

MINUTES COUNCIL

Wednesday 27 January 2021

Councillor Sandra Barnes (Mayor)

Present:	Councillor Meredith Lawrence Councillor Michael Adams Councillor Peter Barnes Councillor Chris Barnfather Councillor Pat Bosworth Councillor Michael Boyle Councillor Nicki Brooks Councillor John Clarke Councillor Liz Clunie Councillor Bob Collis Councillor Jim Creamer Councillor Boyd Elliott Councillor David Ellis Councillor Rachael Ellis Councillor Roxanne Ellis Councillor Andrew Ellwood Councillor Paul Feeney Councillor Kathryn Fox Councillor Des Gibbons Councillor Helen Greensmith	Councillor Gary Gregory Councillor Jennifer Hemingway Councillor Jenny Hollingsworth Councillor Mike Hope Councillor Rosa Keneally Councillor Ron McCrossen Councillor Viv McCrossen Councillor Barbara Miller Councillor Simon Murray Councillor Julie Najuk Councillor Marje Paling Councillor John Parr Councillor Michael Payne Councillor Alex Scroggie Councillor Martin Smith Councillor Sam Smith Councillor Clive Towsey-Hinton Councillor John Truscott Councillor Henry Wheeler Councillor Paul Wilkinson
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52 OPENING PRAYERS.

The Mayor's Chaplin, Reverend Sally Baylis delivered opening prayers.

The Mayor lit a candle in recognition of Holocaust Memorial Day and the Council observed a minute's silence. The Mayor also wished to remember the 100,000 people who had lost their lives to Covid-19 since the start of the pandemic.

53 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

None.

54 MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.

The Mayor thanked Arnold and Mapperley Rotary Club for inviting her to their annual meeting and for their generous offer of a donation to the Mayor's charity. The Mayor, on behalf of the Council, also wished to thank all of the Nottinghamshire hospitals and NHS staff for their hard

work and dedication throughout the Covid-19 pandemic and the staff and volunteers at the Richard Herrod Centre for their efforts in efficiently rolling out the vaccination programme.

55 TO APPROVE, AS A CORRECT RECORD, THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 18 NOVEMBER 2020.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the above meeting, having been circulated, be approved as a correct record.

56 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS.

None received.

57 TO DEAL WITH ANY PETITIONS RECEIVED UNDER STANDING ORDER 8A.

None received.

58 TO ANSWER QUESTIONS ASKED BY THE PUBLIC UNDER STANDING ORDER 8.

None received.

59 TO ANSWER QUESTIONS ASKED BY MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL UNDER STANDING ORDER 9.

Question received from Councillor Sam Smith

“We have all seen an increase in anti-social behaviour in our Wards over the past year. Can the Cabinet Member responsible inform us of how this data is collected by the Council and what plans the Council has in place to reduce anti-social behaviour across the Borough?”

Response from the Portfolio Holder for Public Protection, Councillor David Ellis

“I suppose I ought to start with an apology to those members who are on Overview and Scrutiny. I alerted members on the Committee to this increase in reports of anti-social behaviour (ASB) when I attended it in November. As well as that discussion, the Committee considered an update earlier this month. These two meetings gave the opportunity for a thorough discussion on ASB and the effect of Covid 19.

Therefore, much of this reply will be familiar to members on Overview and Scrutiny. Councillor Smith was at both those meetings so I’m not sure what additional insights he expects to gain from asking this

question that he could not have gained from taking advantage of the earlier opportunities.

Recorded incidents of anti-social behaviour reported by the Council are taken from two data sets. The primary data is incidents reported to Nottinghamshire Police. The second is incidents reported to the Council and recorded on its own system, Uniform.

As I discussed with members at the Scrutiny Committee, the increase in reported ASB since March 2020 is mainly driven by reports of infringements of Covid restrictions. In line with the police national recording standards these are recorded as ASB. Consequently, there has been an apparent increase - locally, across the South Notts CSP area, across Nottinghamshire, and indeed nationally. Much of this was exacerbated during the first period of lockdown which coincided with good weather, that proved too much temptation for many.

