

Minutes



Council

Date: 23 July 2019

Time: 5.00 pm

Present: Councillors P Cockeram, D Davies, M Al-Nuaimi, C Evans, M Evans, C Ferris, D Fouweather, G Giles, J Guy, D Harvey, I Hayat, R Jeavons, C Jenkins, M Kellaway, M Linton, D Mayer, R Mogford, J Mudd, M Rahman, J Richards, M Spencer, T Suller, H Thomas, K Thomas, C Townsend, R Truman, T Watkins, M Whitcutt, R White, K Whitehead, D Wilcox, D Williams, J Clarke, V Dudley, Y Forsey, R Hayat, P Hourahine, J Hughes, J Jordan, L Lacey, S Marshall, W Routley, H Townsend and J Watkins

Apologies: Councillors J Cleverly, M Cornelious, K Critchley, G Berry and T Holyoake

1. Preliminaries

i) To receive any apologies for absence

The Monitoring Officer reported apologies for absence.

ii) To receive declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

iii) To receive any announcements by the Mayor

Stephen Bell

The Mayor noted the tragic death of Stephen Bell who worked within the Council's highways team. The Mayor led the Council in offering its deepest condolences to Stephen's family, friends and colleagues in this difficult time.

The Mayor led a minutes silence as a mark of respect to Stephen Bell.

Mayors Charity Events

The Mayor updated the Council on recent events hosted and attended by the Mayor, including attending Newport County's match at Wembley Stadium.

British Transplant Games

The Mayor reminded the Council of the upcoming British Transplant Games being hosted by Newport City this upcoming weekend and encouraged the Council to attend and show support to this event.

2. Minutes

The minutes of the Council meetings held on 30 April 2019 and 14 May 2019 were approved as a true and accurate record.

3. Appointments

Councillor Harvey presented the report and updated the Council on the proposed changes to Committee appointments.

Resolved

Internal Appointments

Committee	No. of Vacancies / Replacements	Nominations Received
Planning Committee	Replacement	Cllr Malcolm Linton to replace Cllr Tracey Holyoake
Appointments Sub-Committee	7 Vacancies	Cllr Debbie Wilcox Cllr Gail Giles Cllr Paul Cockeram Cllr Majid Rahman Cllr Matthew Evans Cllr Jason Jordan Cllr Carmel Townshend
Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee	1 replacement	Cllr Phil Hourahine to replace Cllr Malcom Linton
Performance Scrutiny Committee – Partnerships	1 replacement	Cllr Christine Jenkins to replace Cllr Yvonne Forsey
Performance Scrutiny Committee – People	1 replacement	Cllr Malcom Linton to replace Cllr Ken Critchley

Appointments to External Organisations

Organisation	No. of Vacancies / Replacements	Nominations Received
Police and Crime Panel	Replacement	Cllr Mark Spencer to replace Cllr John Guy

Governing Body Appointments

Governing Body	No. of Vacancies / Re-appointments	Nominations Received
Caerleon High School	Replacement	Ms Penny Keggie (to replace John Parfitt)

Tredegar Park Primary	Replacement	Cllr Ibrahim Hayat(to replace Jeanne Hugo)
Malpas Court Primary	Vacancy	Amy Morris
Glasllwch Primary School	Vacancy	Mrs Gillian Hyland
Malpas Primary School	Reappointment	William Langsford
Malpas Primary School	Reappointment	Cllr David Mayer
Ringland Primary	Replacement	Cllr Laura Lacey (to replace Cllr Rehmaan Hayat)
Milton Primary -	Replacement	Cllr Rehmaan Hayat (to replace Cllr Laura Lacey)
Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw	Reappointment	John Harris
Rogerstone Primary	Vacancy	Alexandra Mlewa
St Woolos Primary	1 Vacancy	Cllr Tracy Holyoake to be removed. Replacement to be confirmed.
Pill Primary	1 Vacancy	Cllr Tracy Holyoake

It was also resolved that the Council agree the appropriate dispensation for Councillor Ken Critchley continued absence beyond 6 months due to ill-health, for the purposes of section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972.

4. **Police Issues**

Chief Superintendent Mike Richards gave an update on local policing matters, highlighting key developments particularly relating to priority areas of anti-social behaviour, begging and issues with the night-time economy.

