

City Council

Monday 14 September 2020

PRESENT:

Councillor Mavin, in the Chair.

Councillor Winter, Vice Chair.

Councillors Allen, Mrs Aspinall, Ball, Mrs Beer, Bowyer, Mrs Bowyer, Mrs Bridgeman, Buchan, Carson, Churchill, Coker, Cook, Corvid, Dann, Darcy, Sam Davey, Deacon, Downie, Drear, Evans OBE, Goslin, Haydon, Hendy, Mrs Johnson, Kelly, Laing, Michael Leaves, Loveridge, Lowry, McDonald, Morris, Murphy, Neil, Nicholson, Parker-Delaz-Ajete, Penberthy, Rennie, Riley, Singh, Pete Smith, Rebecca Smith, Stevens, Jon Taylor, Kate Taylor, Tuffin, Tuohy, Vincent, Ms Watkin, Wheeler and Wigens.

Apologies for absence: Councillors Derrick, James, Jordan, Samantha Leaves and Mrs Pengelly

The meeting started at 2.00 pm and finished at 7.30 pm.

Note: The full discussion can be viewed on the webcast of the City Council meeting at www.plymouth.gov.uk. At a future meeting, the Council will consider the accuracy of these draft minutes, so they may be subject to change. Please check the minutes of that meeting to confirm whether these minutes have been amended.

24. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 22 June 2020 were agreed as a true and accurate record subject to the following amendment:

Minute 23: Questions by Councillors – question 12 – Councillor Mrs Johnston should be replaced with Councillor Mrs Johnson.

25. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest made by Members in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

26. Appointments to Committees, Outside Bodies etc

Members were advised that there were no changes or new appointments to committees or outside bodies.

27. Announcements

The Lord Mayor made the following announcement:

- invited the Council to note the sad passing of Mrs Phyllis Ainsworth on 9th of September 2020 - she was Deputy Lady Mayoress in 1970/71, Lady Mayoress in

1994/95 and President of the Federation of Ex-Services Associations. Councillors were asked to join the Lord Mayor in observing 1 minute's silence.

The Lord Mayor then requested that Council suspend the usual procedural rules to allow the Director of Public Health to provide an update to the Council on COVID-19. The Deputy Lord Mayor seconded the motion and this was agreed unanimously by Full Council.

The Director of Public Health provided an update on the current situation with regards to the COVID-19 pandemic as follows:

- over the last few weeks there had been an increase in cases of COVID-19 across the country; within Plymouth the rate of cases was currently 16, per 100,000 in comparison to an average of 22 per 100,00 across the rest of England. Plymouth's figures were below the national average however had increased considerably since the last update to Council;
- it was recognised nationally that the majority of cases were in a younger population (working age to up to 50 years old) and that this cohort seemed to be less badly affected by the disease itself. The rates of those cases across the country remained relatively low however in some areas where early increases were experienced there were local lockdowns in place;
- as winter was approaching it was expected that people would spend more time indoors and it was highlighted that COVID-19 could spread more easily in this environment due to less space and ventilation. This time of year also brought about more coughs and colds, many of which would not be COVID-19, however would need to be treated as such due to the similarity of symptoms experienced;
- it was recognised that there had been considerable issues linked to pillar 2 testing; some people were experiencing problems booking onto tests to get to the Seaton Barracks site or to get a home test. It was highlighted that the issue was in laboratory capacity;
- despite the difficulties experienced by some in trying to get a test, the rate of testing had increased; in the last 7 days 3,300 tests had been carried out in Plymouth whereas over a month in the summer the rate was approximately 2,000. It was reiterated that only the person with COVID-19 symptoms was required to undertake a test other than the entire household;
- to try to prevent the rise in COVID-19 associated deaths, guidance had been issued by the Government limiting social contact to a group of 6 people; it was highlighted that the more you minimise social contact the more you minimise the potential risk in contracting or spreading COVID-19.

The following key areas of questioning were raised by Members:

- issues surrounding Track and Trace in terms of licensed premises and how

businesses could be encouraged to collect this information;

- how Plymouth University was going to oversee students were following Government guidelines relating to COVID-19 restrictions during Fresher's Week, and how the rule of 6 was going to affect HMOs in the city whose occupancy was greater than this number;
- what powers did the Director of Public Health, the Council and other responsible bodies have to ensure residents were acting in a responsible way in licensed premises during the pandemic.

