

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF
THE COUNCIL
HELD ON 23 JULY 2020 FROM 7.30 PM TO 10.50 PM**

Members Present

Councillors: Malcolm Richards (Mayor), Keith Baker (Deputy Mayor), Parry Batth, Rachel Bishop-Firth, Laura Blumenthal, Chris Bowering, Shirley Boyt, Prue Bray, Rachel Burgess, Jenny Cheng, UllaKarin Clark, Stephen Conway, Gary Cowan, Andy Croy, Richard Dolinski, Carl Doran, Michael Firmager, Paul Fishwick, Jim Frewin, Maria Gee, Charlotte Haitham Taylor, John Halsall, David Hare, Pauline Helliard-Symons, Emma Hobbs, Graham Howe, Clive Jones, Pauline Jorgensen, John Kaiser, Sarah Kerr, Dianne King, Abdul Loyes, Tahir Maher, Charles Margetts, Adrian Mather, Ken Miall, Andrew Mickleburgh, Stuart Munro, Gregor Murray, Barrie Patman, Angus Ross, Daniel Sargeant, Imogen Shepherd-DuBey, Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey, Caroline Smith, Chris Smith, Wayne Smith, Bill Soane, Alison Swaddle, Simon Weeks and Oliver Whittle

38. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were submitted from Lindsay Ferris and Guy Grandison.

39. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the meeting of Council held on 6 July 2020 were confirmed as a correct record and will be signed by the Mayor at a future date.

40. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Maria Gee declared a Personal Interest in Item 46.4, Motion on the Council Tax Protocol, on the grounds that she was a Trustee of the Citizens Advice Bureau. She indicated that she would abstain on the vote for this Motion.

Andy Croy declared a Personal Interest in Item 46.4, Motion on the Council Tax Protocol, on the grounds that his mother was a volunteer at the Citizens Advice Bureau.

41. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor had no announcements to make.

42. STATEMENT BY THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL, JOHN HALSALL

We recognise that there is a fundamental issue with the volume of items on the agenda, resulting in those at the end of the agenda, unlikely to be reached. At the Full Council meeting on 6 July, the Conservative Group, acknowledging the timing pressures unilaterally withdrew all their Members questions, the only party to do that despite Opposition complaints of lack of time. Despite that withdrawal, many Motions were still not debated, but we concluded the essential business of the meeting. Today we have seven Motions, which if they take their full 30 minute allocation, means 3 ½ hours just on Motions, which clearly cannot be fitted in during 3 ½ hours of this meeting. So in order to try and address this immediate issue, for this meeting only, the Conservative Group will withdraw all their Members' questions and be happy with written answers, but this only saves approximately 18 minutes which is a fraction of the time needed for a single debate. Therefore, we will not be asking any ward questions, adding to those savings. Continuing with this approach, I will be making a very simple statement as Leader, but we will not be making any Executive statements, nor will we be making any reports to Council owned companies, saving another 30 minutes. Let us not lose sight of reality, in that we will not be able to cover all seven Motions on these actions alone, as they will only release approximately an hour which is equivalent to two Motions, unless parties are disciplined and limit their number of speakers. We shall be fielding only two for each Motion. If

Opposition parties limit themselves each to one, each Motion will take 15 minutes. I propose this meeting is extended to 11pm and the Conservative Group will support this. Then and only then will we complete the agenda. I have proposed to the main Opposition parties, several amendments to the standard agenda and timing of Council meetings in order that the agenda can normally be completed whilst we continue to have virtual meetings and thereafter if applicable. A Constitution Review Working Group meeting is in the diary for August, which could allow for an early introduction should the parties cooperate.

Stephen Conway welcomed the Leader's statement but indicated that Opposition councillors still had a duty to hold the ruling group to account.

The Mayor indicated that a proposal to extend the meeting to 11pm would need to be proposed, seconded, and voted upon at the appropriate time in the meeting.

Andy Croy commented that he had not been contacted regarding the proposals and asked that in future he be consulted in advance.

43. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

In accordance with the agreed procedure the Mayor invited members of the public to submit questions to the appropriate Members.

43.1 Ed Pearson asked the Executive Member for Highways and Transport the following question:

Question

Is Wokingham planning on taking part in the Electric Scooter trials proposed by the Department for Transport? If not, then why not? This is an affordable, socially distanced and environmentally-friendly form of transport, and taking part in these trials would see Wokingham leading the way on commitments to fighting climate change.

Answer

It is correct that local authorities were given the opportunity to become trial sites for allowing use of electric scooters on public roads. The plan is for these trials to help inform government on what sort of legislation they should bring in to ensure the scooters are used appropriately and are safe for both the users and others, particularly pedestrians and other vulnerable road users.

Those trial sites will be allowing rental e-scooters (but none that are privately owned) to use the public highway and the highway authority has been able to set its own guidance in terms of whether they can be used on footways, shared paths and/or carriageway.

There are some safety concerns and issues such as difficulty in indicating (they are very unstable if ridden one-handed) and their small wheels are susceptible to surface defects and debris. In addition, in a town centre setting and on shared paths they may be seen as a nuisance by many and we did not feel it is appropriate to encourage their use at this time. We will however, be continuing to monitor the situation to see what other people's experiences are and we will certainly review that decision in due course when we see how it goes in other areas.

With regard to the climate change agenda, we have a My Journey Team who have completed some excellent work in promoting sustainable travel and in teaching adults and

children to cycle and use human-powered scooters safely. We are also delivering infrastructure for sustainable travel including our park and ride sites, greenways and we are currently completing the next phase of the A329 cycleway; our new roads also include provision for cycling. We have put in a cycleway recently going along the Reading Road into Wokingham. There is little evidence that scooter journeys will replace car journeys and shifting people from cycling and walking to scooters will therefore have a negligible impact on our climate emergency objectives. However, as I said, we will monitor it and continue to see how it progresses, and if it looks as if it is going to be successful elsewhere, we would look at it again.

43.2 Kiran Nar had asked the Leader of the Council the following question, which was asked on her behalf by Leanne Henderson:

Question

At a recent Council meeting, you said that equality and diversity were hardwired in WBC's DNA. You then proceeded to make public statements that have caused outrage to black residents, staff and the public. You have since launched a survey to understand racism more; despite saying, equality is being hardwired. Clearly the statements made by you about equality and diversity is contradicted by your offensive comments, is equality genuinely WBC's DNA. What research did you conduct on BLM before your statements were made and can you explain how and why such an important mandate on the Council's position was considered?

Answer

I was as shocked and disgusted at the killing of George Floyd as any other right thinking person and it is my sincere hope that the world can change for the better as a result of the outcry it has produced.

I completely support the message, principles and the aims of Black Lives Matter in the UK. I have always been opposed to discrimination in all its forms. I understand the need today to have a clear focus on tackling racism where it is found.

If any comments that I have made have been offensive to anybody then I apologise unreservedly. That was never my intention; rather by reaching out we had hoped to bring residents together. I fully support Nelson Mandela who said "I detest racialism, because I regard it as a barbaric thing, whether it comes from a black man or a white man."