- Councillor Roger Jeavons was pleased to note the progress made in addressing the issues with 'Boy Racers' and the anti-social behaviour associated with this, which would need a continually robust response during the summer months. Cllr Jeavons also thanked the Police for their support during the first few weeks of the transfer to Civil Parking Enforcement which had been successful.
- Councillor Majid Rahman asked for assurances of increased police visibility in the Victoria Ward, noting several instances of anti-social behaviour including off road biking, and the concerns of the local community in that area. The Police noted that the instances referred to were known to the police, and provided assurances that the Police would be as visible as was possible within the area.
- Councillor David Fouweather asked for an update on whether the additional police officers for Newport City Centre were in place, and whether there was an increase in foot patrols to increase visibility and address the concerns of residents coming into the city centre after 4pm.

The Police responded that an additional 8 Police Constables had arrived in the City Centre Team in the last four months, and there had been an increase in foot patrols

within the city centre. A plan to address City Centre issues was being developed, and the Police undertook to keep the Councillor informed on this matter.

- In relation to the enforcement of the City Centre Public Space Protection Order, particularly relating to begging within 10 metres of a cash point, Councillor Matthew Evans highlighted that this continued to be an issue for local residents both at night and during the day. Appreciating that it was a multiagency approach, the Councillor sought assurances that this would be a priority for the City Centre Team. The Police confirmed that this continued to be a priority, and agreed to follow up the concerns with the City Centre Policing Team to ensure the police response was as robust as possible.
- Councillor Ray Truman asked the Superintendent to comment on whether the Police non-emergency number was to be discontinued. The Superintendent was not aware of any such proposal, and would confirm with Councillor Truman directly.
- Councillor Gail Giles thanked the Neighbourhood Watch Groups across Newport for the work they undertook, which the Superintendent reiterated this thanks.

Councillor Giles also highlighted concerns that had been raised in relation to accessibility at Maindee and Alway Police Station, noting that there was no longer a front desk, only a phone. The Police were asked what forms of communication were available at this police station, as not all residents could communicate via email and there were instances where face to face discussions would be useful. The Superintendent agreed to go back to Inspector Cawley who covers this area to comment on this and reply to Councillor Giles.

- Councillor David Williams asked for thanks be passed on to Inspector Tomkova-Griffiths and her team for the support with an ongoing problem in Bassaleg.
- In relation to parking, Councillor Ray Mogford asked for an explanation of the reference on social media that there had been Police Car ticketed. The Superintendent was not aware of this but would look into this matter.
(Note: The Leader later provided information that this incident had been a ticket moved from another car and the Police car had not been ticketed.)
- Councillor Jane Mudd thanked the superintendent for the update, and welcomed the action being undertaken in relation to the city centre. In relation to the distribution of the knife crime and acid attack kits. The Business Improvement District Board had had a discussion on this recently and were encouraging local businesses to attend the training. Positive feedback had been received from local business on the proactive approach to be fed back to the City Centre Team and thank the officers for the action being taken for citizens in the City Centre.
- Regarding the dismantling of tents mentioned in the Superintendent's update, Councillor Chris Evans sought clarification on the context of this. The Superintendent clarified that the tents that had been removed were disused tents linked to drug use presenting a significant health hazard rather than shelter for homeless.
- Councillor Miqdad Al-Nuaimi asked for thanks to be conveyed to the City Centre team for their support. It was also asked whether there were more resources now available to the Police to address issues in the city centre following Civil Parking Enforcement being transferred to the Council. The Superintendent confirmed that Civic Parking Enforcement had already reduced the demand significantly on city centre resources resulting in an increase in capacity to address issues around anti-social behaviour.

- Councillor Debbie Wilcox thanked the police and other partners for the collaborative work being undertaken relating to the issues around homelessness in the City Centre. It was the Council's duty and responsibility to work in partnership with the Police in these matters, and the need for balance in preventative measures to address homelessness whilst ensuring the safety of all citizen in the City Centre was highlighted.

The Mayor thanked the Superintendent for his attendance and contribution to the Council meeting.

5. **Notices of Motion: Friends of the Earth Bee Initiative**

The Council considered a motion for which the necessary notice had been provided. The motion was moved by Councillor Debbie Wilcox, and seconded by Councillor Laura Lacey:

' This authority supports the Friends of the Earth Bee Cause initiative, and will continue to ensure that where suitable, planting undertaken within the parks, gardens and green areas owned by the Council will support bee and other pollinating insects' lifestyles.