The latest information from the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Chief Constable confirms that the increase in ASB is primarily due to the enforcement of Covid restrictions and that the underlying level of "traditional" ASB has not increased. It's anticipated that the significant increase in reported ASB seen at the six month point will have diminished when the full year figures are published.

The response to ASB is a partnership effort. The Council works closely with the neighbourhood policing team, as well as other partners such as social housing providers, to provide an effective and comprehensive response. The Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 consolidated the powers available to deal with ASB. These powers include civil injunctions; criminal behaviour orders and community protection notices, all of which are taken against individuals. Action can be taken where the problems relate to specific places through Public Space Protection Orders, Dispersal Orders, and Closure orders. As you would expect the Council and its partners use their powers appropriately and judiciously. Under this Administration the Council has consistently demonstrated its determination to take action where necessary.

Responding to Covid has been a challenge to all public services. We can be proud of the way that the Council and its staff have adapted to meet the humanitarian needs of our communities. In addition, I would commend the way in which the Public Protection team has provided support and advice to businesses and individuals – very much engaging, educating, and encouraging. However, where appropriate we have taken enforcement action.

The co-ordination between the neighbourhood policing team and the Public Protection service is well established. As well as the fortnightly Local Operations Meetings the fact that the two teams are co-located means, in normal times, that informal discussions are far easier and relationships are strong. The Neighbourhood Inspector also attends my

portfolio meetings. These local arrangements demonstrate joined up working on a common agenda.

When specific issues have come to light appropriate action has been taken. For example, members highlighted concerns about some parks and open spaces being used for impromptu gatherings of young people. In response, high visibility patrols were deployed providing advice and where necessary enforcement activity. Thank you to those local members who raised these specific concerns with me and the team. The neighbourhood wardens and police have continued with their targeted patrols, including joint patrols where appropriate, to engage with the public across the Borough. The Covid Marshalls are an additional resource to provide support, reassurance, deterrence and are a good source of intelligence and information.

There have been ongoing engagement projects and outreach work delivered in hot spot locations with young people by Nottinghamshire County Council Youth Services, again working closely with Police and Wardens.

Our CCTV system is also a vital tool in tackling anti-social behaviour in identified hot spots. There has been some very significant intelligence and information obtained by the CCTV room staff. Members will be aware that this Administration has continued to invest in CCTV and to improve the quality of images for evidential purposes.

Members will be aware of some high profile instances of closure orders being served, of fixed penalties being imposed, and of dispersal orders being made. However, we must not lose sight of the fact that most people in the Borough have accepted the restrictions which the Government has imposed and despite the difficulties have contributed to controlling Covid. Enforcement has only been necessary against a minority.

Madam Mayor, I hope that this response reassures members that the Council and its partners take anti-social behaviour seriously and are responding appropriately. Thank You.”

In response to an additional comment from Councillor Sam Smith, the Portfolio Holder for Public Protection confirmed that he would be happy for further discussions to take place with any members who have any particular ASB issues in particular wards.

Councillor Feeney joined the meeting at 6.15pm.

the Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS) for the financial year 2021/22.

RESOLVED to:

Approve and adopt the Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS) 2021/22, from 1 April 2021 with no changes to the CTRS for working age people as described in Section 2 of this report, except for the annual uprating and amendments of allowances and premiums in line with Housing Benefit levels.

61 REFERRAL FROM APPOINTMENTS AND CONDITIONS OF SERVICE COMMITTEE: PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2021-22

Consideration was given to a report of the Service Manager Organisational Development, which had been referred to Council by the Appointments and Conditions of Service Committee.

RESOLVED to:

Adopt the Pay Policy Statement 2021/22 for publication on the Council's website.

62 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT

Consideration was given to a report of the Democratic Services Officer, which had been referred to Council by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

RESOLVED:

That the Overview and Scrutiny Annual report be noted by Council.

63 INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL - REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR 2021/22

Consideration was given to a report of the Democratic Services Manager, informing Council of the latest report from the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP), relating to member remuneration for 2021/22.

