

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

20TH NOVEMBER 2019, AT 6.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors R. J. Laight (Chairman), A. J. B. Beaumont (Vice-Chairman), S. R. Colella, R. J. Deeming, G. N. Denaro, S. P. Douglas, A. B. L. English, M. Glass, C.A. Hotham, S. A. Hughes, R. J. Hunter, H. J. Jones, A. D. Kent, J. E. King, A. D. Kriss, L. C. R. Mallett, K.J. May, M. Middleton, P. M. McDonald, H. D. N. Rone-Clarke, M. A. Sherrey, C. J. Spencer, P.L. Thomas, M. Thompson, J. Till, K. J. Van Der Plank, S. A. Webb and P. J. Whittaker

WELCOME

The Chairman invited the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Health and Wellbeing, Councillor S. Webb to introduce this item.

Councillor Webb welcomed Mr Ian and Mrs Vicki Jones to the meeting, who spoke about the loss of their son, Tom, and Mr David Brown from the West Mercia Search and Rescue Team. Mr and Mrs Jones were supporting the Home and Dry campaign in their son's memory and thanked Council for the opportunity to highlight its importance through this meeting. Mr Brown gave a short presentation on the work of the Team and the campaign that Mr and Mrs Jones were supporting. He encouraged all present to complete the online Home and Dry course and to share this with friends and colleagues.

Councillor Webb, the Chairman and Leader took the opportunity to thank Mr and Mrs Jones and Mr Brown for attending the meeting and highlighting the important work of the Search and Rescue Team and the Home and Dry campaign.

49\19

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors S. Baxter and S. Hession. It was also noted that Councillor H. Rone-Clarke would be late.

50\19

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor R. Hunter declared an other disclosable interest in item 14, the Portfolio Holder report for Strategic Housing and Health and Wellbeing as he was employed by an independent charitable provider of social housing, in Birmingham.

51\19

MINUTES

The minutes of the Council meeting held on 25th September 2019 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 25th September 2019 be approved.

52\19

TO RECEIVE ANY ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE CHAIRMAN AND/OR HEAD OF PAID SERVICE

The Chairman made the following announcements:

- The Remembrance parade and service had been well attended.
- He had attended the visit from Princess Anne to a local Bromsgrove business.
- The Primrose Hospice Tree of Light and Christmas Light Switch On in Bromsgrove High Street would take place on Saturday 23rd November.
- The Rubery Primrose Hospice Tree of Light and Christmas Light Switch On would take place on 30th November.
- The Chairman's Christmas Carol Service would take place on at 6.30 pm on 11th December at St John's Church and everyone was welcome to attend.

It was also noted that the Christmas Lights at Barnt Green would be switched on, on 30th November, along with those at Catshill, Alvechurch would be on 6th December and Hagley on 7th December.

53\19

TO RECEIVE ANY ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE LEADER

The Leader advised that the Climate Change Working Group had now been established and had met in October and would meet again in December. Whilst these meetings were held in private, the Working Group would be discussing how best to engage with the public and further information would be provided in the New Year.

As this was the last Council meeting of 2019 the Leader took the opportunity to wish everyone a Merry Christmas.

Councillor S. Colella took the opportunity to thank the Leader, the Deputy Chief Executive and members of the Place Team for the work they carried out in supporting residents during the recent flooding. He also asked whether, under these exceptional circumstances there would be full investigation and those responsible help to account.

The Leader responded that a Section 19 notice had been issued by Worcestershire County Council and assured him that a full and detailed investigation would take place.

54\19

TO RECEIVE COMMENTS, QUESTIONS OR PETITIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

The Chairman invited Mr. D. Smith, a member of the public, to present his question:

“Would the council please support the start up of a new group Called Mental Health Together?

Not asking for financial help, just an endorsement, but help with getting funding for Bromsgrove would be a bonus. When i say endorsement i mean help with getting the message out there.

The group was started in Leamington 2 years ago and they run walk and talk events, run and talk events and other social evenings. I am a trustee of this group and would like to expand to Bromsgrove.”

In presenting his question Mr. Smith provided background information in respect of the group and how he hoped to receive support from the Council in being able to set up a similar group in Bromsgrove and the aims of such of group.

The Leader thanked Mr. Smith for bringing this matter to the Council’s attention and confirmed that Councillor S. Webb, Portfolio Holder for Strategic Housing and Health and Wellbeing would look at how best to take this matter forward.

55\19

RECORD OF DECISION TAKEN UNDER URGENCY PROCEDURES

Councillor G. Denaro, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Finance and Enabling, provided background information in respect of this item and reminded Members that the Council had initially chosen to join the Worcestershire Pilot Scheme which, unfortunately had not been extended beyond March 2020. A decision therefore needed to be made in order to join the Worcestershire Pool to ensure that any share of Business Rates growth for 2020/21 was not returned to Central Government but remained in Worcestershire. This decision needed to be made before 25th October and full details were provided within the agenda item.

56\19

REVISED POLITICAL BALANCE REPORT

Councillor G. Denaro, the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Enabling presented the report, which he explained was necessary following recent political group movements. He understood that those affected by the changes had been consulted and had been in agreement to the committee membership numbers detailed in the appendix to the report.

The recommendations were proposed by Councillor Denaro and seconded by Councillor K. May.

Councillor P. McDonald challenged the accuracy of the calculation and advised Members that the Overview and Scrutiny Board was one of the most important parts of the Council. He questioned the calculation in respect of the rounding up and down of the figures for that Board and the Planning Committee and suggested that the figures had been manipulated to the advantage of the leading Group. He asked for the item to be deferred in order for the anomalies he referred to be addressed. This was supported by Councillor L. Mallett.

