

Minutes



Council

Date: 27 April 2021

Time: 5.00 pm

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

Apologies: Councillor G Giles

1. Minutes

The Minutes of the Council meeting held on 3 March 2021.

Item 4 Notice of Motion: M4 Relief Road

Councillor M Evans asked that the statistic be corrected under the above item from 8% to 98% which referred to the area within the black route being untouched.

Item 6 Revenue Budget and MTFP Final Proposals

Councillor M Evans statement was to be corrects where he welcomed the proposals in relation to parking charges and did not support parking charges as alluded to in the Minutes.

Resolved: That the Minutes of 3 March 2021 were agreed subject to the above.

2. Appointments

To consider the proposed appointments set out in the report

Councillor Harvey moved the appointments set out in the Report, as agreed by the Business managers, subject to the additional appointments set out below.

Resolved: That the following appointments be agreed.

Governing Body Appointments

Governing Body	No. of Vacancies/Re-appointments	Nominations Received
Caerleon Lodge Primary School		Rob Isaac

St Patrick's Primary School		Matthew Pimm
Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Tyrnon		Julie Watkins

External Appointments

Organisation	No. of Vacancies / Replacements	Nominations Received
Raven House Trust	1	Councillor J Hughes

3. Members Schedule of Remuneration 2021/22

The Chair of the Democratic Services Committee presented the report.

Councillor Ferris was pleased to move formal approval and adoption of the Members Schedule of Remuneration for 2021/2022 as set out in the Appendix to the Report.

The Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (IRPW) was the body tasked with setting the remuneration levels for councils in Wales. The IRPW made determinations in relation to basic and senior salaries, and also the rates and conditions for expenses paid by public authorities.

The IRP published its Annual Report for 21/22, which was in line with the draft report considered at Democratic Services Committee in November 2020. The IRPW determined that there should be an inflationary increase of £150 to the basic annual salary of all elected members, which increased the basic salary to £14,368. This would be backdated to 1 April 2021.

Senior salaries would also be increased at the same inflationary rate of 1.06%. The individual senior salaries were set out in the Appendix and the names of the relevant members would be added to the published scheme once the appointments were confirmed at the Council AGM in May.

The amounts of the salaries were fixed by the IRP and there was no discretion for the Council to change the figures.

There were no further changes to last year's scheme of allowances.

Finally, as requested by the IRP, the Chair of Democratic Services Committee reminded members of their entitlement to claim reimbursement of care costs, on an anonymous and confidential basis, where they are eligible.

Resolved:

That Council approved and adopted the Members Schedule of Remuneration for 2021/22 as set out in Appendix 1 of the report.

4. National Non-Domestic Rates: Covid-19 Discretionary Rate Relief Schemes

The Leader Presented the report to Council.

The covid-19 pandemic created difficult trading conditions for many city businesses and in response to this Welsh Government provided measures that were intended to help businesses affected from not being able to trade as they did usually.

This report set out two rate relief schemes that directly assisted city businesses.

The first scheme was an extension of the Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Rate Relief Scheme into 2021-22, removing the requirement to pay business rates for qualifying ratepayers for a second year.

The second scheme was the Enhanced Leisure and Hospitality Rate Relief Scheme. Introduced late in the financial year, this scheme specifically assisted larger leisure and hospitality businesses and removed the need to pay business rates for both 2020-21 and 2021-22.

These schemes required Council approval since rate relief was given under the discretionary rate relief provisions. As both schemes were received late in financial year, with the need to act quickly to ensure that businesses benefited straight away, the schemes were approved by the Leader under emergency provisions.

This ensured ratepayers did not have the worry about paying their rates in 2021-22 and the rate relief was swiftly applied to their rate accounts and notifications issued before the first instalment was due in April.

This report sought formal retrospective approval and ratification of the resolutions agreeing to the adopt the schemes.

Comments from Councillors:

Cllr Al-Nuaimi supported the report and was pleased to see the help delivered to business in a timely manner ahead of Council through the urgent report and decision taken by the Leader of the Council. Councillor Al-Nuaimi also thanked both the UK Central Government and Welsh Government for the help received as a council and within the community. It was hoped that the relief would see businesses in a better place.