RESOLVED to:

- 1) Thank the Independent Remuneration Panel for its work;
- 2) Accept the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel contained in the report;

- 3) Agree the schedule of members' allowances for 2021/22 as attached at Appendix 2 to this report; and
- 4) Authorise the Monitoring Officer to make appropriate amendments to Part 6 of the Constitution to reflect any changes to the members' allowances scheme agreed.

64 TO RECEIVE QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS CONCERNING ANY MATTER DEALT WITH BY THE EXECUTIVE OR BY A COMMITTEE OR SUB-COMMITTEE (STANDING ORDER 11.1).

In accordance with Standing Order 11.1, comments were made and responded to by the appropriate Cabinet Member or Committee Chair.

65 TO CONSIDER COMMENTS, OF WHICH DUE NOTICE HAS BEEN GIVEN, UNDER STANDING ORDER 11.03(A).

None received.

66 TO CONSIDER MOTIONS UNDER STANDING ORDER 12.

Motion One

Upon a notice of motion received in the name of Councillor Rachael Ellis, a proposition was moved by Councillor Rachael Ellis and seconded by Councillor Gibbons in the following terms:

This Council notes:

Fireworks are used by people throughout the year to mark different events. While they can bring much enjoyment to some people, they can cause significant problems and fear for other people and animals. They can be a source of fear and distress for many animals (including pet animals, farm livestock and wildlife). Animals affected not only suffer psychological distress but can also cause themselves injuries - sometimes very serious ones – as they attempt to run away or hide from the noise.

This Council therefore resolves to:

- 1) Require all public firework displays within the local authority boundaries to be advertised in advance of the event, allowing residents to take precautions for their animals and vulnerable people.
- 2) Actively promote a public awareness campaign about the impact of fireworks on animal welfare and vulnerable people – including the precautions that can be taken to mitigate risks.

- 3) Write to the UK Government and Gedling Borough's two local Members of Parliament urging them to introduce legislation to limit the maximum noise level of fireworks to 90dB for those sold to the public for private displays and to support the RSPCA in their campaign to ensure the safety of all animals.
- 4) Encourage local suppliers of fireworks to stock 'quieter' fireworks for public display.
- 5) Write to the Leader and Chief Executive of Nottinghamshire County Council inviting and encouraging them to also take the action outlined in points 1 – 4 above.
- 6) Work with Nottinghamshire County Council and all other relevant authorities to ensure existing legislation regarding purchase of and setting off fireworks is enforced across our borough and county.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY to:

- 1) Require all public firework displays on Gedling Borough Council owned land, and advise and encourage organisers of other public firework displays within Gedling borough, to be advertised in advance of the event, allowing residents to take precautions for their animals and vulnerable people.
- 2) Actively promote a public awareness campaign about the impact of fireworks on animal welfare and vulnerable people – including the precautions that can be taken to mitigate risks.
- 3) Write to the UK Government and Gedling Borough's two local Members of Parliament urging them to introduce legislation to limit the maximum noise level of fireworks to 90dB for those sold to the public for private displays and to support the RSPCA in their campaign to ensure the safety of all animals.
- 4) Encourage local suppliers of fireworks to stock 'quieter' fireworks for public display.
- 5) Write to the Leader and Chief Executive of Nottinghamshire County Council inviting and encouraging them to also take the action outlined in points 1 – 4 above.
- 6) Work with Nottinghamshire County Council and all other relevant authorities to ensure existing legislation regarding purchase of and setting off fireworks is enforced across our borough and county.

Motion Two

Upon a notice of motion received in the name of Councillor Michael Payne, a proposition was moved by Councillor Payne and seconded by Councillor Fox in the following terms:

This Council notes:

Bees and other pollinators play an essential role in the Earth's ecosystems. Bees and other pollinators are vital to our food crops, our gardens and our countryside, but they are declining – some species have become extinct, others are declining in range. Bees not only maintain biodiversity but also pollinate plants which produce food. The Government has estimated that these pollinators are worth around £500 million to the UK food and fruit industries alone; bees therefore help keep healthy habitats for people and nature.