It is of vital importance to Newport's economy of pollinators and the fact that the Council is well placed to make a significant contribution to reversing their decline.

In addition this authority will strive to make Newport one of the first major Welsh cities to have bee friendly accreditation.'

In moving the motion, Councillor Debbie Wilcox outlined that the Council was committed to helping the UK's pollination by ensuring that the needs of pollinators were considered within the delivery of the Council's works and duties. The Council would do this through:

- Ensuring the needs of pollinators were represented in local plans, policy and guidance;
- Protecting and enhancing the amount of quality pollinator habitats in Newport to prevent extinction and improve the status of local species;
- Increasing awareness of pollinators and their habitat needs;
- Improving knowledge and understanding of pollinators in our local area.

A number of Members spoke in favour of the motion.

Resolved

It was unanimously resolved to support the motion.

6. **Notice of Motion: Guangxi Province Twinning**

The Council considered the following motion for which the necessary notice had been provided. The motion was moved by Councillor Matthew Evans, seconded by Councillor Chris Evans.

'This Council deeply regrets the lack of response from Guangxi Province to the letter sent on 19th February 2019 urging them to stop the Yulin Dog Meat Festival and the horrendous treatment of animals. It feels it has no option but to cease the twinning arrangement it has had since 1996 as the City cannot sit idly by and let the barbaric inhumane behaviour towards animals go unchallenged. Therefore, the Council formally resolves to discontinue all twinning arrangements with Guangxi Province with immediate effect.'

An amendment was proposed by Councillor Debbie Wilcox, seconded by

'This Council:

- 1. Deeply regrets the lack of response from Guangxi Province to the letter sent on 19th February 2019 urging them to stop the Yulin Dog Meat Festival and the horrendous treatment of animals.*
- 2. Further calls upon her majesty's government to present the City's case via both the Great Britain-China Centre, a non-departmental public body established by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office in 1974, together with the Foreign Office to make direct representations from both bodies to the Governments of the People's Republic of China about the ending of this appalling festival and to relay their response to Newport City Council. This action will focus the wider attention upon this issue as the twinning arrangements has become defunct by default of non-engagement for many years and all references to it have already been removed from Newport City Council's current webpages.'*

In moving the amendment, Councillor Debbie Wilcox stated that the twinning arrangements had not been active for 15 years and all references to it had been removed from the Council's online and offline presence. Councillor Wilcox suggested that the amendment put forward a stronger course of action to engage the actions of the Foreign Secretary and Great Britain-China Centre (GBCC) in partnership, to help the Council send this the message to China and underlined the seriousness of this matter.

During the debate, a number of points of clarification were raised including:

- Confirmation of when the twinning arrangements were defunct, and;
- Confirmation that any signage indicating the twinning arrangements would be removed.

In seconding the amendment, Councillor Mark Whitcutt spoke in support of the need to seek the intervention of the Government and the GBCC to carry this forward to end this animal cruelty associated with this festival.

Councillor Debbie Wilcox addressed the points of clarification and noted that confirmation of that the twinning arrangement was defunct had been given to the Council in the amended motion, any reference to this on signage would be removed as soon as possible.

When put to the meeting the amendment was carried unanimously and became the substantive motion.

Resolved

The substantive motion was unanimously carried.

7. Treasury Management Report - Financial Year 2018/19

The Leader of the Council presented the Treasury Management report to the Council, outlining that the report looked back to the Council's financial borrowing for 2018/19 and assessed how the Council has adhered to the Council's Treasury Management Strategy.

Resolved

It was unanimously resolved to note the report.

8. Questions to the Leader of the Council

- The opening ceremony of the **British Transplant Games** was being held this weekend, and the Leader encouraged all Councillors to attend and support the event.
- **Western Powerhouse**

A new report had been unveiled by the Leader at the House of Lords that set out the Council's recommendations to supercharge our regional economy and the potential for a new economic powerhouse for the UK. The potential powerhouse would stretch along the M4 corridor from Swindon, across the Welsh border to Newport, Cardiff and Swansea, and in the north from Gloucester and Cheltenham to Bath and Bristol. The Leader outlined the opportunities that this proposal would present for Newport.