Councillor Fouweather echoed the comments above and stressed the importance of this relief for small businesses being advertised properly by the Council to ensure that business were aware of this. It was hoped that this would be done and that a good number of businesses would apply for this help.

Resolved:

That the Council agreed to adopt:

1. Welsh Government's Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Rate Relief Scheme for 2021-2, and
2. Welsh Government's Enhanced Leisure and Hospitality Rate Relief Scheme 2020-21 and 2021-22 by making the appropriate determination and decision, as required by Sections 47(1)(a) and 47(3) respectively of the Local Government Finance Act 1988, and set out in the Appendix to this report.

5. Pay and Reward Policy 2021/22

The Council's Pay and Reward Policy for the workforce is an annual report that requires adoption by Council. This policy sets out the internal mechanisms for remunerating Council officers and provides any changes since the last adoption.

The policy was last approved in November 2020 and as such there were no proposed changes to it this year. It was however highlighted that the annual gender pay gap would also be published on the Council's website. The Leader was pleased to report that the mean pay gap decreased for a second year to 1.92% from last year's reported 3.6%. The Leader reported in November that the 2019 median gap had closed entirely as the analysis of the data showed that the median point of hourly pay was the same for both men and women.

There was a very slight change to this and there was a median pay gap of 0.57% for 2020. The Council's gender pay gap continued to compare favourably with other Councils across Wales and the UK average of 17% but we would maintain efforts to eliminate the pay gap between men and women employed by the Council.

The Council was committed to conducting equal pay audits on a three yearly basis and this was due to be carried out in this calendar year.

Resolved:

That Council approved and updated the Pay and Reward Policy in order to meet the statutory requirement for a pay policy statement to be approved and published by Council on an annual basis.

6. Standards Committee Minutes: 15 April 2021

The Committee met on 15 April 2021 where it was recommended that Council adopt the new Employee Code of Conduct and its inclusion within the Constitution.

7. Questions to the Leader of the Council

The Leader announced the following before proceeding with Questions.

- **Funding awarded for leisure centre**

Last month the leader updated Council on the proposed new leisure and well-being centre located in the heart of our city.

The Leader was pleased to confirm that the council had successfully secured £7 million of Welsh Government Transforming Towns funding towards the project.

The purpose-built centre would provide state-of-the-art facilities for residents and would also pave the way for the redevelopment of the existing Newport Centre site to provide a brand new further education facility for Coleg Gwent.

Final proposals and designs were being worked on ahead of the submission of a full planning application, expected later this year.

- **Transporter Bridge funding**

Another of the Council's flagship projects was boosted by positive news with confirmation of a £1.5m grant from Welsh Government for the Transporter Bridge transformation project.

The funds would complement the £8.75m awarded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, and the £1m capital funding that the council also committed to the project.

The Leader would very much look forward to opening the new and improved facilities in 2023.

- **20mph speed limits**

Our teams had been working hard to introduce 20mph speed limits across a number of residential streets in six of our city's wards.

The measures were being introduced to help improve safety within residential streets to support people to feel confident choosing sustainable travel options such as walking and cycling – something the council was actively promoting through its active travel schemes.

- **Active travel**

The Leader was pleased to confirm that Newport was set to benefit from almost £10m of Welsh Government funding to improve a number of active travel routes across the city.

The funding sees over £8m allocated to the construction of a new footbridge at Devon Place, linking it across the main railway line to Queensway.

A further £100k was allocated to improve the canal link path between Bettws and Malpas. £61k would help develop active travel paths at Lliswerry Pond, providing an off-road option linking with the surrounding area and Newport International Sports Village.

The council would also receive £751k in core grants, which would go towards developing new schemes identified as part of the 2017/18 active travel network map review. The Leader thanked everyone who had taken part in that public consultation. A further consultation with proposed new routes based on the suggestions received would begin very soon.

- **Electric refuse vehicle**

Last month we were incredibly proud to launch Wales' first electric-powered refuse collection vehicle.

It was being used on collection rounds across the city, and would service areas such as Caerleon, which was designated as a priority in terms of reducing emissions to help improve air quality levels.

The vehicle would reduce carbon emissions by approximately 25-35 tonnes per year compared to a standard, non-electric vehicle.