Councillor Denaro responded that he and the leading group had played no part in the discussions that he understood had taken place between the Group Leaders as the changes that had arisen did not impact on the leading group. It was his understanding that the three groups concerned had agreed what was in front of Council this evening.

During the following debate a number of areas were discussed including:

- The impact of a number of dormant committees on the calculations and the removal of those committees from the calculation.
- Consideration being given to the bottom line of the calculation and the impact this had on committee places for some groups.
- The item be deferred and further consideration be given to the figures as there seemed to be a degree of misunderstanding of the formula of the mathematical calculation.
- The matter be considered by the Constitution Review Working Group, with particular consideration being given to the removal of the dormant committees from the calculation/constitution or combined with other committees.
- Why the points raised had not been considered prior to Council as the Group Leaders had been aware of the situation for some time.

The Monitoring Officer clarified that all Group Leaders had been consulted and that the political balance rules were straightforward and had been adhered to with the bottom line reflecting the overall majority. The additional dormant committees referred to were in the Council's Constitution and therefore had to be included within the calculation. Any changes that were suggested would need to be considered in the first instance by the Constitution Review Working Group with a report coming before full Council if appropriate.

Whilst Councillor McDonald acknowledged that he had been advised of the changes he was given to understand that there was nothing he could do and he believed that this was completely wrong. The Chief Executive again confirmed that officers had worked within the parameters of the law when preparing the calculation for the report.

On being put to the vote the amendment to defer the report was lost.

RESOLVED that

- a) the Committees set out in the table at appendix 1 of the report be appointed and that the representation of the different political groups on the Council on those committees be as set out in that table until the next Annual Meeting of the Council, or until the next review of political representation under Section 15, of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, whichever is earlier, be approved; and
- b) Members be appointed to the Committees and as substitute members in accordance with the nominations to be made by Group Leaders, as attached at appendix 1 of these minutes.

57\19

CONSTITUTION UPDATE REPORT

Councillor G. Denaro, the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Enabling introduced the report and advised that the changes had been agreed at the Constitution Review Working Group meeting and were in respect of the Council Procedural Rules for Extra Ordinary meetings. The changes were legislative and brought the Procedural Rules in line with the legal requirement.

Councillor Denaro proposed the recommendation and it was seconded by Councillor K. May.

It was noted that the report did not refer to the Liberal Democrat Group being represented at the meeting, although they had been present and it was confirmed that this would be rectified in future reports.

RESOLVED that the Council Procedure Rules in respect of extra ordinary meetings be amended as detailed in appendix 1 of the report.

58\19

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE AUDIT, STANDARDS & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

Councillor L. Mallett, Chairman of the Audit, Standards and Governance Committee, proposed the recommendation and it was seconded by Councillor P. Whittaker.

Councillor Mallett explained that this matter had been discussed and agreed by the Constitution Review Working Group before it was considered by the Audit, Standards and Governance Committee. The 2 specific areas for discussion, which had been agreed by Worcestershire, were in respect of gifts and hospitality, the original threshold had been suggested at £25 but Members thought this was quite high and had suggested £15, which was accepted and the inclusion of trolling under examples of bullying and harassment, which was a sign of modern times and had also accepted.

Councillor M. Thompson commented that, whilst he was supporting of the changes, he questioned why the Council had such a document as it did not appear that the Council took such matters seriously. He gave a

number of examples at previous meeting where inappropriate comments had been made by Councillors without reprimand. He also questioned the definition of trolling and whether a better definition was needed. Councillor Kent supported the comments made by Councillor Thompson.

The Chairman commented that whilst he could not stop things from being said, whilst he was in the chair he asked Members to be more considerate and highlighted that it was everyone's responsibility to work towards improving the Council's reputation and behave in an appropriate manner.

RESOLVED that the changes to the Code of Conduct, to reflect the Committee on Standards in Public Life (CCSPL) Best Practice recommendations be approved.

59\19

TO NOTE THE MINUTES FROM THE AUDIT, STANDARDS & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 10TH OCTOBER 2019

The Minutes from the Audit, Standards and Governance Committee meeting held on 10th October 2019 were submitted for information and noted by Members.

60\19

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE CABINET

Wyre Forest Local Plan – BDC Response to Pre Submission Plan

Councillor A. Kent, Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regulatory Services, proposed the recommendations in respect of the Wyre Forest Local Plan Response and these were seconded by Councillor K. May.

In presenting the report Councillor Kent highlighted that the response was similar to that already provided at the earlier stage of the process and that he was disappointed that Wyre Forest had not taken on board the comments from that initial stage. However, he was able to confirm that since the report had been prepared officers had met with Worcestershire County Council (WCC) and Wyre Forest District Council, although there was some way to go with these discussions and there continued to be a lack of evidence in respect of the modelling. This lack of evidence has left the Council with no option other than to raise the possibility of non-compliance with the duty to co-operate.

During the following debate Members discussed a number of issues, including:

- Concerns around the impact on the Hagley area in particular.
- Disappointment with the timescales, which had meant that the response had been sent prior to agreement at Council.
- The impact on the eastern side of the District and in particular Whitford Road, where there was currently a major development under consideration.

- The ongoing issues with WCC in respect of highways issues and the need to look at the traffic flows and the impact on them throughout the town centre.
- Whether this provided further evidence to support the need for a western relief road.
- The impact on the public in general and the lack of engagement from Wyre Forest. It was questioned whether it should go back out to consultation as there appeared to have been limited consultation as far as Members were aware.