Wokingham Borough Council is anti-racist, promotes equality and celebrates diversity. We are determined to do better to ensure that every resident in the Borough feels truly valued.

We are proud of the work we do with the BME Forum and worked with its Chair and Vice-Chair to produce the public survey you mention. The survey allows anybody who has experienced racism in any form as well as anybody with views on how this issue can be tackled. It is deliberately an open, listening exercise that acknowledges there will be problems we have not seen and answers we have not thought of. The survey is open throughout July and August and I urge everybody to take part.

In March 2017, we adopted an equalities policy which was published on the website. The position the Council has taken is underpinned by that policy. Whilst we accept that we may need to revisit the policy, any change would need to be passed by Full Council.

I accept that as Martin Luther King said, "injustice anywhere is a threat to justice

everywhere” “We must learn to live together as brothers, or we will perish together as fools.”

I am genuinely surprised and shocked that the rational, energetic, determined, and reasonable approach that the Council has taken should be considered offensive. I can only reiterate my and the Council’s ongoing commitment to combat racism, strive for equality and celebrate diversity.

Supplementary Question:

Could you tell me what kind of resources that you actually have and how will you be putting these into place, and what are your personal thoughts on it?

Supplementary Answer:

We employ about 1200 people and those are the resources we will apply, plus our influence to be anti-racist and to promote equality and diversity.

43.3 Llewelyn Reed-Jones had asked the Executive Member for Children's Services the following question. Due to his inability to attend a written answer was provided:

Question

The warmer weather and lighter evenings have brought about, predictably, some instances of anti-social behaviour from young people in the Borough. I am particularly aware of a minority of the young people using the Emmbrook and Joel Park areas for enjoyment; engaging in nuisance behaviour, littering and underage drinking. This is causing distress, annoyance and intimidation to residents of the area. A more visible police presence in the area would of course go some way to deter this kind of behaviour, but my question is regarding youth provisions. Teenagers who have nothing to do will often take part in nuisance behaviour which can lead to these children being put at risk of injury and exploitation from criminals. How does the Council intend to expand the provision of these services in a manner which is guided by the service users and youth workers and is free at the point of use?

Answer

We are proud of the vast majority of our young people who behave respectfully. In addition to our overall educational, sport, leisure and cultural activities, we have a number of initiatives to divert the small number that indulge or are tempted to take part in anti-social behaviours that harm or lack consideration for the wellbeing of others.

Early Help provision

Targeted 1:1 and family interventions to teenagers through their Early Help provision. Access to this is determined via Early Help assessment and/step-down from social care and engagement is voluntary in nature. They are also involved in the delivery of the Duke of Edinburgh Explorers Extreme programmes, which offer participants to opportunity to engage in constructive and positive activities and develop key life skills.

KICKS project

The KICKS project aims to create safer, stronger, more respectful communities through the development of young people.

Funded through our Community Safety Partnership and run by Reading Football Club; the aim of the work is to engage hard to reach young people aged 11-19 years, all sessions

are free. By giving young people information, raise participant's awareness about how to keep themselves safe within the community and try to help them make informed choices now and later in life.

Sessions are mainly football based and participant numbers for the latest quarter were:

- The project worked with 324 participants,
- 134 sessions were delivered across the Borough
- totalling 234.5 hours of work with young people
- On average, each group reaches 31 young people.
- The majority of young people engaged were male; 290, 34 were female, 44 of which were from BME communities.

Youth Mentoring

Our Community Engagement Team mentors 15 young people a year between the ages of 11-18 who have been referred via the Early Help Hub. In addition, our Junior Warden programme continues to be a success with the Borough. The work of the Junior Wardens has included intergenerational project work with local sheltered housing residents, visiting PCSOs and litter picks.

Positive Pathways Project

Delivered to 5 Wokingham schools to work with students in Years 6, 7 and 8 where children may be involved or at a higher risk of offending and risky behaviours. Schools provide baseline behaviour and the success is measured during and at the end of the project, behaviours will be measured at intervals and up to 12 months after completion with students scoring themselves. Schools refer children to the programme and only those children who will positively engage with the project are accepted.

Community Safety Partnership anti-social behaviour problem solving

The Council monitors anti-social behaviour activity through its Community Safety Partnership activities, including a specific partnership group related to problem solving local issues such as direct engagement with young people and raising awareness of local activities to encourage more positive behaviours.

Youth Offending Service (YOS)

Works with teenagers who have committed criminal offences aimed at reducing offending, however support is also offered to those who are at risk of offending. YOS have also been involved in delivering programmes aimed at reducing violence/offending to larger groups of children in school settings.

Exploited and Missing Risk Assessment Conference

The Council also chair and administer a multi-agency forum known as EMRAC (Exploited and Missing Risk Assessment Conference). The aim of this meeting is to ensure that young people who are at risk of exploitation or who are frequently missing are cited; and that multi-agency safeguarding plans are developed at a strategic level that reduce risk for both the individual and the wider youth population of Wokingham. Whilst this is a targeted provision, meaning that referrals received via Social Care and the police, it does have a broader safeguarding agenda that benefits all young people in the Borough.

43.4 Louise Timlin asked the Leader of the Council the following question:

Question

Question relating to agenda item 39: Annual Pay Policy Statement.

The Gender Pay Gap at WBC is increasing: Difference in Mean Hourly rate was 13.9% in 2018, increasing to 15.23% in 2019. Whilst the Council is rightly proud that 9 of their 22 most senior roles are held by women including the post of Chief Executive, there is a bonus gap of (2018 mean) 55.4% (no figures available for 2019), indicating that despite the number of senior roles held by women, men are receiving substantially bigger bonus payments.

The Council has an opportunity in the publication of the Annual Pay Policy Statement to make clear their action plan for addressing the increasing Gender Pay Gap. I note that the Annual Pay Policy Statement from Reading Council includes the following statement, "Reading Borough Council is committed to equality, transparency and fairness across all of its activities and particularly in relation to the pay and conditions of its staff." Will WBC commit to including an action plan to address their Gender Pay Gap in the Annual Pay Policy Statement and if not would they, at a minimum, commit to include a statement of intent similar to that included by Reading Council?

Answer

Our Pay Policy Statement is a statutory document that provides the public with information as outlined in the requirements of s38 of the Localism Act 2011. Our statement of intent in relation to the Gender Pay Gap is included in our Annual Equality Action Plan for 2020 which is due to be published in September and introduces a Gender pay gap sub group to develop proposals to reduce our Gender Pay Gap by 1% year on year for the next 3 years'.

There has been a delay in publication this year to ensure we address the issues highlighted by Black Lives Matter and will now go to Personnel Board for their consideration in September.