It formed part of a wider project to replace the council's existing vehicles with eco-friendly alternatives to become a carbon neutral organisation by 2030

- **Homelessness scheme**

In another innovative new scheme, the Leader was working with partners to provide affordable homes for people at risk of homelessness.

Working with Linc Cymru, it was agreed to lease part of Hill Street car park for a supported housing project that would feature twelve self-contained flats.

These flats would provide "move-on" accommodation for people in temporary accommodation, in a location close to essential services.

Linc Cymru would manage the tenancies and support residents, enabling them to have a more stable and secure life. The aim was to help them obtain longer-term accommodation where they could live independently.

Initial work was being progressed using permitted development rights, and consultation with neighbours has begun ahead of the submission of a full planning application.

- **UK Community Renewal Fund**

Applications to the UK Community Renewal Fund were being invited for projects in Newport.

The fund aimed to support people and communities most in need across the UK, creating opportunities to trial new approaches and innovative ideas at a local level.

As a council, we would co-ordinate the submission for projects in Newport, the Leader therefore encouraged residents to support local applications. Full details about the scheme was available on the Council's website and the closing date was Friday 21 May.

Finally, the Leader gave personal thanks to the Head Teacher of St Andrew's School, Jo Giles, her senior leadership team and all colleagues. This was in relation to the support given to the school during time of major works being carried out to the main building and the juniors had to be relocated to a temporary classroom.

The Leader extended her thanks to Newport Live and Newport Norse for transforming the connect centre into an excellent school facility.

The Leader delighted to be invited to visit the school along with the Deputy Leader who was the Chair of Governors at the School.

Leader's Questions

- Councillor M Evans:

The Conservative Group had submitted a number of Questions At Any Time (QAAT) to Cabinet Members and Questions to Council and an increasing number had been ruled as operational which meant they were not published for public to see and that Cabinet Members were not held accountable for the question. An example of this was when Councillor Routley asked the Cabinet Member for Community and Resources what happened to councillor's used electronic devices, such as laptops and iPads and whether they could be refurbished and sent out to the community, this was dealt with as operational. Councillor M Evans also observed that with regard to press releases, only good news stories were issued on behalf of the Leader or Cabinet Member but not when anything embarrassing, a statement would be released by the Council's spokesperson. When therefore would the Leader and Cabinet take responsibility for their own actions.

The Leader responded by advising that in terms of taking responsibility and as a previous Leader of the Council the current Leader was sure that Councillor M Evans was aware that the QAAT responses from Cabinet Members were in relation to policies and strategies, a strategic approach was taken. Other questions that were operational in manner were delegated to Heads of Services and officers within the Council to provide a response. Nothing was therefore hidden and all questions were subject to the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act as Councillor M Evans' colleagues were aware. The Leader was therefore happy to conclude by saying that that she and her colleagues were accountable for all of their actions and were open and transparent.

Supplementary:

Councillor M Evans had listened to Cabinet meetings, which in his terms sounded like a glorified love fest. The councillor could not remember when Cabinet last took responsibility for their actions and any mistakes were considered somebody else's fault. Councillor J Watkins sent a Question for Council in relation to the training budget and how it was spent. The answer again was that this was operational and would be answered by an officer, who would decide who attends what in relation to training courses. Councillor M Evans considered that this should be answered by Cabinet part of their responsibility and therefore asked who was running the council, the Cabinet Members or officers.

The Leader reiterated her initial response that herself and her Cabinet Member colleagues took strategic decisions in line with policies and that officers took operational decisions.

- Councillor Whitehead:

In the recent budget, the Council voted to invest £500,000 in a Covid community recovery fund to support community groups in playing their part to support responsible recovery. Councillor Whitehead therefore asked how much of this money had been distributed and to whom.

The Leader advised that none of the money had been distributed as yet, as the process would be for community groups to apply for the funding and to decide on how and where it would be spent. Cabinet took part in a participatory budget process, which was funded by the health sector for community groups to submit bids, which were assessed and voted on, which was also envisaged for the Covid community fund, where community groups would decide who received funding.

Supplementary:

Councillor Whitehead asked if the Leader would provide the information discussed above on the website, clearly marked for members of the public to find out how to apply for the money, backed up by press and social media coverage. Funding was also for all groups across the spectrum.