Councillor Kent thanked Members for their comments and assured them that he would do everything within his power to ensure that this was dealt with satisfactorily and would be lobbying those involved at every opportunity at both District and County Council levels and he had taken the concerns raised on board.

RESOLVED that

- a) the Officer response to the Wyre Forest Local Plan Review Pre Submission Plan as its formal response and that it is confirmed with Wyre Forest District Council as such be approved; and
- b) Delegated Authority be given to the Head of Planning and Regeneration to ensure that BDC is represented at the Examination in Public element of the Wyre Forest Local Plan review.

Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2020/21

Councillor G. Denaro, the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Enabling proposed the recommendation and this was seconded by Councillor K. May.

In proposing the recommendation Councillor Denaro explained that the Council was obliged to bring this Scheme forward to Council each year, last year there had been a consultation which had resulted in 85% of the Council Tax being covered and it was proposed that there would be no change for 2020/21. He further commented that the Overview and Scrutiny Board, who had pre-scrutinised the report, had asked for different levels of support to be considered in the future and it was confirmed that a full review would take place in the following year with all options being considered with a business case being brought forward in support of the different options.

Members asked that 100% be included within the business case going forward for 2021/22.

RESOLVED that no changes be made to the Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2020/21 other than the uprating of allowances, disregards and other financial limits be approved.

61\19

TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS OF THE CABINET HELD ON 23RD OCTOBER 2019

Councillor C. Hotham accepted that the minutes were for noting, but questioned the length of the meeting, as he believed that it was incorrect, as it appeared a very short period of time to consider such important matters.

The Leader explained that detailed discussions had already taken place prior to the meeting at the Leader's Group meeting, when strategic and items for Cabinet were discussed in some detail. It was suggested that these were private meetings and therefore not appropriate nor good practice for the democratic process when Council business was discussed in a private meeting.

Members questioned whether these meetings were minuted and whether those minutes were available for at least all Group Leaders to have access to them and whether they would be able to attend the meetings. The Monitoring Officer as asked to clarify the position in respect of this.

Reference was made to the move to a strong Leader format from a Committee format and how this had impacted on decision that were made, which some Members felt were in some cases, no longer open and transparent.

It was commented that if copies of the notes from the meetings were not provided then a Member could, if necessary, request them through a Freedom of Information request.

The Minutes from the Cabinet meeting held on 23rd October 2019 were submitted for information and noted by Members.

62\19

TO RECEIVE AND CONSIDER A REPORT FROM THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR STRATEGIC HOUSING AND HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Councillor S. Webb, Portfolio Holder for Strategic Housing and Health and Wellbeing presented her annual report.

Councillor Webb advised that she did not intend to go through the report in detail, but took the opportunity to highlight and discuss some of the information it provided, and would then answer any questions Members had on it.

She began by saying how honoured she was to have this portfolio and being given the opportunity to work alongside and support the many conscientious, diligent and caring officers of the Council and also the numerous external organizations and partners who do so much good for the people of Bromsgrove. Whilst she had only worked on the portfolio for less than six months, she had been impressed by the many

compassionate people in the district and the excellent support they offered to residents.

As portfolio holder, she looked forward to supporting the Council and its partners in the future to help them to continue the good work they did for the people of Bromsgrove, she would also work hard to make sure that the services continued to improve and just as importantly, reached every single resident that required them. This was where Members could help by ensuring all residents were aware of the support that was available. The report provided details on many of the support services that the Council and its partners' offered, such as:

- The Healthy Horizons which was an individually tailored program of physical activity for people who suffer from many common ailments.
- The Strong and Steady Falls Prevention Intervention scheme
- The successful BURT bus scheme, which was now being used by more residents with mobility issues, with a 10% increase in registered users last year alone.
- The Couch to 5k Scheme, which in addition to being great for health was also a great way for residents to get out and about and make new friends.
- The new community exercise classes including Yoga, Pilates, Tai Chi and Zumba
- The Escape Pain scheme to support residents who lived with arthritis
- Neuro Exercise sessions where staff worked with neuro physios at POWCH and Images gym on the provision of an exercise class for people living with neuro conditions such as MS, Parkinson's disease, head injuries, and many more.
- The Active Kitchen, which provided 18 hours of activity and 57 meals served to young people aged 8-16. This is something she was currently working hard on introducing to more areas in the district, and new partnerships had been forged with Catshill Baptist Church and the foodbank there, St Chads Church in Rubery and the West Mercia Police Safer Neighbourhood teams in the 5 targeted wards

There were more schemes and support packages available, many of which were listed in her report. She urged Members to use their local knowledge and contacts to ensure the Council reached every single resident in need, and every resident that would benefit from these services receives them.

Councillor Webb also took the opportunity to update Members on a subject that was very close to her heart. She had pushed for and supported new programs within the district to support residents with dementia and those people who care for them. The estimated percentage of the UK population aged over 60 with dementia was between 5-8%, and as over 20% of residents in Bromsgrove were aged over 65 it was something that has touched everyone in the Chamber somehow. She was pleased to report that Worcestershire County

Council had set aside a sum of money for each district to start up a Dementia Meeting place and she was working with the Public Health Practitioner to try and bring this forward. She asked that all Members make a physical effort in their wards to ensure all residents who would benefit from this were made aware of it.

Councillor Webb then spoke about strategic housing, as this had so much impact on the health and well-being of residents. Firstly, reducing Homelessness was a real priority to her. She considered the best way to tackle this was by active prevention, and also by ensuring early intervention if someone was found rough sleeping. To enable this the Council continued to fund a rapid-response service via Caring for Communities and People (CCP) who specialized in helping people at risk of homelessness to avoid ending up being on the streets. She took the opportunity to thank the Council's partners at BDHT for the hard work they did towards both the prevention and early intervention of homelessness in Bromsgrove.