- The Leader updated Council on the positive feedback from the public on the implementation of Civil Parking Enforcement.
- Following Keep Wales Tidy week last week, it had been confirmed that Belle Vue Park, Beechwood Park and Gwent Crematorium had all retained the international mark of a quality in recognition for their excellent floral displays, facilities and commitment to delivering great quality green space. The Council had made the top ten, and was the highest placed Welsh authority, in a recent survey of local authorities praised for recycling plastic waste following recent Council initiatives to improve recycling. The Leader thanked all residents for participating in the initiatives and contributing to the Council's increased recycling rate.

Leaders Questions

M4 Relief Road

In relation to the Welsh Government's recent decision not to build the M4 Relief Road, Councillor Matthew Evans asked the Leader whether this meant that Newport residents would continue to face the same issues with heavy congestion and air pollution, and sought assurances that the Leader would stop any attempts by the Welsh Government to close motorway junctions in Newport.

The Leader stated that her support for M4 relief road was unequivocal in this city and that she had signed the CBI letter to Welsh Government in support of the M4 Relief Road.

The Leader outlined that decisions on the M4 junctions was a matter within the jurisdiction of Welsh Government and as such it was not within the remit of Newport City Council's Leader. Representations had been made to the First Minister to make the Council's position clear, and the Leader had written to the First Minister asking that the terms of reference be revised to ensure that there was a Newport voice on the commission.

The Leader assured the Council that the huge importance of appropriate transport within the city was understood by the administration, and that the Leader would continue to fight in every way possible to ensure that Newport got the best deal possible following this Welsh Government decision.

Councillor Evans asked a supplementary question to seek assurances that the funding outlined by the First Minister would be spent in Newport to address transport and congestion issues.

The Leader reiterated that a letter had been written to the First Minister and that she would do everything possible within the role to ensure that the funding was spent to address issues in Newport. The Leader called upon Assembly Members in Newport to fight for this also.

Street Cleanliness

Councillor Carmel Townsend highlighted issues within Newport on street cleanliness, citing the results of the recent Keep Wales Tidy survey. The Leader was asked if

Street Cleanliness could be the subject of an all Member seminar to support Councillors to improve the situation for local residents.

The Leader thanked the Councillor for this suggestion and agreed that an all Member seminar would be useful.

Newport Economy

Councillor Jason Hughes asked what the Leader thought of a recent article discussing a recently commissioned report on the Newport Economy.

The Leader responded that this independent report confirmed that Newport was growing faster than the rest of Wales, and above the UK average. Between 2014 and 2017 Newport grew at an average of 2.2% per year, and growth accelerated to 2.4% in 2017. The overall size of the economy was 10.8 billion in 2017 which was a significant development and the Newport region accounted for a 1/5th of the overall Welsh output. The Leader summarised the key findings of the report, and was pleased that this report independently evidenced the central strength and success of Newport City and its growing economy.

Anti- Harassment Guide

Councillor Yvonne Forsey asked the Leader to inform the Council further on the recent anti-harassment guide that was launched at the WLGA conference.

The Leader outlined that the LGA and the WLGA recognised the growing need amongst Councillors across the UK for support relating to intimidation, and that this resource had been jointly developed following advice from Councils and representative organisations. The guide provided Councillors with advice on how to deal with abuse and intimidation, including information on the criminal offences involved. Intimidation increasingly experienced by Councillors and candidates undermines the principles of freedom of speech and the engagement in democratic debate.

9. Questions to the Cabinet Members

i) Questions to the Cabinet Member – City Services

Councillor Ray Mogford asked the follow question that had been submitted:

'Given the current ongoing problems regarding the horrendous traffic congestion going into the Tip / Recycling Centre on Docks Way, the Council have indicated that a second Centre will be opened on the East side of the City. However, will the Cabinet Member commit to reviewing the opening times of the Tip by adopting seasonal opening hours with the tip open later in the summer months and shorter in the Winter? Does the Cabinet Member believe that the present 4:10pm closing time is too early and should be extended to 6pm which is in line with most other Welsh Councils?'

The Cabinet Member – City Services responded:

'I am at this time looking to extending the opening hours at the CA site, we have undertaken major works at this site to alleviate some of the issues around congestion and its effects. I have to take into account ever decreasing budgets, operational commitments and staffing implications for this multifunctional site, so cannot at this present moment comment as to actual times. I hope to have a positive update shortly. Work around the site on the eastern side of the city is still ongoing.'

The Cabinet Member was asked a supplementary question relating to the residents accessing Monmouthshire's recycling centre, and asked the Cabinet Member if he had any comments on this now that it is being discussed at Welsh Assembly level.

The Cabinet Member responded that the Council had spent millions of pounds reducing the size of the bins in the city looking to increase the recycling rates to 70% and commented that it was hoped that Newport City Residents would take recycling to Newport facility to contribute to Newport's figures on recycling and assist the City in reaching targets and not be subject to fines from Welsh Government. It was also noted that the new site on the East of the City would assist all residents concerned.

ii) Question to Cabinet Member – Regeneration and Housing

Councillor Ray Mogford asked the following question that had been submitted:

'Recently over 3000 people signed a petition launched by Newport Resident Christine Davies, demanding action to clean-up and regenerate our City Centre. Since this petition was submitted, the Council have refused to accept its requests in terms of a cross party solution. Does the Cabinet Member feel this is a 'slap in the face' for all those who signed the petition? Will the Cabinet Member(s) take a close look then at this petition and acknowledge the concerns raised within it and agree to meet with Christine Davies, local businesses, employer's and politicians to discuss improvements being made in the City Centre?'

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Housing responded:

'I am aware of the petition. One Newport, our Public Services Board issued a public response to the petition on behalf the partner organisations that we work with. In addition, the Chief Executive of the Local Authority has offered to meet the petitioner to discuss the concerns raised, and this offer remains open.
What is One Newport? One Newport is the city's public services board where local public private and third sector organisations work together to improve the economic, social, environmental and Cultural wellbeing of the city. Public Service Boards were established by the Wellbeing of Future Generations Legislation in 2015, and work with the sustainable development principle and achievement of the 7 wellbeing goals by assessing the state economic, social, environmental and Cultural wellbeing, setting local objectives that are designed to maximise their contribution within the city to achieving these goals and taking all reasonable steps to meet these objectives. These objectives and the performance against them are set out in the One Newport Wellbeing Plan. Safer Newport is a sub group of One Newport. Safer Newport is the City's community safety Partnership and delivers on emerging local community safety issues and problem solving for safer city centre, antisocial behaviour, serious and organised crime initiatives, local neighbourhood issues that may arise and local funding applications. Membership includes the Police, NCC, Fire and result. AB Health board and the national probation service. How do we hold the Public Services Board to account? The PSB is scrutinised by the Performance Scrutiny Committee – Partnerships. Membership of that Committee is cross party. The meetings of the scrutiny Committee are public meetings, the Public Services Board also reports on progress to the Future Generations Commissioner and Welsh Government

So what is our plan? Newport City Council Corporate Plan – As an authority we publish a Corporate Plan, Colleagues in the Chamber should be very familiar with this plan. The Corporate Plan has 4 key theses: resilient Community, thriving city, aspirational people and a Modernised Council. The Plan also has 4 wellbeing objectives – they are to improve skills, educational outcomes and employment opportunities, promote economic growth and regeneration whilst protecting the environment, to enable people

to be healthy, independent and resilient and to build cohesive and sustainable communities.

How do we work internally? We work collaboratively, across service areas and Cabinet Portfolios to achieve our corporate plan objectives and contribute to our wellbeing goals. In relation to this meeting of the city council, the question being asked relates to a number of portfolios: City Services, Regulatory and Statutory services, Communities and Resources my own regeneration and housing portfolio. How are we held to account? Our decisions are scrutinised by you our peers. As Cabinet Members we attend Scrutiny meetings. Membership is cross party. These are public meetings and it's very pleasing to see in the gallery today regular regular attendees. All of our decisions are recorded and published in the public domain. Furthermore this Labour Administration also established the Fairness Commission to consider the fairness of our policies and decision making.

Some of the interventions we have implemented include the Community Safety Engagement Hub. This is based at Malpas Fire station and is a multi-agency community safety base. It's where our partners work together particularly on anti-social behaviour. Enabling them to share data and information and support their collaborative work. We have also implemented CPI PSPOs, we work with the BID and businesses in night time economy to develop application for the Purple Flag Award. We have also secured inward investment in regeneration schemes. We support small businesses with grants and business development advice and we have developed our city centre master plan to guide us. We have also developed residential accommodation in the city centre in partnership with not for profit sector and private sector developers converting disused buildings into homes.