The Leader agreed that this was about grass roots recovery and for those groups that could not function during lockdown. The Leader recognised the impact on small income that groups may receive and also impacted on the individual in terms of their wellbeing. The Leader wanted to support their wellbeing by enabling these groups. There might also be new groups applying for this money. Officers were still working on the distribution formula to check it was possible to engage using the model mentioned above, officers had been outstanding in their work on this. The Leader would of course ensure that this funding would be well publicised and was looking to all of her councillor colleagues to help with this.

▪ Councillor C Townsend:

With appointment of Chief Executive in July last year, would the Leader provide update on the recruitment of the Strategic Director vacancies for Place and People.

The Leader thanked Councillor Townsend for her question and for her participation in last year's recruitment process last July. The Chief Executive was looking at council's organisation structure and would bring a report to the Council on this matter in due course.

▪ Councillor J Hughes:

After receiving summary of business on line bulletin, could the Leader provide an update on the work of the Public Service Board (PSB).

The Leader mentioned that this was a statutory requirement, which was established by Wellbeing and Future Generations Legislation introduced in 2015. Newport was unique in its membership and had established a wellbeing plan, which aligned to the objectives of the corporate plan.

There were a number of priorities were put in place with delegated leads from the board membership work in order to progress these for Newport citizens. As well as having statutory partners, the PSB had non statutory partners that were invited around the table these were from Public Health Wales, the Probation Service, registered social landlords, Newport Live, Newport Youth Council as well as representatives from GAVO and CAB. They came together with partners on projects that would help to benefit Newport, the participatory budget was also part of this scheme, seeing positive results.

The Leader mentioned that it would be remiss of her to mention the work of PSB and share some of the priorities, such as skills themes, sustainability themes and importantly work of the safer Newport aspect and the Newport Offer, which looked at broader aspects of living in Newport. All this work was ongoing and was pleased to report back the work that was being undertaken. The Leader also mentioned that the new format was tremendously accessible, giving everyone an overview of the PSB.

Supplementary:

Councillor Hughes asked how did the greener spaces and sustainable travel align with the local authority.

The Leader advised that one of the priorities was sustainable development and the council was working hard on this and was keen to take forward. On this subject the Leader was delighted to share with colleagues that both Cabinet and the Corporate Management Team had undertaken carbon literacy training which enabled us to be accredited as an authority. The Leader wanted to ensure that everyone informed about this. One of the key things arising from this was to sign up to sustainable travel charter, with the PSB. The Council was a significant employer across the whole of Gwent and therefore wanted to help employees and incentivise them to focus on different ways of accessing the work place. The council was also working closely with its partners such as Natural Resources Wales on infrastructure projects. Cabinet identified a significant amount of money to support sustainability activities to establish a green recovery part of this was looking into project work such as sustainable drainage and cleaning the City Centre as well as the canal. This was all being achieved with the help of the PSB.

8. Questions to the Cabinet Members

Question 1 – Cabinet Member: Licensing and Regulation

Councillor J Watkins put the following question to the Cabinet Member:

Given the recent rulings with regard to the impact poor air quality was having on health and given the sad death of the little girl in London attributed to air pollution, what plans did the Council have in place to take positive action with regard to the air quality in the one way system in Caerleon, given that years of monitoring have resulted in little or no action thus far?

Response:

I would like to thank Councillor Watkins for asking this question. One of the issues highlighted by the Coroner in his report on the tragic death of this poor girl in London was the need to raise public awareness of the impact that air pollution had on public health.

I hope that this would therefore help to get the message across to the wider community that action needed to be taken, because increased monitoring and regulation would not, of itself, be sufficient to address these environmental issues.

The Council's Senior Scientific Officer attended an Air Quality workshop recently where he was able to talk with Rosamund Kissi-Debra (the mother of the girl who had died in London) about the challenges in getting air quality messages across to communities and facilitating behaviour change to improve air quality. Raising public awareness however and engaging with the public would be a critical part of this Council's strategy for dealing with Air Quality, both in Caerleon and other areas of the City

The Cabinet Member also stressed that the Council could only act within the current regulations governing the management of air quality standards and it was for the legislators and policy makers to establish a clear framework for this work to be carried out.