The provision of 61 new homes was planned for the Burcot Lane site and the Council continued to work with partners such as BDHT to build more. She would also be examining what extra steps the Council might be able to take to increase the supply of affordable housing, especially for local residents struggling to purchase a home, given that property prices were high here.

Councillor Webb then took the opportunity for her thanks to be formally minuted for the hard work and dedication of the many partners the Council had that supported the residents of Bromsgrove. In particular she thanked all the organizations and individuals in the Local Strategic Partnership, including the Community Wellbeing Theme Group and the Ageing Well Sub Group. She also gave her personally thanks to officers, for their support and patience with her over the last six months.

Following presentation of her report, Councillor Webb responded to a number of questions and comments made by Members, this included:

- Reference to a number of private businesses being made within the report and whether this was appropriate. It was highlighted that these businesses were service providers and the Council worked in partnership with them.
- Concerns that residents and their children had to rely on projects such as the Active Kitchen and local food banks.
- Take up of the BURT (Bromsgrove Urban and Rural Transport) services and how this service could be expanded. Councillor Webb advised that currently it was only one bus that was providing the service, but she was working to increase and promote the service. She also highlighted the recent consultation which Worcestershire County Council had organised.
- It was commented and clarified that County Councillors had contributed from their divisional funds to the Active Kitchen

project and therefore it had not been solely a District Council project.

- The wording around homelessness did not give the right impression of the Council's position on this, as it would want it to be zero and not relatively stable.
- The Council's stance on affordable housing provision in its Section 106 agreements with developers. It was discussed as to why it stated up to 40% as in some cases it could be more than this and the developer would do 100%.
- Support was given to the Dementia Group and a number of Members volunteered their services.
- The number of people on the housing waiting list and how this had increased in recent years and the data available. Councillor Webb responded that 90% of those on the list not being a high priority, she agreed to provide a full response in writing outside of the meeting.
- The community exercise class and walking for health sessions – Members asked if these would be rolled out more widely across the district. Councillor Webb agreed to provide Members with the programme outside of the meeting. She also confirmed that if there was a particular need in an area, then officers would assess what was needed.
- The definition of social housing and the difference between this and affordable, reference was also made to part ownership and social rented accommodation. There needed to be a clear definition between the two types when developers were putting forward proposals.
- It was confirmed that the Burcot Lane site, would also provide for care leavers. Councillor Webb advised those Members who had not already seen them, that there were a number of drawings and diagrams for the proposed site in the Members' Room.
- The availability of notes from the Local Strategic Partnership meetings.

The Leader thanked Councillor Webb for her first Portfolio Holder report.

63\19

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Question submitted by Councillor S. Hughes

"The Government is currently consulting over removing the right of local authorities to determine environmental standards in new homes as part of its Future Homes Standards. Does Cllr Kent agree that this could hamper our aspiration to become carbon neutral and limit our ability to set ambitious requirements for new homes as part of our review of the local plan? Will you write to the Secretary of State following the election in December to ask for a rethink?"

Councillor A. Kent, Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regulatory Services responded that unfortunately he had been away on a course for the last few days and had not been able to speak to officers to get a response to this question; he therefore agreed to provide a written response outside of the meeting.

Question submitted by Councillor S. Douglas

“What is the best way to get these two vital items, appended to the Bromsgrove District Plan 2011-2030 without delay:

- Protected provision for walking and cycling, with dropped kerbs, linked to public transport, should have priority when planning the most convenient option or getting about, and
- That all new buildings including domestic housing be carbon neutral compliant and ECP Rating A, with run-off water storage, energy generation and appropriate EV points; these having now arisen given the urgency of holding back climate change and the reduction of air pollution?”

The Leader referred the question to Councillor A. Kent, Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regulatory Services responded that unfortunately he had been away on a course for the last few days and had not been able to speak to officers to get a response to this question; he therefore agreed to provide a written response outside of the meeting.

The Monitoring Officer clarified that constitutionally the relevant Portfolio Holder was able to respond to a question in writing if it was felt more appropriate.

Question submitted by Councillor P. McDonald

“Would the Chairman of the Council please inform me of the total costs associate with the mothballing of the old Council House in Burcot Lane; for the last two years?”

The Chairman referred the question to Councillor G. Denaro, as Portfolio Holder for Finance and Enabling who confirmed that the total cost to date was £98k with a refund from the Valuation Office, following appeal, expected of £77k. This would bring the cost down to £21k.

Question submitted by Councillor A. Kriss

“The Council is obliged in law to provide public burials for residents who die having no known relatives. This work is undertaken by our team at Worcestershire Regulatory Services. Whilst there are often neighbours and occasionally friends who wish to attend to pay their last respects to the deceased, there are times where our officer is the only person present.

In recognising the contribution that all such individuals have made to life in our district can the Leader put in place a system which advises relevant ward councillors when any public burial takes place in their ward.”

The Leader responded that she had asked Worcestershire Regulatory Services to advise each Ward Councillor whenever a Public Burial of one of their Ward residents came forward so that the Member had the opportunity to attend if they so wished.

Question submitted by Councillor R. Hunter

“In recent days Bromsgrove has seen extraordinary levels of flooding. In Lickey End, for example, The Spadesbourne Brook has burst its banks. Do you share my concerns that we are not undertaking sufficient preventative work and will you commit to providing more resources for this work in next year’s budget?”