The Chief Executive of the Council, Tracey Lee, then provided an update on COVID-19, efforts to provide key services throughout the pandemic and to restore them and work undertaken with partners to focus on recovery.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Tudor Evans OBE, made announcements including the following: testing capacity in Plymouth, the recruitment of COVID-19 Marshalls, Brexit and lorry parks, the Government's consultation on housing, the importance of the defence economy in Plymouth, Plymouth railway station, the penalisation of Plymouth Albion and The Box in Plymouth.

Councillor Kate Taylor, Cabinet Member for Health made announcement regarding four care homes that were at outbreak status and two currently at suspected outbreak status but these were not all residents this could be staff.

Councillor Jon Taylor, Cabinet Member for Education, Transformation and Skills made announcement on COVID-19 in Plymouth schools and advised that there were currently three schools that had confirmed cases and each school was following local risk assessments and DFE guidance.

Councillor Pete Smith, Deputy Leader made announcements regarding the opening of Plympton and Estover Libraries and over the next week all the remaining libraries would be open.

Councillor Sally Haydon, Cabinet Member for Customer Focus and Community Safety thanked staff at the Contact Centre for their hard work and who have made it to number 1 of customer satisfaction rates in June.

Councillor Chris Penberthy, Cabinet Member for Housing and Co-operative Development regarding Crowd Fund Plymouth and it had helped 93 eligible projects. We have increased our match funding from £20,000 to £30,000 and a bonus of up to £15,000 for projects that meet our climate emergency initiative.

Councillor Mary Aspinall, Chair of the Scrutiny Management Board advised Members that individual scrutiny panels would begin to start up again, however would have a clear focus on the impact of COVID-19 upon the specific service areas.

28. **Questions by the Public**

There were no questions from members of the public.

29. **Annual Report on Treasury Management Activities for 2019/20**

Councillor Mark Lowry (Cabinet Member for Finance) introduced the Annual Report on Treasury Management Activities for 2019/20. This was seconded by Councillor Tudor Evans OBE (Leader of the Council).

Following a discussion, Council agreed to approve the Annual Report on Treasury Management Activities for 2019/20.

For (48)

Councillors Allen, Aspinall, Ball, Mrs Beer, Bowyer, Mrs Bowyer, Mrs Bridgeman, Buchan, Corvid, Carson, Churchill, Coker, Dann, Darcy, Davey, Deacon, Downie, Drean, Evans OBE, Haydon, Goslin, Hendy, Mrs Johnson, Kelly, Laing, Mike Leaves, Loveridge, Lowry, McDonald, Morris, Murphy, Nicholson, Parker-Delaz-Ajete, Penberthy, Rennie, Riley, Singh, P Smith, R Smith, Stevens, J Taylor, K Taylor, Tuffin, Tuohy, Vincent, Ms Watkin, Wheeler and Winter.

Against (0)

Absent/ Did Not Vote (9)

Councillors Cook, Derrick, Jordan, James, Sam Leaves, Neil, Mrs Pengelly, Wigens.
Lord Mayor – Councillor Mavin

30. **Report from the Chief Officer Appointments Panel**

This item was withdrawn therefore was not discussed.

31. **Motions on notice**

32. **Flooding**

Councillor Drean introduced the Motion on Flooding. This was seconded by Councillor Kelly.

An amendment to the Motion was moved by Councillor Dann and this was seconded by Councillor Coker.

The amendment proposed was follows:

Plymouth City Council has taken a proactive approach to flood prevention and a lead role in responding to the challenges being faced by Plymouth as a result of the wider climate crisis. Since 2012 PCC have completed 18 separate flood risk projects at a cost of £5M, that has resulted in 343 residential properties being better protected from flooding. In the current and future flood risk programme, between 2020 and 2026, a total of 14 new major flood projects are identified, these are designed to reduce the risk of flooding to a further 998

residential properties in Plymouth at a current estimated total delivery cost of £26M. These projects will be funded through partnership funding arrangements with the Environment Agency, South West Water, developer funded contributions where these can be secured and will depend on match funding from Plymouth City Council.

The Environment Agency has said that £1 billion a year is needed to protect our communities with the need for comprehensive flood prevention plans recognising the climate crisis. The pressure is even higher now on cash strapped councils and our frontline services following years of austerity, its time the government recognised that funding to reverse the severe cuts that have been imposed on local authorities is key to support future climate emergency planning.

In light of recent Flooding across the City, and the forecast that future Climate Change and weather patterns will make this a more regular occurrence, the City Council resolves:

To ask Cllr ~~Mark Coker~~ Sue Dann to be even more proactive in taking and to take the lead in protecting our City from further flooding, by continuing to complete ~~completing~~ preventative and routine work in a timely fashion as well as working with partner agencies to protect and safeguard residents and business from the distress and anxiety caused by such flooding and lobbying the government to take the urgent decisions needed to respond to the climate crisis Ask Cllr Sue Dann to write to the government to ensure that the funding and planning for flood defence is a priority and to increase funding to local authorities and the Environment Agency flood defence schemes to safeguard residents, businesses and infrastructure.

The meeting was briefly adjourned to consider the amendment.

Following a debate, the amendment was agreed.

For (49)

Councillors Allen, Aspinall, Ball, Mrs Beer, Bowyer, Mrs Bowyer, Mrs Bridgeman, Buchan, Corvid, Carson, Churchill, Coker, Dann, Darcy, Davey, Deacon, Downie, Drean, Evans OBE, Haydon, Goslin, Hendy, Mrs Johnson, Kelly, Laing, Mike Leaves, Loveridge, Lowry, McDonald, Morris, Murphy, Neil, Nicholson, Parker-Delaz-Ajete, Penberthy, Rennie, Riley, Singh, P Smith, R Smith, Stevens, J Taylor, K Taylor, Tuffin, Tuohy, Vincent, Ms Watkin, Wheeler and Winter.

Against (0)

Absent/ Did Not Vote (8)

Councillors Cook, Derrick, Jordan, James, Sam Leaves and Mrs Pengelly, Wigens.
Lord Mayor – Councillor Mavin

Following a debate, Council voted on the motion as amended as follows:

For (48)

Councillors Allen, Aspinall, Ball, Mrs Beer, Bowyer, Mrs Bowyer, Mrs Bridgeman, Buchan, Corvid, Carson, Coker, Cook, Dann, Darcy, Davey, Deacon, Downie, Drean, Evans OBE,

Haydon, Goslin, Hendy, Mrs Johnson, Kelly, Laing, Mike Leaves, Loveridge, Lowry, McDonald, Morris, Murphy, Nicholson, Parker-Delaz-Ajete, Penberthy, Rennie, Riley, Singh, P Smith, R Smith, Stevens, J Taylor, K Taylor, Tuffin, Tuohy, Vincent, Ms Watkin, Wheeler and Winter.

Against (0)

Absent/ Did Not Vote (9) Councillors Churchill, Derrick, Jordan, James, Sam Leaves, Neil, Mrs Pengelly and Wigans.
Lord Mayor – Councillor Mavin

The motion was carried.

33. **Poor quality Grass Cutting and lack of Weed Control throughout Plymouth**

Councillor Mrs Beer introduced the Motion on Poor Quality Grass Cutting and Lack of Weed Control Throughout Plymouth. This was seconded by Councillor Nicholson.

An amendment to the Motion was moved by Councillor Stevens and this was seconded by Councillor Dann.

The amendment proposed was follows:

Appreciating that this year is an exceptional year due to the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic, the Council took the decision to reduce grass cutting to all but essential areas until June. The City Council implemented an adapted grass cutting schedule at the end of June and this programme should have seen most areas cut on a four weekly schedule. Added to this, weeds continue to be seen on our streets throughout Plymouth as teams have been reduced because of the COVID -19 pandemic and during lockdown work in the neighbourhoods was restricted. The ongoing issue the service faces is reduced funding as it is now clear that the government's refusal to fully reimburse Plymouth City Council for the impact of Covid-19 crisis, as they had previously promised to do, on top of a decade of relentless and sustained cuts, is impacting negatively on the Council's ability to provide many council services, including street services.

Council resolves:

To urge Cllr Sue Dann to take urgent action most importantly securing additional funding from government to properly cut the City Council's grass and remove weeds from our streets.

To ask the Leader of the Opposition Group to write to the Leader of his party requesting that they restore cuts to the Council budgets and fully reimburse the Council's COVID-related costs.

The meeting was briefly adjourned to consider the amendment.

Following a debate, the amendment was carried.

For (29)

Councillors Allen, Mrs Aspinall, Buchan, Corvid, Coker, Dann, Davey, Evans OBE, Haydon, Goslin, Hendy, Laing, Lowry, McDonald, Morris, Murphy, Neil, Parker-Delaz-Ajete, Penberthy, Rennie, P Smith, Stevens, J Taylor, K Taylor, Tuffin, Tuohy, Vincent, Wheeler and Winter.

Against (21)

Councillors Ball, Mrs Beer, Bowyer, Mrs Bowyer, Mrs Bridgeman, Carson, Churchill, Cook, Darcy, Deacon, Dowie, Drean, Mrs Johnson, Kelly, Mike Leaves, Loveridge, Nicholson, Riley, Singh, R Smith and Ms Watkin.