43.5 Andrew Popple asked the Executive Member for Children's Services the following question:

Question

Given the climate emergency plan, it is important that the need to travel is reduced to reduce emissions / congestion and the associated health concerns. 17% of sixth formers live in the south of Wokingham yet there is no sixth form school option available. The demand for post-16 places is in the south of the Borough, and in line with the Climate Emergency Action plan what are WBC doing about creating capacity now where it is needed?

Answer

It is certainly the case that students from across the Borough travel to school, could be privately or by public transport. We are presently reviewing our home to school transport arrangements in the light of our declared climate emergency, so watch this space.

In terms of education, we are also undertaking a review of our post 16 provision to make sure that we continue to have adequate sufficiency of high quality learning opportunities for all our children. Presently we do have sufficient capacity within the Borough to meet the educational needs of young people wishing to enter sixth form provision, and when it is needed, we will of course expand such provision, so that nobody will be left behind.

Supplementary Question:

If Bohunt Education Trust was to put forward an offer to cover the cost of a temporary school until that demand was deemed to be needed by Wokingham Borough Council, meeting the demand where it is needed, and reducing the impact on the environment now, would that be something that Wokingham Council would wish to take forwards?

Supplementary Answer:

There is nothing stopping Bohunt Trust submitting the planning application. Of course, it would be dealt with like any other planning applications so I cannot comment on the outcome, but seems to me that might be a way forward.

44. PETITIONS

The following Member presented a petition in relation to the matter indicated.

The Mayor's decision as to the action to be taken is set out against the petition.

Charles Margetts	Charles Margetts presented a petition containing approximately 1,000 signatures relating to the request for sixth form provision at Bohunt School. <i>To be forwarded to the Executive Member for Children's Services</i>
------------------	---

45. CLIMATE EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN

The Council considered the Climate Emergency Action Plan, set out at Agenda pages 49 to 140.

It was proposed by Gregor Murray and seconded by Laura Blumenthal that the recommendation be agreed.

Gregor Murray stated that he had presented the initial Climate Emergency Action Plan to Council 6 months ago. The updated Plan had 37 core targets, 123 key actions and 385 milestones, along with a financial plan and carbon budget that would take the Borough from emitting 580,000 net carbon tonnes each year to emitting 72,000 net carbon tonnes per year. The Plan was a living document, some actions may be added, and others removed. Gregor Murray went on to emphasise that Wokingham Borough Council was one of the leading councils in the fight against climate change. He highlighted some of the proposed actions within the Plan including the doubling of greenways and public transport usage, and improving air quality and electric vehicle charging infrastructure. He thanked officers for their hard work in the production of the Plan.

Laura Blumenthal commented that the Plan had grown significantly. Wokingham was a leader in best practice in comparison to some larger city authorities. She highlighted the carbon budgeting, clear steps for green recovery and also the engagement work carried out. Laura Blumenthal thanked Officers for their hard work and all the organisations and residents who had had an input in the process.

It was proposed by Sarah Kerr and seconded by Clive Jones that the recommendation be amended as follows:

'That the Council approves the ~~detailed~~ Climate Emergency Action Plan, endorsing the targets **where available** for carbon dioxide reduction and the related actions proposed for Wokingham Borough Council to play as full as a role as possible in achieving a **net-zero** carbon **neutral** Borough by 2030, **but notes that much more work needs to be done before it can hope to achieve that aim.**'

Sarah Kerr stated that she welcomed the progress made and that her amendment was not to lessen this achievement, however, it was to highlight that there was still much which needed to be achieved. She stated that there were some instances of double counting within the plan and some areas whose successful achievement were interdependent on the achievement of others. Sarah Kerr emphasised that changing residents' behaviours was key to success and questioned how this could be best achieved. She requested that a costed business case be produced for the Green Bank project.

Clive Jones reemphasised that whilst the Plan contained a lot of detail, more work needed to be undertaken. There were still 47 actions without a carbon budget against them. He highlighted the four proposed solar farm sites and indicated that it was not known where they would be sited, how much they would cost and the revenue they would generate. Clive Jones referred to the target around additional bottle banks and questioned where they would be located. He went on to state that the Liberal Democrats supported the plan to plant more than 250,000 new trees in the Borough and proposed the creation of a memorial wood for Covid 19 victims.

The amendment to the recommendation was accepted by the proposer of the original recommendation.

Alison Swaddle commented that the plan was a living document. She was part of the cross party Climate Emergency Task and Finish Group which had considered the Plan and had met with officers and the Executive Member. She was pleased that some of their comments and suggestions had been incorporated.

John Kaiser stated that solar farms were commercially viable.

Gary Cowan expressed concern about how the Climate Emergency Action Plan would fit in with current and future planning policy.

Carl Doran stated he found the Plan to be disappointing and that he felt there had been insufficient engagement with the residents, the Working Group and councillors. He referred to elements of double counting within the Plan and questioned why greenways had been included. Carl Doran went on to comment that new homes and the cars that they would likely bring into the area had not been sufficiently accounted for.

Jim Frewin thanked the Executive Member and the officers for their work. He commented that there was a need for the Council to look at its culture and how it did business. He went on to question how many trees and green land in the area had been lost over the last 10 years.

Paul Fishwick stated the Plan was one of the most important documents of the decade but was not currently robust enough.

Rachel Burgess expressed surprise at the positive comments and referred to the fact that 25% of the carbon reductions required had still not been accounted for. She stated that

many of the figures within the Plan did not add up and that some elements were unrealistic.

At this point in the meeting, the item was put the vote. Andy Croy expressed concern that there remained Members who wished to speak on the item. He commented that there was no time limit for agenda items. It was explained that agenda items were treated in the same way as Motions and therefore had a 30 minute time limit for discussion.

Upon being put to the vote, it was:

RESOLVED: That the Council approves the Climate Emergency Action Plan, endorsing the targets where available for carbon dioxide reduction and the related actions proposed for Wokingham Borough Council to play as full a role as possible in achieving a carbon neutral Borough by 2030, but notes that much more work needs to be done before it can hope to achieve that aim.

46. ANNUAL PAY POLICY STATEMENT

The Council considered the Pay Policy Statement, set out at Agenda pages 141 to 152.

It was proposed by John Halsall and seconded by John Kaiser that the recommendation be agreed.

Rachel Burgess expressed disappointment that there was no mention of the Gender Pay Gap. Since last year, the mean gender pay gap had increased to over 15%, which was 9% above the local authority average and 10% higher than neighbouring Reading Borough Council, and the median pay gap was worse. Rachel Burgess stressed that proactive measures needed to be put in place.

Clive Jones emphasised the need for the Council to look after its lower paid workers.

John Halsall responded that many of the issues raised were being continuously addressed. He felt that Reading and Wokingham's workforces could not be directly compared.

Upon being put to the vote, it was:

RESOLVED: That the draft Pay Policy Statement for 2020/21, be approved for publication on the Council's website in accordance with the Localism Act 2011.

47. POLLING DISTRICT CHANGES - SHINFIELD SOUTH

The Council considered a report regarding proposed polling district changes in Shinfield South, set out at Agenda pages 153 to 156.