This pollinator decline is due to various external influences. These causes include disease, climate change, loss of habitat and the use of insecticides such as neonicotinoids ('neonics'). Neonicotinoid use has been linked in a range of studies to adverse ecological effects, including honeybee colony collapse disorder.

The World Health Organisation's cancer agency has recently declared that herbicides that include glyphosate are probably carcinogenic to humans. Glycophate lab trials have shown impact on bee behaviours, although not on their foraging efficiency.

Local authorities already have a Duty to have regard to the conservation of biodiversity in exercising their functions, introduced by the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act, which came into force on 1 October 2006. The Duty affects all public authorities and aims to raise the profile and visibility of biodiversity, to clarify existing commitments with regard to biodiversity, and to make it a natural and integral part of policy and decision making. Conserving biodiversity includes restoring and enhancing species' populations and habitats.

This Council further notes:

The UK Government pledged to back the 2018 EU ban on all outdoor uses of the neonicotinoid thiamethoxam. At the time, Michael Gove, then the Environment Secretary, said: "The weight of evidence now shows the risks neonicotinoids pose to our environment, particularly to the bees and other pollinators which play such a key part in our £100bn food industry, is greater than previously understood ... We cannot afford to put our pollinator populations at risk."

He also wrote in the Guardian ('The evidence points in one direction – we must ban neonicotinoids' - 9 Nov 2017): "Unless the evidence base changes again, the government will keep these restrictions in place after we have left the EU."

This Council therefore resolves to:

- 1) Write to the Environment Secretary and Gedling Borough's local Members of Parliament, condemning the UK Government's recent authorisation in England of the use of a pesticide containing the neonicotinoid thiamethoxam, despite an EU-wide ban on its outdoor use two years ago and an explicit Government pledge to keep the restrictions.
- 2) Call on the UK Government to fund proper research into the hazards of glyphosphates on human and nature's health.
- 3) Cease the use of neonicotinoids and glyphosphates on all public access land that it manages in a proactive effort to reverse the destruction of the bees and pollinators and protect human health.
- 4) Explore other ways in which to enhance and protect bee and pollinator habitats and encourage environmental growth. This Council will therefore produce a Bee/Pollinator Action Plan. This action plan could include:
 - a) Protecting pollinator habitats via the planning process.
 - b) Encouraging all new developments to provide for pollinators.
 - c) Stopping the use of insecticides on local authority land.
 - d) Establishing wildflower meadows on un-used areas of parks and public greenspace.
 - e) Planting pollinator-friendly plants as part of amenity planting in parks, gardens and green spaces.
 - f) Planting trees for bees – blossom producing spring flowering trees such as apple, cherry, hawthorn, blackthorn, sallow.
 - g) Working with Nottinghamshire County Council to manage road verges for spring and late summer flowers.

An amendment was moved by Councillor Ellwood and seconded by Councillor Towsey-Hinton in the following terms:

Immediately following point 4) sub paragraph g) of the original motion, insert the following:

- h) Consult in advance with local residents and members to seek their views on whether specific open spaces in residential areas should be used for wild flower planting or retained as a conventional lawn.
- i) Where open spaces in residential areas are not to be used for wild flower planting, the Borough Council to continue the cutting of grass at such spaces with their existing frequency.

Councillor Wilkinson, seconded by Councillor Sam Smith, proposed a motion to briefly adjourn the meeting to allow Members to consider the amendment put before them. The motion was supported and the Mayor declared it carried.

The meeting adjourned at 7.33 pm.

The meeting resumed at 7.42 pm.

Following debate, the amendment was put to a vote and the Mayor declared that the amendment was not carried.