This evening as the police have reported, they are also taken actions in relation to the City Centre and they have given a commitment to a robust approach to addressing disorder in the city centre. All of these interventions help support improvements in our city centre. '

Councillor Ray Mogford asked a supplementary question asking if the Cabinet Member was appalled that 3000 people sign a petition because they do not think things are happening fast enough. The Cabinet Member responded that she welcomed any engagement with the democratic process.

iii) Questions to the Cabinet Member – Licencing and Regulation

Councillor Joan Watkins asked the follow question that had been submitted:

'The developer Redrow now having purchased the USW Campus in Caerleon for £6.2 million with the intention of building some 220 houses on the site although a planning application will have to be made, there is considerable concern as to the impact such a development will have on traffic and Air quality in the village. Given Air Pollution levels are already considerably higher through the one way system than permitted by EU regulations can the Member clarify just what action is being taken to reduce the pollution levels as opposed to just the monitoring process which has been in place for a very long time with little or no action taken on the findings.'

The Cabinet Member provided the following response:

'It would clearly be inappropriate to comment on the proposed housing development on the Caerleon Campus site as that will be a matter for Planning Committee to determine. One of the relevant planning considerations that will have to be taken into account will be the potential impact on traffic congestion and air pollution, as compared

with previous activity on the site. But that will depend on the developers' traffic management plans and impact assessments.

However, with regard to the action that the Council has taken. A number of studies have been undertaken in relation to air pollution in Caerleon. Unfortunately, due to the constricted road network there is little that can be done in the way of simple physical improvements. Fundamentally, the problem is due to the sheer volume of traffic on the roads in Newport, not just Caerleon.

Newport City Council has developed supplementary planning guidance to address issues of air quality. This was adopted in February 2018, and we the first local authority in Wales to do this. The SPG raises the profile of air quality issues in the planning process. Sustainable Travel Supplementary planning guidance is currently being developed that will complement the air quality SPG. This will embed the principles of sustainable travel in the planning process, including measures to encourage the use of public transport, active travel (cycling & walking) and car sharing, which are key to reduce pollution for both air quality and greenhouse gases.

Back in March of this year, I approved a draft Sustainable Travel Strategy for consultation, designed to pull together a number of actions aimed at reducing pollution generated by Newport's transport network. The strategy identifies ways to improve public transport and encourage cycling and walking, suggests increasing electric vehicle charging points and gives guidance on planning applications to ensure they all play a part in how the city's transport network can improve public health, reduce pollution levels and limit the extent of global warming. The strategy does not set out detailed proposals but provides a framework to develop local action plans.

The Council has already declared 11 Air Quality Management Areas across the city, including Caerleon. These AQMA's are areas where pollution exceeds air quality objectives – caused by excessive road traffic. AQMAs will be a focal point when developing the local action plans. Road traffic results in carbon dioxide emissions which is a greenhouse gas contributing to climate change. To minimise the impact of climate change, scientists have predicted we have 12 years to curb carbon dioxide emissions. With this in mind, rather than just develop an Air Quality Action Plan to meet government legislation, the Council is looking to develop and implement a wider Sustainable Travel Strategy.

The draft Sustainable Travel Strategy was the subject of public consultation for a period of 6 weeks from 13th May to the 30th June 2019. We are now in the process of analysing the results and refining the strategy and a report will be taken to Cabinet in September to agree and adopt the final Strategy.

Once this framework is agreed, the next step will be to develop local plans for each of the 11 AQMA's including Caerleon. That will involve more focussed consultation and engagement within each area, as the development and implementation sustainable transport measures within each locality will require working in partnership with other agencies and public co-operation. We all need to take responsibility and ask the question how can I make my journey less polluting.'

Councillor Joan Watkins asked a supplementary question asking for detail on how many responded to the recent consultation on to Air Quality Management Areas, and what specific plans the Cabinet Member had to improve access to the village of Caerleon given the potential development.

The Cabinet Member reiterated that he was not able to comment on the development as that was a matter for the Planning Committee. Regarding specific numbers of respondents to the consultation, the Cabinet Member advised Councillor Watkins that he would provide a written response to this.

iv) Questions to the Cabinet Member – Education and Skills

Councillor Joan Watkins asked the following question that had been submitted:

'Given that two secondary schools in Newport remain in special measures Newport high and St Julian's (St Julian's now for 2 years) and another Llanwern is in the red zone Can the Cabinet Member give an update as to the progress all these schools are making and how long before they can be removed from special measures or the red zone. Additionally can the Member guarantee that other schools eg John Frost are not in danger of falling into these poor categories?'

The Cabinet Member provided the following response:

' Newport High, St Julians and Llanwern schools have continued on an upward trajectory since the time of their Estyn Inspections. I have full admiration for the resilience, hard work and commitment of all staff within those schools whilst on this important improvement journey. Only Estyn, Her Majesties inspectorate can determine when a school can be removed from a category of requiring significant improvement or special measures. It is the Local Authority that ensures that the most appropriate support is provided to each of these schools so that they can achieve sustained success in the future. Sustainability requires the correct amount of support over the correct amount of time and the meeting of Estyn Standards.

All schools in Wales are subject to the National Categorisation Process and I strongly dispute Councillor Watkins use of inappropriate terminology in her question when she refers to poor categories. There is no such thing as a poor category that is a term that has been completely fabricated and to randomly suggest that any school could fall into an imaginary category is completely unacceptable. Categorisation is used to determine the level of support a school receives. All of our schools have a variety of good practise which is shared and celebrated throughout the region, not just Newport. Is there anyone else in this Chamber who does not understand that the colour or categorisation of a school does not reflect the whole school but in fact identifies if there are any areas that require additional support. As I have explained many times to Councillor Watkins many times, the level of support required by each school will vary depending on the particular issue. It could be relating to staffing issues, management, attendance, educational results or governance of the school, and all of us in this room are Governors. It may be one individual issue, or several. So the circumstances will dictate the support and time involved.

The process ensures that the support is provided in a timely and appropriate way to ensure each school can secure the best outcomes for our children and young people. It involves not only the Local Authority and Estyn, but also EAS which is itself reviewed by the join executive group consisting of the 5 cross party Cabinet Members from the Gwent Area. I would like to take this opportunity to inform you all of the excellent work, which has arisen from each of these schools with outstanding examples, such as:

John Front is leading cutting edge practice through the raising achievement of disadvantages youngster project. The focus of the project is to raise aspirations of free school meal pupils using a positive assessment and tracking programme supported and directed by strong teaching and learning. The school has also reported a provisional attendance rate of 92.6% this academic year. This is a 1.3% higher than the attendance rate last academic year and 0.5% above the individual school target. Each school has a different target because it has a different cohort of pupils and circumstances.

During the last academic year, Newport High School demonstrated a 14.5% rise in the number of young people gaining A-C GCSEs including English and Maths. This was the largest improvement of this indicator in Newport.

Llanwern High has improved its attendance by 1.6% this year. Provisional data indicates that this is the strongest secondary attendance this year.

St Julians has demonstrated a significant improvement in GCSE Maths with 63% of all pupils obtaining A to c grade. This has exceeded Welsh Government Modelled expectations so it is more than the Welsh Government would expect for this school and it is an achievement that that the whole school community should be proud of.*

These are all examples of excellent work that is being undertaken in these schools, and I say to Councillor Watkins again you should be lauding all the amazing work being undertaken by young people, Head teachers, all school staff, parents, carers, congratulating them on their achievements and stopping the constant criticism and negativity.

To reiterate, all our schools have a wide range of issues to consider and celebrate. Newport City Council and the Educational Attainment Service continue to work together to develop the best educational achievement service to pupils across this city.

To sum up, all the schools in Newport are categorised by Estyn, and are fully supported in all areas of their work. The level of support is set by the category. Every action is consistently taken to improve schools and prevent negative events and I repeat my thanks to all young people, Teachers, school staff, parents and carers, and congratulate them on their achievement. ‘

Councillor Joan Watkins asked a supplementary question relating to the use of funds for reserve project. Councillor Watkins was advised that this did not relate to the original question and was a new subject matter. The Cabinet Member advised that a written response to this question would be provided following the submission of a full written question from the Councillor.

Councillor Joan Watkins asked the following question that had been submitted:

‘A recent FOI to Gwent Police has shown there were 121 referrals from Newport comprehensive schools since June 2017. Worryingly 58 of these referrals related to bullying, intimidation assault and battery. However further examination of the data indicate a big variance in the number of referrals across Newport schools .St Joseph’s Catholic school had 17 referrals over the 2 year period whilst Liswerry appeared to have just 5. Is the Cabinet Member confident that all schools have robust anti bullying protocols in place and are they regularly checked by the Authority and not just left to individual schools and Governing bodies.’

The Cabinet Member responded:

‘I am confident that all Newport Schools have anti-bullying policies that outline appropriate procedures for dealing with reported incidents of bullying. All schools in Newport have anti-bullying policies that are published on individual school websites. To check the robustness of this practice, the Authority’s Educational, Safeguarding Care and Support Officer reviews these policies and judges the quality of the individual schools policies against set criteria. All incidents of bullying are recorded on individual schools management information system and are reported to the Local Authority each month. The Local Authority’s wellbeing forum routinely completes an analysis of incidents and interventions and follows up on any issues that may arise from this. This forum also identifies any training needs that arise from the analysis of the data. I am

pleased to inform Members that recent Estyn Inspections have highlighted a number of good practice in Newport Schools that I will now describe.

St Julian's Primary – Estyn specifically commented on the significant impact of pupils work to design anti-bullying posters to highlight the issue and make presentations during assemblies. As a result of this good work, pupil's behaviour has improved over time and is now extremely good.

At St Joseph's Roman Catholic High School, Estyn reported there were effectively robust systems, with very few instances of bullying or harassment.

At Malpas Park Primary, a pupil voice group reviewed pupil's responses to questionnaires and used this information to update the schools anti-bullying policy. Young people influencing policy.

There are many schools in the city engaging fully with anti-bullying week activities and a number have trained pupils as anti-bullying ambassadors, so we also have anti bullying ambassadors to support this work. There is no doubt an increasing pressure on our school leaders, teachers and inclusions staff to support the growing numbers of young people who are experiencing physical and mental health challenges. And successful collaboration is strengthening the support provided.

An excellent example is the collaboration with Aneurin Bevan University Health Board to develop the arrow project, which enables health and educational professionals to work jointly to build pupil and staff capacity around the themes of mental health, wellbeing, resilience and self-esteem. A key part of this work focuses on educating pupils on the acceptable uses of social media and distinguishing between reality and fiction. All pupils also have access to the school based counselling service which is commissioned by Newport from the University of South Wales. Pupils can request access to the service or they can make an online referral via the website.

In conclusion, I am fully confident that all schools have robust anti-bullying protocols in place which are appropriately checked by the authority to support individual schools and governing bodies.'

v) Questions to the Cabinet Member – Culture and Leisure

Following a point of order from the Cabinet Member and a challenge about whether she was accusing a Council officer of deliberately providing false and misleading information, Councillor Joan Watkins formally retracted that part of her question that referred to the information being "patently untrue".

Councillor Watkins then asked the following amended question:

'We were advised in September 2018 that detailed plans were being developed to reinstate the Splash Park at Tredegar Park to be opened in 2019 and that a planning application was to be lodged imminently. Can the Cabinet Member explain incorrect information was given out and why the promise to install this facility has now been scrapped to the disappointment of many children and families?'

The Cabinet Member provided the following response:

'In September 2018, The Council's Director for Place responded to an enquiry from a Member of the public. The response correctly advised that Officers had been developing plans to reinstate a splash pad at Tredegar Park. The status of detail within those plans is frankly irrelevant. This was the correct operation position at that point in time with the views being that the plans were significantly now developed to enable a

planning application to be submitted shortly. The advice sought to reach this stage may have been basic advice but clearly officers felt it was satisfactory in developing the proposal for consideration and a planning application to shortly be developed. Therefore, I reiterate that incorrect advice was not given to anybody.

I have previously advised Councillor Watkins on 28 May, during ongoing dialogue between officers and myself as the Cabinet Member which as you should know is a regular aspect of project development prior to final approval. I asked for the proposals to be reviewed as I held some concerns about the accessibility and year round availability of a splash pad. As a consequence of these discussions I have chosen Pedal Power scheme which will open all year round and promoting health and wellbeing to adults, children of all abilities, ages and more importantly, disabilities.'

Councillor Joan Watkins asked a supplementary question, querying whether £2 wrist bands would be an option to enable a splash pad to be cost neutral, highlighting that many neighbouring authorities had similar facilities.

The Cabinet Member responded that charging for access to a splash pad was not acceptable, and would make it inaccessible for many families. The Cabinet Member reiterated that this was a Cabinet Member decision that had been taken.

10. Questions to the Chairs of Committees

There were no questions to the Chairs of Committees.

The meeting terminated at 7.40 pm