



COUNCIL

MEETING : Thursday, 25th January 2018

PRESENT : Cllrs. Morgan (Mayor), Toleman (Sheriff & Deputy Mayor), James, Cook, Noakes, D. Norman, Organ, Pullen, Hilton, Gravells, Tracey, Stephens, Lugg, Hanman, Lewis, Wilson, Haigh, D. Brown, Dee, Taylor, Hansdot, Hampson, H. Norman, Pearsall, J. Brown, Coole, Fearn, Hawthorne, Hyman, Melvin, Ryall, Smith and Walford

Others in Attendance

Jon McGinty, Managing Director
Anne Brinkhoff, Corporate Director
Jonathan Lund, Corporate Director
Jon Topping, Head of Policy and Resources
Sara Freckleton, Solicitor - One Legal
Tanya Davies, Policy and Governance Manager
Tony Wisdom, Democratic Services Officer

APOLOGIES : Cllrs. Watkins, Bhaimia, Williams, Patel, Brazil and Finnegan

48. MINUTES

48.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 23rd November 2017 were confirmed and signed by the Mayor as a correct record subject to the amendment of minute 40.7 to refer to the Tree of Light.

49. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

49.1 No declarations were made on this occasion.

50. CALL OVER

50.1 The Mayor invited Members to indicate whether they wished to reserve agenda items 9, 10 and 11 for discussion. As no Member indicated that they wished to discuss any of these items, the Mayor invited the Leader of the Council to move the recommendations contained in the reports of those items.

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50.2 Councillor James (Leader of the Council) moved approval of the recommendations in respect of agenda items 9, 10 and 11. Councillor Noakes (Cabinet Member of Culture and Leisure) seconded the motion.

50.3 **RESOLVED that the recommendations in the reports in respect of agenda items 9, 10 and 11 be approved.**

Please refer to the individual items for further details.

51. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (15 MINUTES)

51.1 Mr Steve Gower, a Gloucester resident, asked the following question of Councillor Organ (Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning):-

Following the distressing news in Gloucester this week of eight confirmed deaths of vulnerable people in a local bed and breakfast establishment in Kingsholm that is signposted by the Council as suitable accommodation, could you confirm how many other vulnerable people have passed away in 2017 in other signposted establishments recommended by the Council.

Also including suicides of vulnerable people in the City; estimates reach to sixty deaths of vulnerable people.

Do you agree with this estimation and if so what are your plans to reduce the figure this year?

51.2 Councillor Organ thanked Mr Gower for his question and advised that in 2017 there had been 39 deaths by suicide recorded by HM Coroner with a further four with suicide included in the cause of death. He noted that none of these had been homeless people and three were in supported housing and noted that was the only information held by the Council and he did not wish to speculate further.

51.3 Mr Gower stated that the estimate was based on talking to proprietors of the establishments involved, newspaper reports and Coroner's reports. He asked what plans were in place to reduce the figure this year.

51.4 Councillor Organ stated that there were many factors involved such as drug abuse and there was no single cause. He noted that Government figures for 2017 indicated an increase in rough sleeping nationally by fifteen per cent and regionally by seventeen per cent while rough sleeping in Gloucester had reduced by thirty-seven per cent with fifteen individuals involved. He noted the Council would not be satisfied until, with Government help, the number had reduced to zero.

NOTE: Subsequent to the Meeting, clarification had been received to indicate that the 39 deaths by suicide referred to above at paragraph 51.2 occurred in the period 2013-15, not in 2017.

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51.5 James Collett, a Gloucester resident, asked if and how the Council was fulfilling its equalities responsibilities in respect of the consultation on the Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO).

51.6 Councillor James (Leader of the Council) stated that the matter came within the portfolio of the Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods. As Councillor Watkins was not present he undertook to ensure that Mr Collett was provided with a written answer.

51.7 Mr Collett requested that the written response be included in the minutes of the meeting.

51.8 The written response was as follows:-

The draft Public Spaces Protection Order provided with the public consultation was an example to demonstrate what types of conditions could be included in a PSPO for the City centre. Once the consultation was complete the results and comments would inform the creation of an order to implement which would be subject to a Personal Impact Assessment before implementation. It was agreed by Officers and Cabinet in turn that carrying out a Personal Impact Assessment prior to consultation would be premature.

52. PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS (15 MINUTES)

52.1 There were no petitions or deputations.

53. ANNOUNCEMENTS (10 MINUTES)

The Mayor

53.1 The Mayor thanked Members for their support of fundraising events for his Civic Charity, Footsteps Counselling and Care. The events which included a concert and an auction had raised over £600 for the charity.

53.2 The Mayor advised that he had awarded the Mayor's Medal to Graham Howell, founder of Barnwood Builders which now provided work for over two hundred people in the City and had a turnover in excess of £85 million. He stated that Mr Howell was known as a quiet philanthropist who supported many organisations in Gloucestershire but had never sought recognition.

The Leader of the Council

53.3 Councillor James announced that GVA Planning Grimley Ltd had been appointed as lead consultants for the Kings Quarter development in association with AHR Architects, AECOM Transport and other specialists. It was expected that a planning application would be submitted in the summer.

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Cabinet Member for Environment

- 53.4 Councillor Cook advised that recycling for the latest period had increased by 248 tonnes compared to the same period last year. The increase was worth £15,000 to the City Council and would save the County Council £31,000 in landfill charges. He praised Officers for their efforts and he stressed the importance of residents properly sorting recyclables. He advised that additional boxes could be provided if required.
- 53.5 The Mayor thanked Councillor Cook for his contribution.

Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure

- 53.6 Councillor Noakes advised that Arts Council funding had been agreed and Gloucester had been named together with Birmingham and East Riding for a Strategic Touring Bid by the Multi-Story Orchestra to bring classical music to car parks. Plans include working with the Guildhall, Strike-a-light and Gloucester Academy of Music to bring a full-size orchestra and over one hundred young musicians to City car parks this summer.

Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources

- 53.7 Councillor David Norman advised that Gloucestershire had been selected as a pilot area for 100 per cent retention of Business Rates 2018-19. This would particularly benefit Adult Social Care and Economic Development.

54. MEMBERS' QUESTION TIME

- 54.1 Councillor Pullen (Leader of the Labour Group) stated that the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) had expressed concerns regarding borrowing by local authorities to invest in property and he understood that the Department was preparing guidelines. He asked for an assurance that no negotiations would take place until the outcome of the consultation was known. Councillor David Norman (Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources) replied that he had previously made that promise.
- 54.2 Councillor Pullen believed that the DCLG would only consider local initiatives that would benefit local people. Councillor David Norman replied that there were a number of documents out for consultation and he had previously stated that his preference would be to make any such investments within the City boundaries.
- 54.3 Councillor Pullen stated that he had written to the Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning requesting that a recently issued poster suggesting that people should not give money to homeless people on the street be withdrawn. He asked if the Cabinet Member had authorised the poster; what had been the cost and whether the campaign had been abandoned. Councillor James (Leader of the Council) stated that the matter came within the portfolio of the Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods. In the absence of the

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Cabinet Member he replied that all posters been taken down except one which would be removed as planned in February. He stated that the cost had been £253.34p.

- 54.4 The Leader of the Council did not believe that the poster had demonised homeless people and that public reaction had been broadly positive. He noted that the number of rough sleepers in the City had fallen by 35 per cent while the national trend had been an increase of 15 per cent. He noted that the message had been used elsewhere, including Ipswich which was a Labour controlled authority, and believed that giving cash on the streets would result in homeless people not contacting the agencies that could help them.
- 54.5 Councillor Pullen understood that there were plans to re-issue the poster with the same message. He noted that Richard Graham MP had said that the message may not be appropriate and had called for a more sympathetic approach to tackling homelessness. The Leader of the Council noted that the original poster had included details of Street Link and he displayed the poster for the next stage of the campaign which gave more details of how homeless people could find support. He noted that the Council had committed huge resources to tackling rough sleeping which had been reflected in the fall in numbers of those sleeping on the streets.
- 54.6 Councillor Hilton (Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group) welcomed the latest recycling figures but asked the Cabinet Member for Environment if he would apologise to the Council and to the people of Gloucester for the number of missed refuse collections over the Christmas period. Councillor Cook (Cabinet Member for Environment) replied that apologies had already been made. He explained that the snowfall had occurred at the worst possible time over three Bank Holidays. He was holding discussions with Amey about handling similar situations in the future.
- 54.7 Councillor Hilton believed that the contract with Amey should be terminated and referred to problems with both grass cutting and shortage of drivers. He noted that Councillor Cook had previously referred to the Amey contract as the worst he had ever seen and he asked if Councillor Cook would consider establishing a Direct Labour Organisation to avoid problems such as those recently experienced by Carillion. Councillor Cook stated that Councillor Hilton would recall the recent Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting where he had stated that all options were open and requested that Councillors put any ideas to him. He reiterated that nothing was ruled out.
- 54.8 Councillor Hilton noted that the number of empty homes in the City had increased by 132 in the last five years and asked the Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning what was being done to address the problem. Councillor Organ noted that the Council did not own these homes and there were many reasons why they were empty including being on the market; divorce settlements and awaiting

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probate. He stated that few people now leave properties completely unattended and stated that the Council had exercised its powers of compulsory purchase in some cases although he advised that the fluidity of the housing market depended on the availability of a number of empty properties. He advised that the Council could take action if there was a specific problem such as vermin infestation.

- 54.9 Councillor Hilton noted that the Council had failed to make use of the empty homes management legislation to tackle long term empty properties in the last five years. Councillor Organ asked Councillors to let him know of any long term empty properties in their wards.
- 54.10 Councillor Stephens referred to the consultation on the proposed Public Space Protection Order and noted that it would not apply to rough sleepers and he sought an assurance that it would not be used against homeless people. The Leader of the Council stated that the Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods had already given that assurance.
- 54.11 Councillor Joanne Brown asked if the Cabinet Member for Environment was aware that Amey had stopped locking the gates of The Oaks and Barnwood Arboretum at dusk. Councillor Cook stated that he had not been aware of the situation and would ensure that Officers looked into the matter.
- 54.12 Councillor Joanne Brown asked if this was another instance of Amey dictating to the Council and Councillor Cook stated that the Council was a customer of Amey and would expect to be treated as such.
- 54.13 Councillor Fearn asked for an update on the emergency repairs to Gloucester Life Museum. Councillor Noakes (Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure) stated that scaffolding had been erected as soon as the Council had been able due to restrictions in Westgate Street over the holiday period and repairs were underway. She advised that the condition of the building was not as bad as had been feared and no further water was entering the building.
- 54.14 Councillor Hyman stated that complaints about dog fouling had increased in his ward and noted the dangers this presented to children's health. He asked what measures were being taken to address the problem. Councillor Cook replied that Amey dealt with reported incidents of fouling and if complainants could provide evidence the owner would be contacted and, if appropriate, the matter taken further.
- 54.15 Councillor Hyman noted Section 89 of the Environment Protection Act and believed that the Council should take a more proactive stance employing more staff on the ground if necessary.

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- 54.16 Councillor Coole advised that February was LGBT History Month and asked if the Council would be flying the Rainbow Flag. The Leader of the Council confirmed that the flag would be flown.
- 54.17 Councillor Coole advised that Pride in Gloucestershire was under threat and asked if Cabinet Members would meet with him to ensure that Pride remained in the City. The Leader of the Council and the Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure both agreed to meet with Councillor Coole.
- 54.18 Councillor David Brown advised that a resident had seen a stray dog and had visited the Council's website for information. They had been referred to Worcester Regulatory Services and could not receive an answer to their telephone calls. He asked the Cabinet Member for Environment for his views on the stray dog contract. Councillor Cook undertook to investigate the incident and provide Councillor Brown with an answer.
- 54.19 Councillor Hampson referred to the work on Houses in Multiple Occupation undertaken by the Private Sector Housing Officer and asked how the work would be delivered following the recent restructure. Councillor Organ (Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning) stated that the section was still undergoing change and he would provide Councillor Hampson with an answer.
- 54.20 Councillor Tracey referred to a recent visit to Westgate Street and The Dukeries where she saw a large amount of litter. She called 396396 which was not answered but called another floor and the litter had been collected within the hour. The Leader of the Council noted that the contract would run until 2022 but if litter was collected within an hour of being reported it provided a pretty good service.

55. REVIEW OF MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES 2018

55.1 No Members had indicated that they wished to discuss this item.

55.2 **RESOLVED that**

- (1) Members' Allowances remain unchanged at the levels detailed in the 2017-18 Scheme, subject to the wording of Schedule 2 being amended to reflect the Council's continued commitment to the Living Wage in respect of the Dependents' Carers' Allowance for the reimbursement of childcare costs.**
- (2) The Council writes to the Local Government Association asking them to lobby the government in support of making the Dependents' Carers' Allowance exempt from taxation.**
- (3) The Scheme of Members' Allowances set out in Appendix 1 be approved for 2018-19.**

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56. LOCAL COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME REVIEW 2018/19

56.1 No Members had indicated that they wished to discuss this item.

56.2 **RESOLVED that the current Local Council Tax Support Scheme as the approved scheme for Gloucester City Council in 2017/18 be adopted for 2018/19.**

57. PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS, MAY 2018-APRIL 2020

57.1 No Members had indicated that they wished to discuss this item.

57.2 **RESOLVED that, subject to any further changes, the two-year programme of ordinary meetings of Council and other meetings for the period May 2018 to April 2020 be approved.**

58. NOTICES OF MOTION

Notice of motion from the Labour Group

58.1 Proposed by Councillor Pullen seconded by Councillor Stephens:

“This Council believes in equality of access in providing facilities and services to all residents in Gloucester. The Council currently operates the Community Toilet Scheme whereby some businesses offer toilets in their premises for use by the public when visiting the City centre.

However, there are some people with complex needs and disabilities and some elderly people, whose needs cannot be met either by the Community Toilet Scheme or by existing toilets for disabled people.

In order to address this issue, this Council is asked to incorporate a Changing Places Toilet into the plans for the Kings Quarter development. This facility will provide people with complex disabilities with appropriate specialised equipment to meet their sanitary needs.

This Council is also requested to influence private sector developers to provide such facilities when considering future developments.”

58.2 Councillor James proposed the following amendment and was seconded by Councillor Cook:

“This Council believes in equality of access in providing facilities and services to all residents in Gloucester. The Council currently operates the Community Toilet Scheme whereby some businesses offer toilets in their premises for use by the public when visiting the city centre.

However, there are some people with complex needs and disabilities and some elderly people, whose needs cannot be met either by the Community Toilet Scheme or by existing toilets for disabled people.

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In order to address this issue, this Council is asked to incorporate a Changing Places Toilet into the plans for the Kings Quarter development **in addition to the Changing Places facility the Council is seeking to provide at Kings Walk.** This facility will provide people with complex disabilities with appropriate specialised equipment to meet their sanitary needs.

This Council is also requested to influence private sector developers provide such facilities when considering future developments.”

58.3 The mover and seconder of the original motion indicated that they would accept the amendment.

58.4 **RESOLVED that this Council**

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This Council is also requested to influence private sector developers to provide such facilities when considering future developments.

(2) Notices of Motion from the Liberal Democrat Group

58.5 Proposed by Councillor Hilton and seconded by Councillor Ryall:

“This Council notes that after questions from the Liberal Democrats the Cabinet has included in its forward plan a proposal to adopt a public art strategy for Gloucester.

This Council welcomes this decision and notes that the planned date for the public arts strategy to be approved by Cabinet, is the 9th of May 2018.

This Council requests that the Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure holds an evening seminar, inviting all Councillors, to discuss the development of the public arts strategy for Gloucester.

This Council also notes that the Gloucester Heritage Urban Regeneration Company published a public arts strategy for Gloucester in 2006 called ‘A Place

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for Art – A Public Art Strategy for Central Gloucester’ (by Ginkgo Projects Ltd) and that this should be used as the basis on which to develop a public art strategy for Gloucester City Council.”

58.6

Councillor Noakes proposed the following amendment and was seconded by Councillor James:

“This Council notes that after questions from the Liberal Democrats the Cabinet has included in its forward plan ~~a proposal to adopt~~ **a report on renewing the public art strategy for Gloucester.**”

This Council welcomes this decision and notes that the planned date for the ~~public arts strategy to be approved~~ **report to be considered** by Cabinet is the 9th of May 2018.

This Council requests that the Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure ~~holds an evening seminar, inviting all councillors, to discuss the development of the public arts strategy for Gloucester.~~ **ensures there is appropriate consultation with Councillors, stakeholders and wider public as the revised strategy is developed.**

~~This Council also notes that the Gloucester Heritage Urban Regeneration Company published a public arts strategy for Gloucester in 2006 called ‘A Place for Art – A Public Art Strategy for Central Gloucester’ (by Ginkgo Projects Ltd) and that this should be used as the basis on which to develop a public art strategy for Gloucester City Council.”~~

58.7

The mover and seconder of the original motion indicated that they would accept the amendment.

58.8

RESOLVED that this Council

This Council notes that after questions from the Liberal Democrats the Cabinet has included in its forward plan a report on renewing the public art strategy for Gloucester.

This Council welcomes this decision and notes that the planned date for the report to be considered by Cabinet is the 9th of May 2018.

This Council requests that the Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure ensures there is appropriate consultation with Councillors, stakeholders and wider public as the revised strategy is developed.

58.9

Proposed by Councillor Ryall and seconded by Councillor Hilton:

“This Council notes that the government is consulting over the Great Western Rail Franchise and that the consultation ends on the 21st of February.

This Council agrees that it is important for the people of Gloucester to have excellent rail services to and from Gloucester Railway Station.

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This Council notes that the Government has listed eighteen questions in their consultation document that was published in November 2017.

This Council agrees to respond to the consultation and asks the Leader of the Council, in consultation with Group Leaders, to prepare a response from this Council to meet the 21st of February 2018 deadline.”

58.10

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This Council agrees to respond to the consultation and asks the Leader of the Council, in consultation with Group Leaders, to prepare a response from this Council to meet the 21st of February 2018 deadline.

(3) Notice of Motion from the Labour Group

58.11 Proposed by Councillor Haigh and seconded by Councillor Lugg:

“This Council notes that 2018 is the 100th anniversary of the 1918 Representation of the People Act which gave women aged over 30 the right to vote. Since then women have made significant contributions to the political life of the City and the Country but are still under represented nationally and locally. The “Does Local Government Work for Women” report by the Fawcett Society last year highlighted that only 33% of Councillors are women, less than 1 in 5 Council Leaders are women and 6 out of every 7 Cabinet members are men. Gloucester City Council currently has 15 women out of 39 Councillors.

This Council resolves to mark this important anniversary in the following ways:

- a. By remembering our own suffrage pioneers, the first 3 women City Councillors by putting a page on the Council website to tell their story, and by nominating them as suffrage pioneers to the Women’s Local Government Society campaign “From Suffrage Pioneers to Citizenship” by 30th Jan 2018. They are:
 - Councillor Edith Sessions (Liberal, Barton, co-opted 1918)
 - Alderman Julia Siveter (Conservative, Tuffley, elected 1920, first female Alderman 1931)
 - Alderman Martha Edwards (Labour, Southend then Linden, elected 1926, made Honorary Freeman 1959).
- b. By working to improve women’s representation and participation in the democratic life of our City and to encourage women from underrepresented

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groups such as, young people, Black and minority ethnic (BME) people, people living with disabilities, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Queer(LGBTQ+) people and people from lower socio-economic groups. In particular by running a Local Government Association, Be A Councillor, event for women.

- c. To investigate the commissioning of a piece of Public Art which celebrates the contribution of women to the Civic life of the City.”

58.12 Councillor Noakes proposed the following amendment and was seconded by Councillor Pearsall:

“This Council notes that 2018 is the 100th anniversary of the 1918 Representation of the People Act which gave women aged over 30 the right to vote. Since then women have made significant contributions to the political life of the City and the Country but are still under represented nationally and locally. The “Does Local Government Work for Women” report by the Fawcett Society last year highlighted that only 33% of Councillors are women, less than 1 in 5 Council Leaders are women and 6 out of every 7 Cabinet members are men. Gloucester City Council currently has 15 women out of 39 Councillors.

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Alderman Julia Siveter (Conservative, Tuffley, elected 1920, first female Alderman 1931)

Alderman Martha Edwards (Labour, Southend then Linden, elected 1926, made Honorary Freeman 1959).

- b. By working to improve women’s representation and participation in the democratic life of our City and to encourage women from underrepresented groups such as, young people, Black and minority ethnic (BME) people, people living with disabilities, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Queer(LGBTQ+) people and people from lower socio-economic groups. In particular by running a Local Government Association, Be A Councillor, event for women.
- c. ~~To investigate the commissioning of a piece of Public Art which celebrates~~ **Requests that the revised public art strategy considers the importance of** the contribution of women to the Civic life of the City.

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Council welcomes the theme chosen by the Gloucester History trust for this year's Gloucester History Festival of "Women and Leadership" and further welcomes the plans for activities to mark the 1100th anniversary of the death of Aethelflaed, arguably the most historically important woman to be buried in Gloucester".

58.13 The mover and seconder of the original motion indicated they would accept the amendment.

58.14 **RESOLVED that this Council**

notes that 2018 is the 100th anniversary of the 1918 Representation of the People Act which gave women aged over 30 the right to vote. Since then women have made significant contributions to the political life of the City and the Country but are still under represented nationally and locally. The "Does Local Government Work for Women" report by the Fawcett Society last year highlighted that only 33% of Councillors are women, less than 1 in 5 Council Leaders are women and 6 out of every 7 Cabinet members are men. Gloucester City Council currently has 15 women out of 39 Councillors.

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- b. **By working to improve women's representation and participation in the democratic life of our City and to encourage women from underrepresented groups such as, young people, Black and minority ethnic (BME) people, people living with disabilities, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Queer(LGBTQ+) people and people from lower socio-economic groups. In particular by running a Local Government Association, Be A Councillor, event for women.**
- c. **Requests that the revised public art strategy considers the importance of the contribution of women to the Civic life of the City.**

Council welcomes the theme chosen by the Gloucester History trust for this year's Gloucester History Festival of "Women and Leadership" and

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further welcomes the plans for activities to mark the 1100th anniversary of the death of Aethelflaed, arguably the most historically important woman to be buried in Gloucester.

59. WRITTEN QUESTIONS TO CABINET MEMBERS

- 59.1 Councillor Hansdot indicated that he did not wish to ask a supplementary question.
- 59.2 Councillor Stephens expressed concern that there were 136 active homelessness cases and he asked what was the average time for dealing with a homeless application. Councillor Organ (Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning) replied that the length of time varied with each case and he would provide Councillor Stephens with a written response.
- 59.3 **RESOLVED that the written questions and responses detailed on the agenda be noted.**

**Time of commencement: 7.10 pm
Time of conclusion: 9.10 pm**

Chair