The Leader responded that everyone shared concerns about any resident who had suffered flooding in the District. However, North Worcestershire Water Management had a structure plan for maintenance. The Council was constantly reviewing this with its partners across North Worcestershire and the bulk of funding for flooding comes from Worcestershire County Council. The recent flooding in Hagley had triggered a Section 19; which meant that the County Council would do an in-depth investigation with any follow up actions required including funding. She would provide Members with an update in respect of this in due course.

64\19

MOTIONS ON NOTICE (TO FOLLOW IF ANY)

The Chairman asked Members to be concise in their discussions as there were a large number of motions to be considered at the meeting. Councillor S. Colella asked it to be noted that he had withdrawn his motion and would take the matter up directly with the relevant Portfolio Holder. He further commented that he felt that there were, in many cases, a number of other ways in which the issues raised in the motions could be dealt with and urged members to consider these before submitting a motion.

Fly Tipping

Members considered the following Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor K. Van der Plank:

“This Council notes that;

- Fly tipping cost this Council £88,000 and over 200 staff hours to clean up in the financial year 2018-19. Time and money that could be put to better use for our residents.

- Fly tipping damages our natural environment, harming both wildlife and our eco-systems.

Keeping our district clean and protecting our environment by tackling and eliminating fly tipping is essential in building a district people can enjoy and where people are proud to live

This motion calls on this Council to request that the Cabinet

- 1. Explore more effective methods of environmental enforcement in particular the levels of investment in CCTV*

2. *Make it clear this District will not tolerate fly tipping and will take a tough stance on offenders. Look into the levels of funding allocated to enable the investigation of incidents and ensure fly-tippers are held to account.*
3. *Ensure that when prosecutions occur that this is communicated widely to deter rogue operators and fly-tippers.*
4. *Raise awareness with residents through a comprehensive communication campaign including:*
 - *ensuring residents understand they must take appropriate steps to ensure they give their waste to a person who is licensed. If they don't and their rubbish is found dumped and it's tracked back to them, they will be prosecuted or receive a fixed penalty notice.*
 - *promoting the green agenda, and in particular, encouraging residents to reduce and reuse so less waste is created*
 - *encourage residents to be vigilant (whilst remaining safe) and report suspicious behaviour and incidents of fly tipping*
5. *Work with County and cross-boundary with Birmingham to explore opportunities to collaborate to reduce fly tipping and encourage and make it easy for residents to dispose of waste properly*
6. *Make it easier for our residents to access the directory of licensed waste collection companies on the environment agency website by providing a prominent link on the BDC Website alongside information about County Council tip site in our district.*
7. *Put the necessary steps in place to ensure that all fly tipped waste, whether hazardous or non-hazardous is removed within a timely, efficient and safe way.*
8. *Explore ways in which the Councils Bulky Waste Service can be expanded to take additional items that are not currently available under our disposal arrangements with the County Council and how much this would cost."*

The Motion was proposed by Councillor Van der Plank and seconded by Councillor K. May.

In proposing the Motion Councillor Van der Plank thanked the Leader for working with her to develop this motion and giving her support. She did not believe that anyone would disagree that this was a matter which needed to be addressed to ensure that the costs were put to better use and the district kept clean and be somewhere for residents to be proud to live.

Councillor Van der Plank went on to say that the suggestions she had made were practical ideas which could be easily implemented, currently the cost to the Council was £88k and 2,556 staff hours. The problem

impacted in many ways, not just the landowners, but also environmental and caused distress to residents. There had been 113 incidents since 2017 in just one street, with over a thousand areas being affected overall. Many of the actions she was suggesting were low both practical and low cost to the Council but effective. Raising awareness would play a large part and linked with the green agenda, highlighted in the Council Plan. It was important to raise awareness with residents and to encourage them to both reuse and recycle wherever possible. The Council should also take the opportunity to investigate ways in which bulky waste can be expanded. It was also important to ensure people on the borders of the District were aware that this Council was a no fly tipping zone.

In seconding the Motion Councillor May advised that she shared Councillor Van der Plank's concerns regarding the issue. It was noted that in Frankley alone in 2018-19 there had been 129 fly tips. She further advised that the Council was reviewing how enforcement was carried out across the District, and starting to do work with Parish Councils to increase the scrutiny on the rural lanes that attracted the most fly tipping. The Council already used CCTV on its main hotspot areas and were reviewing other systems that might be able to increase the effectiveness in catching those responsible. As part of working closer with Parishes and partners, the Council hoped to be able to access additional funding to support operations across the District as part of the wider Community Safety agenda and were currently working towards joint funding bids that could help further this approach without additional cost to tax payers. All prosecutions were publicised as widely as possible when they took place using social media and local newspapers. It was noted that the Council would also be including details on duty of care with future messages to residents about their domestic waste services to help educate people on the importance of checking who they use for larger waste clearance. There was also an ongoing commitment to reduce the amount of waste produced in the District through the Joint Worcestershire Waste Strategy.

Councillor May further advised that the Council was always pleased to hear from residents on any issues relating to environmental crime and information could be given over the phone or through the Council's website and would then be investigated appropriately. The Council already worked closely with neighbouring authorities and had recently supported Birmingham City Council in a prosecution of a persistent fly tipper operating across the Midlands. All fly tips were removed as quickly and efficiently as possible, with the size and logistics being the main factor in the speed of removal. Hazardous waste that required specialist contractors would be made safe and then removed as quickly as possible. The Council's bulky waste service was currently limited in what it could take as part of the disposal arrangements with Worcestershire County Council. There were ongoing discussions around the commercial opportunities of extending the service to take additional items and the service planned to investigate options around this in the future.