Turning to the specific issues relating to Caerleon, it was a complete fallacy to say that the extensive monitoring work carried out by Environmental Health officers resulted in little or no action so far. Current positive action in Caerleon included:

A number of measures were taken to address air quality issues arising from vehicle emissions in Caerleon, for example:

- Deployment of electric refuse collection vehicles on routes in Caerleon.
- Deployment of electric buses on routes in Caerleon.
- Continuation of the Eco Stars Scheme, which facilitated less fuel use in fleets travelling around Newport, including Caerleon.
- Using the development control process to require ultra-low energy vehicle infrastructure at new developments e.g. EV charging as part of the Redrow development on the University site.
- Using development opportunities to require mitigation measures such as anti-idling controls for vehicles e.g. anti-idling of construction traffic serving refurbishment work at Charles Williams School.
- Engaging with the community of Caerleon wherever possible in relation to concerns, planning work and pending projects e.g. concerns raised by the local community about routes of construction traffic to and from the University development site routing has resulted in additional monitoring.
- Air quality issues were inextricably linked to wider initiatives regarding Climate Change and Sustainability and this work would also have beneficial impacts on all of the Newport area including Caerleon.

Future/pending action included:

- Air Quality Annual Progress Reports would be prepared with more accurate data. The current data for 2020 is clearly unreliable because traffic journeys have reduced significantly due to COVID restrictions. However, while people continued to work from home, this would continue to have a positive impact on air quality.
- The on-going work on the Sustainable Travel Strategy and the pending Air Quality Action Plan would also help to address air quality. The Air Quality Action Plan would be refreshed in 2021/22 with a view to identifying interventions for all Air Quality Management Areas, such as Caerleon. This would complement the work being done under the Sustainable Transport Plan.
- Purchase and deployment of real time monitors for three AQMA street canyons including Caerleon, where exceedances of the air quality objective were observed in a 75 meter section of High Street. This would provide data on peak pollution times which would feed into interventions that were considered as part of the Air Quality Action Plan process. Additional pollutants in the form of particulates would also be measured by these monitors.
- Setting up of Air Quality Groups for at least six of the AQMAs including Caerleon.
- Piloting of e-Taxis should include e-Taxis activity in Caerleon.
- Scoping of funding opportunity through Cardiff City Region Fund to look at problem street canyons like Caerleon High Street and engineered solutions to mitigate air quality impacts.

And those were just examples of the work that was already carried out or planned, but we did need to engage with and secure the co-operation of the public in order to deliver our air quality objectives.

Supplementary:

Councillor J Watkins welcomed the initiatives such as the electric buses and electrical waste disposal units that would go through the village once a week. Councillor J Watkins felt it was disrespectful of the Cabinet Members to suggest that the public are not aware of their responsibility, whereas the Councillor considered Caerleon residents to be responsible. Councillor J Watkins asked if the Cabinet Member thought that electric cars were affordable; as for majority of residents they would not be and asked if it was time that the Cabinet member did something positive for Caerleon and provided alternative access into the village to improve poor air quality.

The Cabinet Member suggested that the cost of cars was not for this council to decide or comment upon. The point the Cabinet Member was referring to with regard to people taking responsibility was on a global scale and not just within Newport. The Council could only do so much and all the information provided was evidenced based for Newport. Finally, the Cabinet Member stressed that the Council was doing as much as it could for the air quality in Caerleon.

Question 2 – Cabinet Member: Sustainable Development

Councillor J Watkins put the following question to the Cabinet Member:

Did the Cabinet Member agree that Section 106 monies generated in a particular ward should include the Community to have a voice in the decision making process as to how such monies were spent and if so why was this was not the process currently in place?

Furthermore, did the Cabinet Member agree that such monies should be spent entirely on innovations or improvements solely with the ward where said monies were generated?

Response:

Planning obligations were legal obligations that were entered into to mitigate the impacts of a development proposal. This could be via a planning agreement that was entered into under section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act. Hence the use of the term 'section 106 monies'

This was introduced following an act of Parliament that was laid down and agreed in 1990.

This was a fundamental piece of legislation, which had to be adhered to by the person or developer who had an interest in the land, as well as the planning authority. Planning obligations that run with the land, were legally binding and enforceable.