It was proposed by Barrie Patman and seconded by Charlotte Haitham Taylor that the recommendation be agreed.

The Ward Members were pleased that an inconvenience for some residents of Three Mile Cross when voting in Parish elections would be rectified.

Upon being put to the vote, it was:

RESOLVED: That it be agreed that a new polling district be created for the electors living in the roads as set out in the table and as shown in the hatched area on the map within the report.

48. FLAG FLYING POLICY AND ROOM NAMING PROTOCOL

The Council considered a report regarding a proposed Flag Flying Policy and a Room Naming Policy set out at Agenda pages 157 to 164.

It was proposed by John Halsall and seconded by John Kaiser that the recommendation be agreed.

Members were informed that the Council now had a house flag.

Imogen Shepherd-DuBey raised a number of issues. She felt that it was important that Wokingham Borough Council and Wokingham Town Council were in accord with their flag flying policies, and welcomed the Policy, including the addition of the flying of the flag on Holocaust Memorial Day. Imogen Shepherd-DuBey went on to ask about the rules around the flag being flown at half-mast, and who would decide when this would occur. She questioned whether the Council's house flag would be flown following the death of a councillor. With regards to the Room Naming Policy, she felt that further clarification was required about the number of people required to make a proposal.

Gary Cowan suggested that 'may consult with the relevant bodies' be amended to 'will consult with the relevant bodies', in the Room Naming Policy.

Andy Croy was of the opinion that the Flag Flying Policy was insensitive and should be withdrawn. He commented that if the Council had a good reason to fly the Union Flag it should do so.

Carl Doran stated that the Flag Flying Policy did not include any process by which residents or councillors could request a different flag, not included in the policy, to be flown. He suggested that the policy required further work and requested that the Royal Airforce Ensign be flown at Shute End on the 80th anniversary of the Battle of Britain.

John Halsall indicated that he would be happy to meet with Wokingham Town Council to discuss their flag flying policies.

Upon being put to the vote, it was:

RESOLVED: That the Flag Flying Policy and Room Naming Protocol be approved.

49. MEMBER QUESTION TIME

In accordance with the agreed procedure the Mayor invited Members to submit questions to the appropriate Members

49.1 Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey asked the Executive Member for Climate Emergency the following question:

Question

How will we actually measure that the Heathrow expansion is actually Carbon neutral; including the extra airplanes and additional petrol powered vehicles dropping people off or picking them up?

Answer

Thanks for your question.

The Council has previously made public that the support to the expansion of Heathrow Airport is conditional on the need to reduce the emission of greenhouse gases including carbon emissions and to demonstrate a clear pathway to carbon neutrality by all means which may include offsetting. The need for Western Rail Access and associated improvements to the Twyford Station area have also been identified as essential for the Borough to ensure that there is less dependence on private motor vehicles to access Heathrow from Wokingham Borough and beyond.

The Council has requested that Heathrow Airport demonstrate through monitoring (at a suitable location within the Borough) that any increase in the proposed number of overflights in Wokingham Borough will have no adverse effect on the health and quality of life of our residents.

In regards to carbon on the ground, Heathrow has publicly committed to transition their fleet of cars and small vans to be fully electric or plug in hybrid by 2025. To ensure vehicles at Heathrow meet ultralow emissions standards by 2025, Heathrow is currently investing in building a high-density Electric Vehicle charging network to support their business partners as well as introducing an airside Ultra-Low Emissions Zone from 2025. The Council will closely monitor the realisation of these commitments and will call for action should the commitment not be met.

Wokingham Borough Council is currently developing an electric vehicle strategy that will set the right policies and incentives to accelerate the adoption of zero carbon vehicles within the Borough. This seeks to decarbonise carbon emissions from transport over the next ten years by working in collaboration with our residents and local businesses.

Our annual report on climate emergency includes the carbon footprint for the Council; it will show specifically the carbon dioxide emissions from transport. However, these emissions report does not include scope three emissions, which relate to air travel.

Supplementary Question:

Since we are supposedly measuring these, what are we going to do about that if they do not meet it, and second of all how are you going to stop all these cars from coming in there that are petrol based, and the planes which are petrol based, unless you are making all electric cars and all electric planes only?

Supplementary Answer:

As I said, we are not referring to the type 3 emissions that come from the aeroplanes. It is the responsibility of the aircraft companies and the airlines to take responsibility for their own emissions. We cannot take responsibility for them. In terms of the number of cars, we can put in place strategies locally to ensure that we progress to a low emission vehicle place as soon as we possibly can for ourselves and for our residents.

All we can do is take responsibility for the areas that we have control over and that means taking responsibility for working with our residents and helping them to progress to low emission fleets and then demonstrating to the likes of Heathrow and other airports, that it can be done and that we can lead by example and they should be following us.

49.2 Michael Firmager had asked the Executive Member for Environment and Leisure the following question but it was subsequently withdrawn at the meeting:

Question

Wokingham Borough Council have engaged Consultants to advise on the road map for recycling. What is the brief?

49.3 Emma Hobbs had asked the Executive Member for Children's Services the following question but it was subsequently withdrawn at the meeting:

Question

How has WBC helped to improve children's access to technology?

49.4 Pauline Helliar-Symons had asked the Executive Member for Regeneration the following question but it was subsequently withdrawn at the meeting:

Question

What is the recovery programme for Wokingham Town Centre?

49.5 Angus Ross had asked the Chairman of the Planning Committee the following question but it was subsequently withdrawn at the meeting:

Question

When can we go back to 'face to face' Planning Committee meetings; if not, are there any proposals for the public to speak at meetings?

49.6 Jenny Cheng had asked the Executive Member for Children's Services the following question but it was subsequently withdrawn at the meeting:

Question

What are the implications of Bohunt's wish to have a 6th form?

49.7 Tahir Maher asked the Executive Member for Health, Wellbeing and Adult Services the following question:

Question

I want to acknowledge what the Council has been and are doing to support the Borough over the Covid-19 pandemic. Unfortunately, it is now clear that members of the ethnic minority are likely to suffer more severe effects of Covid-19, resulting in higher than average mortality rates, as compared to non-ethnic minorities.

Have the Council considered this and what specific actions have they taken to protect and support their employees, and when working with the general public who are from ethnic minorities background?

Answer

Thank you for your acknowledgement of the work done by Council officers and Councillors of all parties to support residents during the Covid pandemic. I have seen several members of your party at the Food Distribution Hub and it is very welcome.

Specifically to answer your question; A recent report by Public Health England identified a

major number of inequalities:

- Risk of dying following a positive test for Covid-19 (pillar 1):
- 70 times higher in people 80 years or older than those under 40
- Higher in males than females
- Higher in those living in the more deprived areas vs those living in the least deprived areas (2x)
- Higher in many Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic groups than the White British ethnic group

In Wokingham, we have designed an individual risk assessment to support employees and their managers to consider any additional measures that may need to be put in place to ensure employees are protected and fully supported. While there is no specific medical guidance about what these protective measures should be for ethnic minorities, we are recommending that the measures advised by the Government for those who are classified as 'clinically vulnerable', should be followed.

Supplementary Question:

In case we are in a similar situation as Leicester and Wokingham has to shut down, would it be all of Wokingham or would it say be Earley or Woodley, part of Wokingham, or would it be all of it?

Supplementary Answer:

The Council has a separate body basically, chaired by my colleague Councillor Halsall, which includes all health professionals, local health professionals from Public Health England and the NHS etc., which monitors it. Your colleague Councillor Hare sits on it. That would control the reaction to anything that did happen here. I think, being honest with you, it is likely that we are going to have more cases, and we have to be honest about that. I would say to all residents to remain vigilant and to follow the appropriate medical advice in terms of symptoms.

The direct answer to your question is that it would depend on how grave an outbreak would be. The Council has published a Plan, which has been available for some weeks, 114 or 115 pages long, which outlines all the different scenarios should there be an outbreak in a school, community centre, a care home, a shopping area etc. and what would happen. That is available for the general public. It is a very comprehensive plan and something that I fully support, and contributed to by not just officers from my own department, but officers from across the Council.

49.8 Graham Howe had asked the Executive Member for Highways and Transport the following question but it was subsequently withdrawn at the meeting:

Question

Please can you update the Council on the works on Wokingham Town Centre roads and what affect they are having for residents?

49.9 Gary Cowan asked the Executive Member for Health, Wellbeing and Adult Services the following question:

Question

The Government provided a fund of a £5 Million pot to Councils to enable care homes to

get £1,000 cash incentive per patient if they took in hospital patients in order to free up beds in Hospitals. To qualify, the care homes, including Council run care homes had to admit the patient within 24 hours regardless of whether they had Coronavirus or not.

The £1,000 per patient was designed to help pay for any additional costs care homes incurred including extra PPE, additional staff, additional cleaning so Covid-19 patients coming out of hospital into care homes could be isolated.

My question is how much of this £5 million did Wokingham get and how was it distributed?

Answer

To date, the government has provided a number of funding streams to support the Council and its local social care market.

NHS England published Covid-19 hospital discharge service requirements on the 19 March. These requirements identified actions that had to be taken to enhance discharge arrangements and the provision of community support. This included the discharge 7 days a week, within 2 hours. This did not include a cash incentive to Care Homes for Hospital Discharge.

Wokingham Borough Council has done a lot to support care homes:

- An improved funding deal, prepayments to support with cash flow possibility;
- Help with Personal Protective Equipment (PPE);
- Regular advice and guidance;
- Testing for staff with symptoms;
- Offer of access to staff in an emergency

Wokingham Borough Council was allocated £1.8m from the Adult Social Care Infection Control Grant. Funding will be provided in two equal instalments and WBC has distributed the first instalment in accordance with the grant conditions.

75% of that funding went straight to care homes within our geographical area for use on infection control measures. The funding was distributed in June 2020. 25% was passed on to other commissioned adult social care providers, including home care and supported living.

The Grant is subject to a number of conditions and the second payment will be subject to the satisfactory completion of the NHS Care Home Tracker and evidence that funding has been spent in accordance with the Grant conditions.

There are a very large number of Care Homes in Wokingham compared to other Unitary Authorities in Berkshire. They are usually run by private or voluntary sector service providers. Optalis Ltd operates one care home; Suffolk Lodge that provides residential care for 36 older people living with dementia who need the support of a secure environment and a higher level of care from staff.

49.10 Daniel Sargeant had asked the Executive Member for Health, Wellbeing and Adult Services the following question but it was subsequently withdrawn at the meeting:

Question

Can you please provide us with an update on the Council's Covid-19 track and trace plan?

49.11 Shirley Boyt asked the Executive Member for Highways and Transport the following question:

Question

Children in year six in our primary schools usually have the opportunity to participate in level 3 of the Bikeability scheme, having completed levels 1 and 2 in the previous year. Unfortunately, due to Covid-19 they have been unable to do so. This is a particularly important level as children get the opportunity to practice the route they will be taking to secondary school from September. I note from the My Journey web page that level 3 courses are running during the holidays in Twyford and Gorse Ride. Are there any further courses planned to enable Woodley and Earley children to participate in this essential training?

Answer

We agree that the level 3 course is a beneficial part of the Bikeability programme. The course is aimed at more confident cyclists who want to cycle on roads over 30mph, cross multiple lanes and use complex junctions. Last year Level 3 training was delivered at 4 primary schools and 3 secondary schools with some additional summer courses.

The most significant demand for Bikeability training currently, is for the Level 1/2 training. We have seen 25 primary schools cancel or not book their training this year compared to previous years. Level 2 training is usually sufficient for most cyclists who travel to school, as it covers cycling on the road up to 30mph and encounters some cycling infrastructure.

The Bikeability Trust has issued Covid-19 guidelines on how to deliver socially distanced courses with smaller groups of children. The guidelines have resulted in the Level 3 courses being particularly difficult to find suitable venues for.

We are pleased to confirm that Willowbank Primary School have agreed to host both Level 2 and Level 3 Bikeability courses in late August. These additional courses will be available for booking on the My Journey website shortly. Places will be available on the Level 3 course at Oakbank Secondary School tomorrow (24th July). The My Journey team are focusing on delivering further Level 2 courses at this time, and finding suitable venues in which to run this training from. Further Level 3 courses will be offered to secondary schools next year. If there is sufficient demand for further Level 3 training beyond this, additional holiday courses can then be arranged. If you want to have a chat separately and explain who would like to do it and where they think it would be suitable then I would be happy to follow it up for you.

Supplementary Question:

I note that the Level 3 courses do incur a charge whereas Levels 1 and 2 are subsidised from the Department of Transport grant. Are there any ways that children from very low-income families could do this training without paying for the course, or pay a reduced rate?

Supplementary Answer:

That is a very good question and I am happy to follow up for you.

49.12 Andy Croy asked the Executive Member for Climate Emergency the following question:

Question

The Climate Emergency Action plan is not fit for purpose. The plan will not cause the Borough to be Carbon Neutral by 2030. It has taken a whole year for this to be acknowledged.

What changes to the plan will be made to ensure the Borough reaches Carbon Neutrality by 2030?

Answer

Thank you for your question.

The purpose of the climate emergency action plan is to provide a working document that acts as a planning tool. It provides an understanding of the Council's trajectory, the scale of ambition and the complexity of the challenge ahead. Identifying which actions need to be implemented to achieve the 2030 goal of net carbon neutral. This is a ten-year plan and it is expected that this will change significantly over time, as many of the actions will develop as new information emerges and new actions are identified over the next years.

As a Council, we are leading the way, in being bold and aspirational by publishing an action plan that provides a high level of detail about our carbon targets and how we are planning to achieve them. Within the document, we establish that even if all of the actions in the plan are implemented, there will still be a shortfall of 72.67 ktCO₂e from the aspirational net-zero carbon target by 2030. This is an important piece of information that the action plan has helped us to identify so we can understand what more needs to be done to become net carbon zero. The Council will seek to close this gap by continually reviewing the action plan. Providing more accurate carbon savings against individual actions, as projects are introduced and develop.

Despite the Council's, best efforts many of the outcomes rely on factors which are outside the Council's control. The effective delivery of this action plan depends on the influence and support of multiple agencies and stakeholders such as businesses, Town and Parish Councils, the University of Reading. The Council is committed to working in partnership to achieve these ambitious goals. Responsibilities will be made clear in future iterations of the action plan.

Central to delivering the climate emergency targets is engaging with our residents and the community so that they can become an integral part of the Borough's response to the Climate Emergency. The Council will also develop a behavioural change and engagement program that will support our residents at the different stages of this journey.

The plan has been reviewed independently by our partners in the Climate Emergency Advisory Board, which is formed with representatives from organisations including businesses, charities and academia including the University of Reading, National Grid, Greater South East Energy Hub, Chairman of WBC Business Group, Sustrans and Scottish Southern Electric.

Supplementary Question:

There are 317 milestones in the Plan and 84 of them have no impact at all. There is a lot of puff in this Plan. If I can just draw your attention to one part of the Plan. To have 50%

of new vehicle registrations to be electric vehicles. According to the Plan that would kill 45,000 tonnes of carbon for the year. Now that is an absurd statistic – 50% of all vehicles to be electric is 900. It is not going to do anything like that. The real figure for that should be 2,000. So just in 30 seconds, we have taken away 20% of the carbon savings that you think that you are going to make. The fact is, this Plan does not add up does it?

Supplementary Answer:

As I have said Councillor Croy, the action plan is a living and breathing document. Things are going to come into it and things are going to come off of it. You raised this point in terms of new vehicle registrations during the Task and Finish Group, and I have promised to get you an answer on that and we will get you one.

I genuinely believe that is taking our carbon budget down significantly already. There are more plans, more programmes, in the works, in the background that we are doing the due diligence on, and that we need to evaluate on behalf of our residents. We have got to do it properly. New targets, new initiatives will come onto this Plan over the next 10 years. I am sorry that you do not believe that that is the case, but many, many actions have come on over the last year that have taken our carbon emergency plan down, our carbon budget down. More will come and things like solar farms were not pre-existing actions. They are new to our Plan. They are going to take our carbon footprint down massively.

50. MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS AND WARD MATTERS

Emma Hobbs, Tahir Maher and David Hare indicated that they would not be asking their Ward questions in order to save time on the agenda.

50.1 Maria Gee asked the Executive Member for Highways and Transport the following question:

Question:

In January, I asked about the policy for pavement advertising in Wokingham Town Centre and Councillor Pauline Jorgensen responded that there was no need for a new policy on pavement advertising. I appreciate the need to have due regard to businesses during these difficult times, but when you, Pauline, made the decision in January not to develop such a policy, in what way did you give due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty, specifically the need to advance equality between people who have protected characteristics and those who do not? With whom did you consult from people who shared protected characteristics, such as the elderly and those with disabilities, before making that decision? Our elderly and disabled residents have been denied an equal opportunity to take part in business and social life in the town centre. Soon more alfresco drinking and dining licences will be issued, and we need to design our towns so that social distancing is possible. The landscape of town centres is changing. Will you now consult widely to put up an on pavement policy that is fair to all residents?

Answer:

Yes, as you know, I did consult with you, and I also consulted with one resident who was complaining about the pavement advertising. I also talked to the Planning Officers and I also talked to the Highways Officers. The conclusion we came to was, is that there is a current policy which if implemented, and if enforced, would actually deal with the problem. As a result of that conversation with Highways Officers, we had people going round the Town Centre, talking to local businesses and encouraging them to move their A Boards off the highway. I had a recent report today from one of my colleagues that said that when you were complaining about the A Boards on the highway pavement, there was actually all

the A Boards on the shop precinct. So, obviously going round talking to people did work. We really need to encourage the businesses in Wokingham Town at the moment, and I agree that we also need to make sure that the signs are not dangerous, and I think that we have the policy to do that. I am currently also talking to the Planning guys to make sure that that is the case.

50.2 Andy Croy asked the Executive Member for Highways and Transport the following question:

Question:

I have been contacted by a resident in Bruce Road in Woodley who is very, very disappointed, as are his neighbours, about the quality of the recent resurfacing work that was undertaken. I was wondering would you and perhaps an officer like to come with me to Bruce Road Woodley to explain to residents about the quality of the road?

Answer:

I would be delighted to. I have already been to speak to residents in Earley and I have been to speak to residents with Jim Frewin in Shinfield. Be happy to. I think one of the things that we as councillors need to do is to explain to local residents how the micro asphaltting process works for example and how long it takes to settle down. Expectations need to be managed.

51. STATEMENTS BY THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL, EXECUTIVE MEMBERS AND DEPUTY EXECUTIVE MEMBERS

John Halsall, Leader of the Council:

Mr Mayor, I promised that this would be a brief statement.

It is only to announce the small change to Councillor Murray's responsibilities and title to become "Executive Member for Residents' Services, Communications and Emissions".

52. STATEMENTS FROM COUNCIL OWNED COMPANIES

This item was withdrawn.

53. MOTIONS

53.1 Motion 432 submitted by Clive Jones

The Council considered the following Notice of Motion submitted by Clive Jones and seconded by Rachelle Shepherd-Dubey.

'This Council wants the political leadership to redouble their efforts to challenge the housing numbers which are being inflicted on this Borough by central government which we consider do not meet our local needs.

Since the beginning of the year, our lives have changed considerably and local circumstances are now very different to what they were in January and February. We would therefore like to invite Ministers and senior Civil Servants from MHCLG to come to Wokingham to see for themselves the beautiful semi-rural nature of our Borough.

We would like them to meet local residents, Borough Councillors from all political groups, Town and Parish Councillors from all parts of the Borough including Remenham to Swallowfield and everywhere in between; so they can understand for themselves the strength of feeling that residents have about the high housing numbers that are being

forced on us by this Conservative Government.’

Clive Jones stated that Wokingham had taken more than its fair share in housing numbers and despite efforts, these numbers had not been reduced. Last year a survey of residents’ views on future housing development showed that 95% of those who responded did not want lots more development. He asked that senior officials and civil servants to be invited to the Borough to meet with residents and to hear their views. He suggested that councillors from all parties and the Town and Parish Councils be included in discussions.

Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey commented that it was time to prevent a continuous urban sprawl. She felt that the north of England was crying out for more new homes whilst building continued to be more focused in the south east. She suggested that the money spent on the survey could have been used on other things, such as funding youth workers.

It was moved by Wayne Smith and seconded by John Halsall that the Motion be amended as follows:

‘This Council wants the political leadership to **more than** redouble their efforts to challenge the housing numbers which are being inflicted on this Borough by central Government which we consider do not meet our local needs.

Since the beginning of the year, our lives have changed considerably and local circumstances are now very different to what they were in January and February. We would therefore like to **again and again** invite Ministers and senior Civil Servants from MHCLG to come to Wokingham to see for themselves the beautiful semi-rural nature of our Borough.

We would like them to meet local residents, Borough Councillors from all political groups, Town and Parish Councillors from all parts of the Borough including Remenham to Swallowfield and everywhere in between; so they can understand for themselves the strength of feeling that residents have about the high housing numbers that **are being have been** forced on us by **this successive Labour, Lib Dem and** Conservative Governments.’

Wayne Smith commented that the high housing numbers were the result of successive governments.

John Halsall commented that Wokingham was a rural area and that the development of the Borough had increased over the years. To not have a Local Plan would leave the Council vulnerable to speculative development. He outlined some of the actions that he had taken to try to get the housing numbers for the Borough reduced.

The amendment to the Motion was accepted by the proposer of the original Motion, subject to the following change ‘**successive past and current Labour, Lib Dem and Conservative Governments,**’ and, therefore, became the substantive Motion.

A number of Members spoke in support of a reduction in the Council’s housing numbers.

Upon being put to the vote, the amended Motion was declared by the Mayor to be carried.

RESOLVED: That this Council wants the political leadership to more than redouble their efforts to challenge the housing numbers which are being inflicted on this Borough by

central Government which we consider do not meet our local needs.

Since the beginning of the year, our lives have changed considerably and local circumstances are now very different to what they were in January and February. We would therefore like to again and again invite Ministers and senior Civil Servants from MHCLG to come to Wokingham to see for themselves the beautiful semi-rural nature of our Borough.

We would like them to meet local residents, Borough Councillors from all political groups, Town and Parish Councillors from all parts of the Borough including Remenham to Swallowfield and everywhere in between; so they can understand for themselves the strength of feeling that residents have about the high housing numbers that have been forced on us by successive past and current Governments.

53.2 Continuation of the meeting

At this point in the meeting, 10.06pm, in accordance with Procedure Rule 4.2.12 (m), the Council considered a Motion to continue the meeting beyond 10.30pm for a maximum of 30 minutes to enable further business on the Agenda to be transacted. The Motion was proposed by Prue Bray and seconded by Stephen Conway.

Upon being put to the vote, the Motion was declared by the Mayor to be carried.

53.3 Motion 433 submitted by Gregor Murray

The Council considered the following Notice of Motion submitted by Gregor Murray and seconded by Laura Blumenthal.

‘At its meeting on July 18th 2019 the full Council voted unanimously to declare a Climate Emergency across Wokingham Borough and to commit itself to being carbon neutral by 2030.

In order to achieve this crucial aim, and to live up to our environmental responsibilities we understand that it is essential we take steps to immediately reduce the amount of carbon we either directly or indirectly use each year.

It is clear that no responsible Council can take action on climate change without seeking to drastically reduce the amount of single use plastics consumed by both its residents and by the Council in its every day operations.

In face of the overwhelming evidence about the impact that single use plastics have on our lives, climate, seas, rivers and broader environments, Wokingham Borough Council commits to ensuring that – wherever possible – single use plastics are eliminated from use within the Council, and all Council controlled environments, as soon as possible.’

This would be achieved by:

- phasing out the purchase of single-use plastic products through services commissioned by the Council where possible and as soon as practicable.
- Bringing regular reports to future committee meetings, describing the Council’s plans to eliminate single-use plastic from the organisation, including a timetable for doing so.
- Working with Wokingham’s businesses, community groups and residents to share advice, ideas and best practice on using sustainable alternatives
- Working with schools to support the aspiration of Wokingham’s young people to

eliminate plastic waste from our environment.

- Seeking to work with neighbouring Councils to tackle single use plastic use across the wider Berkshire area.
- Sign-posting on all Council buildings and properties to forbid the bringing of single use plastics onto the property.
- Sign-posting on all Council buildings and properties once it has become single use plastic free.'

Gregor Murray emphasised the negative environmental impact of single use plastics. Whilst there had to be some exceptions, such as for health and wellbeing reasons, there was in the main, no reason, for the Council to use single use plastics.

Laura Blumenthal commented that residents were doing their bit and that the Council also needed to play its part, in order to take more residents with them in its green ambitions. She felt that the Motion built on a lot of work that was already being done within the Council.

Rachel Burgess reminded the meeting that Section 4.2.13.1 of the Constitution stated that 'after a Motion has been proposed, seconded and the proposer has made his/her speech the Mayor will ask if any Member wishes to speak against the Motion. If no one wishes to speak against the Motion then the Mayor will put the matter to the vote.' The Mayor, having established that no one wished to speak against the motion, put the matter to the vote.

Upon being put to the vote, the Motion was declared by the Mayor to be carried.

RESOLVED: That at its meeting on July 18th 2019 the full Council voted unanimously to declare a Climate Emergency across Wokingham Borough and to commit itself to being carbon neutral by 2030.

In order to achieve this crucial aim, and to live up to our environmental responsibilities we understand that it is essential we take steps to immediately reduce the amount of carbon we either directly or indirectly use each year.

It is clear that no responsible Council can take action on climate change without seeking to drastically reduce the amount of single use plastics consumed by both its residents and by the Council in its every day operations.

In face of the overwhelming evidence about the impact that single use plastics have on our lives, climate, seas, rivers and broader environments, Wokingham Borough Council commits to ensuring that – wherever possible – single use plastics are eliminated from use within the Council, and all Council controlled environments, as soon as possible.

This would be achieved by:

- phasing out the purchase of single-use plastic products through services commissioned by the Council where possible and as soon as practicable.
- Bringing regular reports to future committee meetings, describing the Council's plans to eliminate single-use plastic from the organisation, including a timetable for doing so.
- Working with Wokingham's businesses, community groups and residents to share advice, ideas and best practice on using sustainable alternatives
- Working with schools to support the aspiration of Wokingham's young people to

eliminate plastic waste from our environment.

- Seeking to work with neighbouring Councils to tackle single use plastic use across the wider Berkshire area.
- Sign-posting on all Council buildings and properties to forbid the bringing of single use plastics onto the property.
- Sign-posting on all Council buildings and properties once it has become single use plastic free.'

53.4 Motion 434 submitted by Sarah Kerr

The Council considered the following Notice of Motion submitted by Sarah Kerr and seconded by Paul Fishwick.

'This Council notes that:

- Air pollution poses a serious threat to the health of everyone and in particular the development of young people. Epidemiological studies show that symptoms of bronchitis in asthmatic children increase in association with long-term exposure to pollutants, as well as stunting lung growth.
- Our residents and visitors are exposed to unsafe levels of pollutants, particularly outside of schools at peak times in the morning and afternoon, next to taxi ranks, at level crossings and along our major roads.
- Road transport is one of the biggest contributors to particulate matter and pollution in Wokingham Borough.
- While many of the policy interventions to rectify this problem would have to come from central Government, this Council can do more and needs to be proactive on this issue.
- Only a handful of areas across the country are trialling "No Vehicle Idling zones" yet they bring many health benefits, and could be introduced around the Borough, particularly outside schools, taxi ranks and at level crossings.
- It is important to provide our residents and visitors with healthier and less polluting alternatives to move about the Borough, and in particular, parents taking their children to school. Therefore, the Council should invest more in walking and cycling.

This Council resolves to:

- Monitor the level of particulate matter 2.5 across the borough.
- Review the work done on No-Vehicle-Idling nationally in other local authorities and integrate this into an Action Plan for No-Vehicle-Idling zones covering the Wokingham Borough Council area with a view to implementing No-Vehicle-Idling zones, around as many schools in the Borough as possible, by the end of 2022, and in other identified areas such as taxi ranks and close to level crossings
- Encourage local businesses to sponsor green walls on school buildings and tree planting near schools and the Executive Member for Environment includes this in his action plan.
- Increase spending on active travel in future budgets, especially safe cycle lanes.
- Produce a strategy for implementing a car club scheme across the Borough.'

Sarah Kerr commented that climate change and air pollution whilst linked, were not the same. A large proportion of air pollution came from road transport which released gases such as nitrous oxides, sulphur dioxide and fine particles. Fine particles were particularly harmful to health and were attributable to four out of five deaths from air pollution. Research undertaken by the British Heart Foundation suggested that in 2017, 65

circulatory and heart disease related deaths in the Borough were attributable to air pollution. Sarah Kerr went on to emphasise the damage to lung growth and highlighted that according to the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, Wokingham was above national and regional average for children being hospitalised for respiratory tract infections.

Paul Fishwick emphasised the need for the monitoring of particulate matter, which were harmful to health. He emphasised the effects around schools, railway bridges and other areas where cars were more likely to have their engines idling.

It was proposed by Gregor Murray and seconded by Parry Bath that the Motion be amended as follows:

‘This Council notes that:

- Air pollution poses a serious threat to the health of everyone and in particular the development of young people. Epidemiological studies show that symptoms of bronchitis in asthmatic children increase in association with long-term exposure to pollutants, as well as stunting lung growth.
- Our residents and visitors are exposed to unsafe levels of pollutants, particularly outside of schools at peak times in the morning and afternoon, next to taxi ranks, at level crossings and along our major roads.
- Road transport is one of the biggest contributors to particulate matter and pollution in Wokingham Borough.
- While many of the policy interventions to rectify this problem would have to come from central Government, this Council can do more and needs to be proactive on this issue.
- Only a handful of areas across the country are trialling “No Vehicle Idling zones” yet they bring many health benefits, and could be introduced around the borough, particularly outside schools, taxi ranks and at level crossings.
- It is important to provide our residents and visitors with healthier and less polluting alternatives to move about the borough, and in particular, parents taking their children to school. Therefore, the Council should invest more in walking and cycling.

This Council resolves to:

- **Continue monitoring** the level of particulate matter 2.5 across the Borough.
- **Continue to** review the work done on No-Vehicle-Idling nationally in other local authorities and ~~integrate this into an~~ **continue with the** Action Plan for No-Vehicle-Idling zones covering the Wokingham Borough Council area with a view to implementing No-Vehicle-Idling zones, around as many schools in the Borough as possible, by the end of 2022, and in other identified areas such as taxi ranks and close to level crossings
- **Continue to** encourage local businesses to sponsor green walls ~~on school buildings~~ and tree planting ~~near schools~~ and the Executive Member for Environment includes this in ~~their~~ **his** action plan.
- **Continue to** increase spending on active travel in future budgets, especially safe cycle lanes.
- ~~Produce~~ **Consider** a strategy for implementing a car club scheme across the Borough.’

Gregor Murray commented that many of the recommendations within the original Motion were already underway. He referred to funding awarded to the Council by Defra to further encourage active travel in Wokingham Town centre and Twyford where air quality

management areas were located, and also Finchampstead where the air quality agglomeration zone was located. A key Council aim was to get more schoolchildren using active transport methods.

53.5 Adjournment of meeting

At this point in the meeting, 10:32pm, the meeting was adjourned following a request by Sarah Kerr for time to consider the amendment.

53.6 Continuation of Motion 434 submitted by Sarah Kerr

At this point in the meeting, 10:37pm, the meeting continued.

The amendment to the Motion was accepted by the proposer of the original Motion subject to no changes being made to the first and last bullet points of the published Motion.

Rachel Burgess reemphasised Section 4.2.13.1 of the Constitution.

Jim Frewin commented that whilst he supported the aims and objectives of the Motion he found it difficult to support the no vehicle idling zones. It was not proven that starting and stopping in an older car was effective in reducing pollution.

Upon being put to the vote, the amended Motion was declared by the Mayor to be carried.

RESOLVED: That this Council notes that:

- Air pollution poses a serious threat to the health of everyone and in particular the development of young people. Epidemiological studies show that symptoms of bronchitis in asthmatic children increase in association with long-term exposure to pollutants, as well as stunting lung growth.
- Our residents and visitors are exposed to unsafe levels of pollutants, particularly outside of schools at peak times in the morning and afternoon, next to taxi ranks, at level crossings and along our major roads.
- Road transport is one of the biggest contributors to particulate matter and pollution in Wokingham Borough.
- While many of the policy interventions to rectify this problem would have to come from central Government, this Council can do more and needs to be proactive on this issue.
- Only a handful of areas across the country are trialling “No Vehicle Idling zones” yet they bring many health benefits, and could be introduced around the borough, particularly outside schools, taxi ranks and at level crossings.
- It is important to provide our residents and visitors with healthier and less polluting alternatives to move about the borough, and in particular, parents taking their children to school. Therefore, the Council should invest more in walking and cycling.

This Council resolves to:

- Monitor the level of particulate matter 2.5 across the Borough.
- Continue to review the work done on No-Vehicle-Idling nationally in other local authorities and continue with the Action Plan for No-Vehicle-Idling zones covering the Wokingham Borough Council area with a view to implementing No-Vehicle-Idling zones, around as many schools in the Borough as possible, by the end of 2022, and in other identified areas such as taxi ranks and close to level crossings
- Continue to encourage local businesses to sponsor green walls and tree planting and the Executive Member for Environment includes this in his action plan.

- Continue to increase spending on active travel in future budgets, especially safe cycle lanes.
- Produce a strategy for implementing a car club scheme across the Borough.'

53.7 Motion 435 submitted by Rachel Burgess

Due to time constraints, the Motion was not considered.

53.8 Motion 436 submitted by Rachel Bishop-Firth

Due to time constraints, the Motion was not considered.

53.9 Motion 437 submitted by Pauline Helliard-Symons

Due to time constraints, the Motion was not considered.

53.10 Motion 438 submitted by Gary Cowan

Due to time constraints, the Motion was not considered.

This page is intentionally left blank