Councillor Kent commented that there were issues in Wythall and he was keen for residents to understand the steps that could be taken to address the matter and he suggested that a more robust enforcement process was needed, targeting this particular area of concern.

Councillor Sherrey, as Portfolio Holder for Environmental Services advised that new cameras had been delivered, some which replaced existing ones, but others which would be mobile. These would be put in hot spots together with signage which was required by law. Often such signage prior to installation of cameras was sufficient to act as a deterrent. It was noted that there was an imminent prosecution and that two further incidents were being investigated. Where applicable, prosecutions were recorded in the local press to show that the Council was willing to take the necessary steps in dealing with these incidents.

Councillor Thompson, supported by Councillor Rone-Clarke asked for the matter to be moved to the vote without further debate. The Monitoring Officer advised that it was a matter for the Chairman to decide whether the motion had been sufficiently debated and that Members had sufficient evidence to make a decision, however the proposer of the motion should be given the opportunity to sum up prior to the vote being taken.

Councillor Van der Plank indicated that she was happy for the matter to go to the vote.

On being put to the vote the Motion was carried.

Free Swimming

Members considered the following Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor S. Douglas:

“All accompanied children under 8 may swim in the new Bromsgrove pool for free. This also applies to children and adults with disabilities and their carers. The remaining children from 8-18 need this opportunity too.

This Council calls on the Cabinet to consider extending this provision to include all children from 8-18 and that the costs associated with this be built into the budget when presented to this Council in February.

So to help alleviate Bromsgrove’s child poverty in a small way this Council proposes that the first stage of extending free children’s swimming is enabled.”

The Motion was proposed by Councillor Douglas and seconded by Councillor H. Rone-Clarke.

In proposing the Motion Councillor Douglas advised that it would meet one of the targets of the Bromsgrove District Council Plan 2019 to 2023 - Help me to live my life independently: Connect, Be active, Keep Learning.

Councillor Douglas also commented that when the National Curriculum Key Stage 2 & 3 was rolled out, there was a target to get all children to swim 25m in school time. She suggested that austerity had removed this potential life-saving basic skill cutting it from their curriculum. She also highlighted that Childhood obesity was now common, along with diabetes and asthma increasingly killing children, which had not been issues when she was a child and in previous decades. The opportunity for all children to swim regularly would help control these three largely unnecessary dangers. With swimming, children could maintain fitness, weight control, as well as develop lung capacity & breathing skills. On top of this they would learn the essential water safety skills, which safeguard children when they play near many different types of water or participating in water sports.

By making swimming free, which was Councillor Douglas' preference, for all youngsters from next year's budget, she commented that it would mean none would be subjected to, and often rejected, by means-testing. There was no magic border as to how family households and budgets were managed or stretched to allow for the entrance fees. By giving inclusion to all of them, none could fall just outside the cut-off level and lead to their not benefitting from this opportunity.

It was also noted that as well as fun and enjoyment, learning life preserving skills, swimming was a social event where those skills could be developed and friendships formed, which she believed was essential these days to ameliorate the effects of lonely electronic gadget immersion. This could be isolating and less than healthy for growing children forming debilitating lifelong habits. Swimming also helped with childhood mental health issues as it was both relaxing and entertaining. A meeting place off the streets for youngsters at that critical adolescent period when independence was being taken and enjoyed.

Finally, Councillor Douglas asked that Councillors gave Bromsgrove young people their full support by enabling all to have this opportunity to use the Council's fantastic local facilities.

In seconding the motion Councillor Rone-Clarke took the opportunity to pay tribute to Councillor Douglas in pushing this matter forward. He suggested that with the demise of many youth groups in the district, due to cutbacks, that there was little left for young people to do, so it was important to ensure that the use of the Council's Leisure Centre was inclusive to all.

Members also commented that it was important for all young people to be able to learn to swim and that often these days it was not something

which was taught in schools as it used to be. It was important that this facility was inclusive to all and not means tested.

The Leader responded to the motion and advised that whilst she was not able to support it she could assure Members that the Council would be considering the needs and requirements of all its residents in the budget setting process. Whilst the motion identified this as a small thing, the Leader confirmed that the actual cost of doing what had been proposed would equate to over a £1m if it was implemented over the lifetime of the contract with Everyone Active and in the context of the motion the Council had no evidence to support or otherwise the effectiveness of what had been proposed.

The Leader further advised that this Council had and would continue to look at the very best ways in which support could be given to all disadvantaged people within the District but must do so responsibly and in a context that considered the most beneficial outcomes for the people it was supporting. There were very positive and targeted ways that public money could be used to support disadvantage residents, such as the Active Kitchen Project and the Council had a responsibility to consider the best way in which public funds could be used. If the Council was to commit to expenditure of this level it needed to understand the impact on other services and how it would be funded. It was for this reason that every other project must be properly scoped and assessed before a decision was made in order to understand the facts and implications. She would continue to work with the leisure teams to find the best ways the Council could support the community with concessionary services in the context of the budget.

Councillor P. Thomas, the Portfolio Holder for Leisure, Culture and Community Services agreed with the Leader and confirmed that the cost implications would mean that this was not economically viable, particularly as the Council's Leisure Services were run by Everyone Active and the cost of such a service to the end of the contract with them could be up to £1m. The Council needed to look at the best way in which to spend its budget in order to maximise the benefit to its residents and he did not believe that such a scheme would be appropriate. Although he did confirm that the Council would always support young people in as many ways as it could.

During the following debate Members discussed a number of other areas in respect of the motion, including:

- The need to make such activities attractive to young people, which in turn would prevent anti-social behaviour.
- It was important to provide something for young people as had been suggested, the cuts to youth services had resulted in a reduction of activities for them generally.
- It was disputed by some Councillors that there were no activities for young people, and Members were reminded that the local scout and guide groups had long waiting lists.

- There were also other facilities, such as the climbing wall, available at the Leisure Centre for young people to participate in.
- It was pointed out that the motion was not asking for the scheme to be implemented but merely for the Council to consider it.

In summing up, Councillor Douglas advised that she was happy to do more research about the subject in order for Council to consider it further. She had spoken to a representative of Everyone Active and it had been suggested that the annual cost of such a scheme would in fact be £57k a year, she also reiterated that she was merely asking Council to consider the matter and that there would be so many benefits from it.

In accordance with Procedure Rule 18.3 a recorded vote was taken and the voting was as follows:

For the motion: Councillors Colella, Douglas, English, Hotham, Hughes, Hunter, King, Mallett, McDonald, Rone-Clarke, Thompson, Van der Plank (12)

Against the motion: Councillors Beaumont, Deeming, Denaro, Glass, Jones, Kent, Kriss, May, Middleton, Sherrey, Spencer, Thomas, Till, Webb, Whittaker (15)

Abstentions: 0

On being put to the vote the Motion was lost.

Restoring pride, improving bus shelters

Members considered the following Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor R. Hunter:

“Council recognises that many of Bromsgrove’s existing bus shelters are in poor condition and need upgrading or removing where they are no longer in use. The current budget only enables the council to upgrade 1 out of the 44 bus shelters it is responsible for each year which is insufficient.

Council resolves to ask the Cabinet to undertake a full review of bus shelter provision and bus shelter funding across the district.”

The Motion was proposed by Councillor Hunter and seconded by Councillor J. King.

In proposing the Motion Councillor Hunter provided Members with a brief history of how the bus service had been an integral part of Bromsgrove for over 100 years. Buses were a lifeline for many people as 1 in 10 in the district did not have access to a car or live near a train station. There was also a call for the Council to reduce its carbon emissions and a good way of doing this would be to get them out of their cars and on to buses. This would also improve the air quality for those people on foot. He acknowledged that the services were not easy to use, services had

been cut and had become expensive, the infrastructure had been neglected and bus shelters left to decay. It was important to make the use of buses more attractive in order to encourage people to use them.

The Leader responded that there were 44 bus shelters within the District which were maintained by Environmental Services and repainting of some of the shelters had taken place within the budget for them. She confirmed that her Group would not be supporting the motion and had confirmed with the Engineering Team Leader that a full survey of all bus shelters was already programmed in to the works programme for the end of November. Any requirements would then be fed into the next budget setting round.

It was noted that a number of rural bus shelters were the responsibility of the parish council, which were also in need of general maintenance work.

During his presentation of the motion Councillor Hunter had produced photographs of a number of bus shelters which were in a state of disrepair. Councillor H. Jones raised a point of order in respect of Member Protocol as the photographs appeared to be of bus shelters which were outside of Councillor Hunter's ward.

The Chairman announced a five minute adjournment.

Councillor P. McDonald asked for the motion to be amended to take account of the inclusion of "live time" within each bus shelter. He advised that this was an important service for those that relied on the public transport. It was also another way of encouraging people to use the bus services and he supported the comments of other Members in respect of the need to improve the services to help towards making a difference to carbon emissions and air quality. Reference was made to the air quality management areas within the district which needed to be addressed.

Councillor Hunter agreed that he was happy to accept the amendment suggested by Councillor McDonald.

The Leader reiterated that the motion was not necessary as a review of all bus shelters would be undertaken at the end of the month. It was also commented that "live time" timetables were being rolled out in Catshill and it was anticipated that other wards would follow in due course.

Councillor L. Mallett welcomed the motion as he had a number of bus shelters in his ward which were in need of maintenance work. Whilst he was grateful that the Engineering Team were looking at this, he was concerned that there were a number of bus shelters which were not the responsibility of this Council and the appropriate authority needed to address this. He reiterated other Members concerns that there were a lot of residents who relied on buses to get around. The motion would

hopefully ensure that this long standing matter was addressed and the appropriate action taken and the matter looked at in a more detailed manner and those residents that relied on the service were given the consideration that they deserved.

Councillor H. Rone-Clarke commented that some families did not own a car and therefore relied on the bus services for getting to and from work. It was important that those residents received the Council's full support.

A number of Members went on to raise concerns around the roll of Motions on Notice in general, particular in view of the number which had been submitted for consideration at this meeting. It was suggested that a number of them could have been dealt with through other channels, such as Overview and Scrutiny Board or by approaching the relevant Cabinet Member. Whilst Members were not belittling the importance of the topics, it was felt that the aim of Motions on Notice was to deal with more substantive issues and Members were asked to give more thought about the topics brought forward through this process at future meetings.

Councillor Van der Plank asked for the matter to be moved to the vote without further debate.

Councillor Hunter was given the opportunity to sum up his motion and in so doing he thanked Members for their comments and added that he had in fact raised that matter with the Cabinet Member, but had not received a satisfactory response, hence his motion coming forward, as he felt it was an important issue that received the attention it deserved.

In accordance with Procedure Rule 18.3 a recorded vote was taken and the voting was as follows:

For the amended motion: Councillors Douglas, English, Hotham, Hughes, Hunter, King, Mallett, McDonald, Rone-Clarke, Thompson, Van der Plank (11)

Against the amended motion: Councillors Beaumont, Colella, Deeming, Denaro, Glass, Jones, Kent, Kriss, May, Middleton, Sherrey, Spencer, Thomas, Till, Webb, Whittaker (16)

Abstentions: 0

On being put to the vote the amended Motion was lost.