A second amendment was proposed by Councillor Adams and seconded by Councillor Murray in the following terms:

That points 1) and 2) of the original motion be replaced as follows:

- 1) Write to the Environment Secretary and Gedling Borough's local Members of Parliament, seeking urgent reassurances that the UK government's recent authorisation in England of the use of the pesticide containing the neonicotinoid thiamethoxam, will not extend past the very strictly controlled licence and remain in the general use ban as in the EU.
- 2) Call on the UK government to increase investment into the research into alternative controls to deal with pests and thus mitigate the hazards of glyphosates on human and nature's health.

Following debate, the amendment was put to a vote and the Mayor declared that the amendment was not carried.

RESOLVED to:

- 1) Write to the Environment Secretary and Gedling Borough's local Members of Parliament, condemning the UK Government's recent authorisation in England of the use of a pesticide containing the neonicotinoid thiamethoxam, despite an EU-wide ban on its outdoor use two years ago and an explicit Government pledge to keep the restrictions.
- 2) Call on the UK Government to fund proper research into the hazards of glyphosphates on human and nature's health.
- 3) Cease the use of neonicotinoids and glyphosphates on all public access land that it manages in a proactive effort to reverse the destruction of the bees and pollinators and protect human health.
- 4) Explore other ways in which to enhance and protect bee and pollinator habitats and encourage environmental growth. This

Council will therefore produce a Bee/Pollinator Action Plan. This action plan could include:

- a) Protecting pollinator habitats via the planning process.
- b) Encouraging all new developments to provide for pollinators.
- c) Stopping the use of insecticides on local authority land.
- d) Establishing wildflower meadows on un-used areas of parks and public greenspace.
- e) Planting pollinator-friendly plants as part of amenity planting in parks, gardens and green spaces.
- f) Planting trees for bees – blossom producing spring flowering trees such as apple, cherry, hawthorn, blackthorn, sallow.
- g) Working with Nottinghamshire County Council to manage road verges for spring and late summer flowers.

Motion Three

Upon a notice of motion received in the name of Councillor Michael Payne, a proposition was moved by Councillor Payne and seconded by Councillor Clarke in the following terms:

This Council notes:

- 1) The provisional Local Government Finance Settlement for 2021/22, which was published by the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities & Local Government on 17 December 2020.
- 2) Core Spending Power is the Government's own measure of the resources available to local councils to fund service delivery – it sets out the money that has been made available to local councils through the Local Government Finance Settlement.

This Council is disappointed that:

- 1) For the second successive year, Gedling Borough Council is the worst affected council in England in terms of change in Core Spending Power from 2015-16 to 2021-22.
- 2) As a result of Government policy and decisions, Gedling Borough Council has received a 20.2% reduction in Core Spending Power between 2021-22 and 2015/16.

The Council further notes:

- 1) By comparison, twenty councils have received a greater than 20.5% uplift in Core Spending Power in 2021/22 compared to 2015/16 and that 18 of the 20 are Conservative controlled.

This Council agrees:

- 1) To use all available resources to:
 - a) ensure residents and businesses across our borough are aware of the disproportionate way Gedling Borough has been negatively affected by successive Local Government Finance Settlements since 2015/16, in terms of change in Core Spending Power.
 - b) lobby the Government to reverse this unfair and unjust treatment of Gedling Borough's local communities.
- 2) That all members of the Council will be invited to sign the letter being sent by the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government and Gedling Borough's two local Members of Parliament, urging them to reverse the unfair and unjust treatment of Gedling Borough Council in this year's provisional Local Government Finance Settlement (as set out above).

Sources: *Link to official Government data showing Gedling Borough Council is the worst affected in England in terms of Core Spending Power in 2021/22 compared to 2015/16:*
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/corespending-power-provisional-local-government-finance-settlement-2021-to-2022>

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:

- 1) To use all appropriate resources to:
 - a) lobby the Government to increase Gedling Borough Council's share of the Local Government Finance Settlement 2021/22.
- 2) That all members of the Council will sign the letter being sent by the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council, working with Gedling Borough's two local Members of Parliament, to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government calling on the Government to increase Gedling Borough Council's share of the Local Government Finance Settlement 2021/22 (as set out above).

The meeting finished at 8.58 pm

Signed by Chair:

Date: