- 77.4 Councillor Smith stated that while she appreciated the value of arts and culture, she questioned the timing of the proposals, given the Council's challenging financial circumstances and the funding already provided to Marketing Gloucester Limited. She raised concerns about the costs involved and the ambitious income targets. She stated that there were more important priorities in the City that the Council should be tackling before considering the proposed strategy.
- 77.5 Councillor Tracey questioned whether it was necessary to have a Board to oversee the strategy and asked what MGL's involvement would be.
- 77.6 Councillor Hilton stated that he was not inspired by the proposed strategy. He expressed concern that a Board was being set up with little Member representation or consultation.
- 77.7 Councillor Haigh stated that a strategy was necessary and that she welcomed some of the proposals, but also had some concerns. She echoed the need for cross-party involvement in the development and monitoring such strategies and questioned why more consultation had not taken place. She acknowledged that it

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was difficult to justify some of the expenditure at the present time and suggested that MGL should fund the cost of the Board.

77.8 Councillor McLellan noted that he and Councillor Chatterton had been consulted as a result of their involvement in the former Cultural Strategy Steering Group. He added that that MGL should fund the cost of the Board.

77.9 Councillor James advised that the costs associated with setting up the Board had formed part of the Council budget agreed in February 2016 and that it was necessary in order to secure significant funding from the Arts Council. He explained that the aims of the strategy were much broader than the remit of MGL and that the Board was a partnership, not a Council body; its strength and drive would come from its wide-ranging membership. He noted that Members had had an opportunity to comment on the strategy when it was considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and reiterated that the Council had to commit resources in order to progress the strategy.

77.10 Councillor Noakes explained that recruitment processes would be undertaken to appoint an independent Chair, members of the Board and a Director to shape and deliver the strategy. She stated that she was confident in the advice provided in respect of the income targets and reiterated that the Arts Council were providing support and guidance to help realise the Council's ambition of delivering a thriving arts and culture sector.

77.11 RESOLVED –

- (1) That the Cultural Strategy 2016-2026 be adopted;
- (2) That the establishment of a new Cultural Board, as set out in paragraphs 3.5 – 3.7, be noted;
- (3) That the Corporate Director be authorised to enter into an agreement with the formed Cultural Board on terms approved by the Council Solicitor to deliver the Cultural Strategy on behalf of the Council for the period 2016- 2018; and
- (4) That the Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure be appointed as the Council's nominee on the new Cultural Board.

78. TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

78.1 Council considered a report of the Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources concerning the Treasury Management Strategy, the prudential indicators and the Treasury activities.

78.2 Councillor D. Norman moved the recommendations set out in the report and advised that the strategy had been endorsed by the Audit and Governance Committee; he thanked the Chair of the Committee, Councillor Llewellyn for her commitment to the work of the Committee. He noted that the Council was required to set an affordable borrowing limit and reported that the Council remained in an under-borrowed position, which generated value for money for the Council.

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78.3 Councillor Haigh stated that a good strategy should predict the future movement of the economy and noted that it did not indicate what impact the UK leaving the European Union might have on the Council's finances.

78.4 Councillor D. Norman stated that the outcome of the EU referendum was not relevant to the strategy, therefore no reference had been made to it.

78.5 Councillor James seconded the motion.

78.6 **RESOLVED –**

(1) The Treasury Management Strategy at Appendix 1 be approved;

(2) The authorised borrowing limit be approved at:-

a) 2016/17 £30m

b) 2017/18 £30m

c) 2018/19 £30m

(3) The prudential indicators set on in section two of the strategy be approved.

79. PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2016-17

79.1 Council considered a report of the Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources concerning the Council's Pay Policy Statement for 2016/17.

79.2 Councillor D. Norman moved the recommendations set out in the report and noted that the Pay Policy Statement was a legislative requirement.

79.3 Councillor James seconded the motion.

79.4 Councillor Haigh noted that the Council had previously made a commitment to be a Living Wage Council. She asked the Cabinet Member to confirm whether the Council would continue to use the Living Wage Foundation's assessment of the Living Wage or introduce the Government's alternative Living Wage from 1 April 2016, which was assessed at a lower level.

79.5 Councillor D. Norman advised that he would not commit the Council to a position in future years, but advised that it would continue to be fair to its employees and would bring forward proposals at the appropriate time.

79.6 **RESOLVED –** That the Pay Policy Statement for 2016/17 attached as Appendix A to the report be approved.

80. NOTICES OF MOTION

(1) Notice of Motion from the Labour Group

80.1 Moved by Councillor Pullen and seconded by Councillor Hampson:

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"Parry Hall has for many years been at the heart of community activity on the Parry Hall estate. It has served as a vital centre for many local people providing them with social, leisure and recreational activities.

Parry Hall now faces an uncertain future as the County Council, who own the building, are planning to sell it off.

This council instructs the leader to meet with the leader of the County Council to discuss transferring the ownership of Parry Hall to Gloucester City Council. This will preserve the hall as a community asset for use by local people for many years to come."

- 80.2 Councillor Dallimore moved the following amendment which was seconded by Councillor James:

"This Council:

recognises that Parry Hall has for many years been at the heart of community activity on the Parry Hall estate. ~~It~~ **and** has served as a vital centre for many local people providing them with social, leisure and recreational activities.;

~~Parry Hall now faces an uncertain future as the County Council, who own the building, are planning to sell it off.~~

notes that the Leader of the County Council has confirmed to the Leader of this Council that the County Council will engage with any group or organisation capable of taking on and managing the asset for the benefit of the community for the long-term;

~~This council instructs~~ **requests that** the Leader meet with the Leader of the County Council to discuss ~~transferring the ownership of Parry Hall and other County Council-owned buildings in the City to Gloucester City Council. This will preserve with the objective of preserving the hall these buildings~~ **as a community assets** for use by local people for many years to come."

- 80.3 Councillor Pullen did not accept amendment.

- 80.4 The amendment was put to the vote and was carried.

- 80.5 The following motion, as amended, was put to the vote and was carried:

"This Council:

recognises that Parry Hall has for many years been at the heart of community activity on the Parry Hall estate and has served as a vital centre for many local people providing them with social, leisure and recreational activities;

notes that the Leader of the County Council has confirmed to the Leader of this Council that the County Council will engage with any group or organisation capable of taking on and managing the asset for the benefit of the community for the long-term;

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requests that the Leader meet with the Leader of the County Council to discuss the ownership of Parry Hall and other County Council-owned buildings in the City with the objective of preserving these buildings as community assets for use by local people for many years to come."

80.6 The motion was put to the vote and was carried.

(2) Notice of Motion from the Labour Group

80.7 Councillor Haigh sought the agreement of Council to withdraw the following motion:

"As a result of the changes to the grants budget this Council is concerned that some groups who work across ward boundaries may not be funded to the extent that have been previously. Until now grant applications have been examined by Council officers to see how they meet Council aims and objectives and the equalities impacts considered before a recommendation is made to the Cabinet Member. This Council is concerned that the increase of Members Allocations Funds to £2000 removes this scrutiny of the funding and makes it more difficult to establish that the grants are in line with Council priorities.

We further believe that this change will have the effect of removing funding from the people and areas of the City with most need.

This Council agrees to place a halt on the grant allocations for 2016/17 until a report is brought to Council with a full equalities impact assessment that demonstrates that minority groups will not be adversely affected by this change."

80.8 The motion to withdraw was put to the vote and was carried.

(3) Notice of Motion from the Labour Group

80.9 Moved by Councillor Hampson and seconded by Councillor Pullen:

"This Council has a duty of care to protect and safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults.

Safeguarding is everyone's business, and as City Councillors we are the eyes and ears of our communities.

Gloucester City Council should ensure that all Councillors undertake training in recognising the signs of child sexual exploitation. Each and every city Councillor has a duty of care and a responsibility to understand how to report the signs of child sexual and vulnerable adult exploitation to the appropriate authorities.

With immediate effect, this City Council resolves to organise compulsory annual training for all Gloucester City Councillors in child and vulnerable adult safeguarding."

80.10 Councillor McLellan moved the following amendment which was seconded by Councillor Hilton:

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“This Council has a duty of care to protect and safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults.

Safeguarding is everyone's business, and as City Councillors we are the eyes and ears of our communities.

Gloucester City Council should ensure that all Councillors undertake training in recognising the signs of child sexual exploitation. Each and every city Councillor has a duty of care and a responsibility to understand how to report the signs of child sexual and vulnerable adult exploitation to the appropriate authorities.

~~With immediate effect, this City Council resolves to organise compulsory annual training for all Gloucester City Councillors in child and vulnerable adult safeguarding.~~

As part of the training at the start of each four yearly Council cycle, the City Council will organise safeguarding training for all Councillors, acknowledging that some may have undertaken training as part of their jobs or other activities.”

80.11 Councillor Hampson accepted the amendment.

80.12 The following motion, as amended, was put to the vote and was carried:

“This Council has a duty of care to protect and safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults.

Safeguarding is everyone's business, and as City Councillors we are the eyes and ears of our communities.

Gloucester City Council should ensure that all Councillors undertake training in recognising the signs of child sexual exploitation. Each and every city Councillor has a duty of care and a responsibility to understand how to report the signs of child sexual and vulnerable adult exploitation to the appropriate authorities.

As part of the training at the start of each four yearly Council cycle, the City Council will organise safeguarding training for all Councillors, acknowledging that some may have undertaken training as part of their jobs or other activities.”

80.13 The motion was put to the vote and was carried.

81. WRITTEN QUESTIONS TO CABINET MEMBERS

81.1 As a supplementary to his written question, Councillor Pullen asked the Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods whether she would either appoint or commission appropriate persons to deliver Youth Council policy or appoint a community builder to work with young people to create a Youth Council.

81.2 Councillor Dallimore stated that the Council supported the principle of getting young people involved in a Youth Council, but that it should be delivered in an asset-

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based way if young people wanted it. She noted that other forums existed, such as G15, and that if a group had come forward to form a Youth Council then the Council would already be supporting them. She advised that she would not appoint anyone to deliver a Youth Council for the City, but invited Councillor Pullen to consider using his Members' Allocation Fund allowance to support his aim. She welcomed Councillor Pullen's involvement in discussions about the possibility of appointing a community builder for young people, but stated that she did not support a top down approach.

Time of commencement: 7.00 pm hours

Time of conclusion: 10.00 pm hours

Chair