The Chairman announced that the allotted one hour timescale had expired, and therefore the remaining motions would be carried over to the next meeting.

Councillors McDonald and Mallett asked for the time to be extended, as this was in the gift of the Chairman and commented that the public had come to hear the debate on the issues raised in the outstanding motions.

The Chairman thanked Members for their comments, which he took on board and acknowledged that it was his decision as to whether to extend the time. However, on this occasion he said he would ask Members to make this decision.

Councillor McDonald further commented that as there was so many motions that would be carried over, realistically with the number of Council meetings in a year that some important issues may never be debated. He suggested therefore that the time limit for motions be referred to the Constitution Review Working Group to be reviewed in more detail.

Members discussed whether one further motion should be debated and the time extended, Councillor C. Hotham also advised that in the absence of Councillor S. Baxter that her motion could be withdrawn, if this would assist matters.

The Chairman acknowledged Members comments and chose to put the matter to the vote.

On being put to the vote, the extension of the time limit for consideration of motions was lost.

The meeting closed at 9.10 p.m.

Chairman

Bromsgrove District Council

Composition of Committees 2019-20 (Revised 20/11/19)

Committee	Cons	Lab	Independent Alliance	Liberal Democrats	Comments
Overview and Scrutiny Board	<p style="text-align: center;">6</p> <p>Deeming Spencer Till Beaumont Kriss Glass</p> <p>(Sub: Middleton, Whittaker, Jones, Hession)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">1</p> <p>McDonald</p> <p>(Sub: Douglas)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">3</p> <p>Colella Hotham Thompson</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">1</p> <p>Hunter</p>	11 Members on Board
Licensing Committee	<p style="text-align: center;">6</p> <p>Jones Glass Spencer Till Sherrey Whittaker</p> <p>(Subs: Webb, Kriss)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">1</p> <p>Rone-Clarke</p> <p>(Sub: Mallett)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">2</p> <p>English Thompson</p> <p>(Sub: Baxter)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">2</p> <p>Hughes King</p> <p>(Sub: Hunter)</p>	11 Members on Committee
Planning Committee	<p style="text-align: center;">6</p> <p>Deeming Thomas Whittaker Hession Beaumont Glass</p> <p>(Subs: Spencer, Sherrey, Middleton, Kriss)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">1</p> <p>Douglas</p> <p>(Sub: McDonald, Rone-Clarke)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">3</p> <p>Baxter English Hotham</p> <p>(Subs: Van Der Plank, Thompson)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">1</p> <p>King</p> <p>(Subs: Hughes, Hunter)</p>	11 Members on Committee

Audit, Standards and Governance Committee	5 Whittaker Hession Spencer Beaumont Kriss	1 Mallett	2 Baxter Van der Plank	1 King	9 Members on Committee
Electoral Matters Committee	4 Hession Middleton Glass Deeming	1 Mallett	1 Colella	1 Hunter	7 Members on Committee
Appeals Committee	3 May Denaro Kent	1 McDonald	1 Baxter	0	5 Members on Committee
Appointments Committee (nominees made as and when necessary)	3 TBA	1 McDonald	1 Baxter	0	5 Members on Committee
Statutory Officers (nominees made as and when necessary)	3 TBA	1 McDonald	1 Baxter	0	5 Members on Committee
TOTAL	36	8	14	6	64 Places

Appendix 1

Councillor A. Kent's response to Councillor S. Douglas' Question

What is the best way to get these two vital items, appended to the Bromsgrove District Plan 2011-2030 without delay:

- Protected provision for walking and cycling, with dropped kerbs, linked to public transport, should have priority when planning the most convenient option or getting about, and
- That all new buildings including domestic housing be carbon neutral compliance and ECP Rating A, with run-off water storage, energy generation and appropriate EV points; these having now arisen given the urgency of holding back climate change and the reduction of air pollution?

It is simply not possible to append things to the District Plan, all planning policies in District plans must go be subjected to the full plan making process, which involves evidence gathering, wide scale public engagement, and culminates in an examination in public carried out by a representative of the Secretary of State. As members know that process is already underway, and the issues raised above can feature in the consideration of that review, although the answer just given to the question from Cllr Hughes is also relevant here in relation to carbon neutrality. Officers are considering what if any changes can be made to the recently adopted design Supplementary Planning Document to consider climate change further, although the ability to introduce new requirements as per the question are unlikely to be possible in a supplementary planning document which does not have the full weight of an adopted District Plan policy.

The current BDP in policy BDP16 in conjunction with Worcestershire County Council Streetscape design Guide already has policies to ensure safe and convenient access for walking and cycling, As with any planning issues, I would urge members to raise this issue at the SPSG so officers can investigate further.

Councillor A. Kent's response to Councillor S. Hughes' Question

The Government is currently consulting over removing the right of local authorities to determine environmental standards in new homes as part of its Future Homes Standards. Does Cllr Kent agree that this could hamper our aspiration to become carbon neutral and limit our ability to set ambitious requirements for new homes as part of our review of the local plan? Will you write to the Secretary of State following the election in December to ask for a rethink?

The simple fact is we don't know how it will affect our aspirations. The proposals do set a standard that is an improvement on current building regulations and the current District Plan. Our aspiration to become carbon

neutral will be affected as much by the financial viability of any new standards, which have to be considered when setting local plan policies, as by new government standards. The new standards would appear to be able to be enforced without requiring a lengthy local plan process to determine them, so may in fact speed up the implementation of higher standards. The consultation is open until 10th December, officers are considering a response at the moment; I would urge others to respond if they feel strongly about it.