Should the Council spend the contributions on infrastructure or services not within the scope of the legal agreement, or if it failed to spend the contribution within the agreed timeframe, the Council would be liable to return the contributions to the developer.

It was therefore important to have some understanding of the S106 process and the parameters the Council must work within to negotiate, secure and spend S106 contributions.

And in response to the second part of the question:

The contributions that were required from the developer had to be used to address an identified need (rather than a wish list), it was important to note that proposed contributions were outlined within reports determined by Planning Committee and those reports were published in advance of the meetings. As an example, the Caerleon Campus application contained over five pages of discussion on the Section 106 contributions agreed within the Heads of Terms. These details were in the public domain and the decision of Planning

Committee took into account the officer's recommendation on these matters as well as any representations made to Committee.

Supplementary:

Councillor J Watkins was interested to hear the Cabinet Member mention to identified need and there was a clear identified need for how money was to be spent in Caerleon and nothing to interest, involve or develop children in Caerleon. There was a play area by the comprehensive school, which was out of date and there was nothing for teenagers to get involved in and enjoy. The money therefore needed to be spent on young people to engage them and improve their lives.

The Cabinet Member agreed with Councillor J Watkins' comments and advised that Redrow Housing had agreed for £1M of this money to be spent on Caerleon schools for their upkeep and five difference play recreation areas and sporting areas which included rugby and five different aspects, looking at different generational needs to support the wellbeing of young people. Also agreement was made in relation to sustainable travel, with installation of electric charging points including the widening of the public right of way, pedestrian crossings, two new bus tops as well as repairing the listed buildings. Therefor the improvements put forward by Redrow had been carefully considered and Planning Committee approved those recommendations. This would improve the area for the residents of Caerleon.

Question 3 – Cabinet Member: Leisure and Culture

Councillor A Morris put the following question to the Cabinet Member:

What attempts were made to engage with the gangs of youths who congregated at various locations across the city during lockdown.

Response:

The Cabinet Member advised that officers had gone out to engage with youngsters but unfortunately the community centres were closed due to lockdown. Children with certain needs had been considered and looked after.

Supplementary:

Councillor Morris considered that the Council had not engaged with youngsters who had nothing to do nowhere to go and not wearing masks or social distancing. Would the Council be engaging with youngsters to show them the error of their ways and the dangers that they were putting themselves and other people in presently.

The Cabinet Member advised that these were policing issues. We as a Council had no rights or legislation in place to tell people to wear masks or not to loiter. A Section 48 dispersal order had been used in Alway as a result of engaging with the police and it was advised that Councillor Morris do the same for Lliswerry by contacting Inspector Cawley.

Question 4 – Deputy Leader/Cabinet Member: City Services

Councillor W Routley put the following question to the Cabinet Member:

Flooding event 23 of December is subject to a section 19 investigation, also the local storage of Sandbanks initiative as previously discussed, could you please update Council on these two subjects.

Response:

The section 19 investigation is currently underway together with an enquiry being led by NRW into causation and contributory factors for the flooding event in the eastern catchment of the City. When findings are finalised and received these will be published on the council website

Local Authorities have no duty to provide sandbags to the public, however NCC and SWFR often support residents at times of flooding. At my request, officers are currently reviewing options for some localised storage for sand bags at strategic sites and I will announce further details when ready. Business, Farm and Agricultural landowners need to ensure they have their own flood plans and NRW can provide further advice on this.

Supplementary:

Councillor Routley mentioned that it was good to speak with the Cabinet Member and officers in relation to the 23 December, which caught everyone out however, there was a massive shortage of sand bags in rural area. Telford Street Depot was not open to collect sand bags, the Council could not deliver sandbags. Farmland had been identified and would safely store local sandbags in for residents to prepare in advance or on the day of such an event can access these sandbags to help prevent flooding to their property. This initiative released the council to give a more proactive approach when this is repeated. Small improvements such as these would give hope for residents. Councillor Routley offered help to the Cabinet Member to create distribution centres.

The Deputy Leader advised that sights had already been identified within Newport, such those as mentioned in the Langstone Ward and the council was also looking at other suitable locations and once this was completed the council were looking draft a policy and agreements with all those that had accepted.

9. **Date of Next Meeting: 11 May 2021 at 5pm - Council AGM**