Absent/ Did Not Vote (7)

Councillors Derrick, Jordan, James, Sam Leaves and Mrs Pengelly and Wiggins.
Lord Mayor – Councillor Mavin

Following a debate, the motion was carried.

For (29)

Councillors Allen, Mrs Aspinall, Buchan, Corvid, Coker, Dann, Davey, Evans OBE, Haydon, Goslin, Hendy, Laing, Lowry, McDonald, Morris, Murphy, Neil, Parker-Delaz-Ajete, Penberthy, Rennie, P Smith, Stevens, J Taylor, K Taylor, Tuffin, Tuohy, Vincent, Wheeler and Winter.

Against (21)

Councillors Ball, Mrs Beer, Bowyer, Mrs Bowyer, Mrs Bridgeman, Carson, Churchill, Cook, Darcy, Deacon, Downie, Drean, Mrs Johnson, Kelly, Mike Leaves, Loveridge, Nicholson, Riley, Singh, R Smith and Ms Watkin.

Absent/ Did Not Vote (7)

Councillors Derrick, Jordan, James, Sam Leaves and Mrs Pengelly and Wiggins.
Lord Mayor – Councillor Mavin

34. **Wheelie Bin Charges**

Councillor Mrs Bridgeman introduced the Motion on Wheelie Bin Charges. This was seconded by Councillor Kelly.

Following a debate, the motion was lost.

For (21)

Councillors Ball, Mrs Beer, Bowyer, Mrs Bowyer, Mrs Bridgeman, Carson, Churchill, Cook, Darcy, Deacon, Downie, Drean, Mrs Johnson, Kelly, Mike Leaves, Loveridge, Nicholson, Riley, Singh, R Smith and Ms Watkin.

Against (29)

Councillors Allen, Mrs Aspinall, Buchan, Corvid, Coker, Dann, Davey, Evans OBE, Haydon, Goslin, Hendy, Laing, Lowry, McDonald, Morris, Murphy, Neil, Parker-Delaz-Ajete, Penberthy, Rennie, P Smith, Stevens, J Taylor, K Taylor, Tuffin, Tuohy, Vincent, Wheeler and Winter.

Absent/ Did Not Vote (7)

Councillors Derrick, James, Jordan, Sam Leaves, Mrs Pengelly and Wigans
Lord Mayor – Councillor Mavin.

35. **Covid-19 Funding Crisis**

Councillor Evans OBE introduced the Motion on Covid-19 Funding Crisis. This was seconded by Councillor Lowry.

Following a debate the motion was carried.

For (30)

Councillors Allen, Aspinall, Buchan, Corvid, Coker, Dann, Davey, Evans OBE, Haydon, Goslin, Hendy, Laing, Lowry, McDonald, Morris, Murphy, Neil, Parker-Delaz-Ajete, Penberthy, Rennie, Singh, P Smith, Stevens, J Taylor, K Taylor, Tuffin, Tuohy, Vincent, Wheeler and Winter.

Against (0)

Abstain (19)

Councillors Ball, Bowyer, Mrs Bowyer, Mrs Bridgeman, Carson, Churchill, Cook, Darcy, Deacon, Downie, Drear, Mrs Johnson, Kelly, Mike Leaves, Loveridge, Nicholson, Riley, Rebecca Smith and Ms Watkin.

Absent/ Did Not Vote (8)

Councillors Mrs Beer, Derrick, James, Jordan, Sam Leaves, Mrs Pengelly and Wigans.
Lord Mayor – Councillor Mavin

(During this motion it was agreed that the meeting of council would be extended by 30 minutes)

36. **Re-opening of Plymouth Libraries**

Councillor Deacon introduced the Motion on Re-opening of Plymouth Libraries. This was seconded by Councillor Downie.

Following a debate, Councillor Lowry's proposal to move to the vote, as seconded by Councillor Rennie, was carried:

For (28)

Councillors Mrs Aspinall, Buchan, Corvid, Coker, Dann, Davey, Evans OBE, Haydon, Goslin, Hendy, Laing, Lowry, McDonald, Morris, Murphy, Neil, Parker-Delaz-Ajete, Penberthy, Rennie, P Smith, Stevens, J Taylor, K Taylor, Tuffin, Tuohy, Vincent, Wheeler and Winter.

Against (22)

Councillors Allen, Ball, Mrs Beer, Bowyer, Mrs Bowyer, Mrs Bridgeman, Carson, Churchill, Cook, Darcy, Deacon, Downie, Dreaan, Mrs Johnson, Kelly, Mike Leaves, Loveridge, Nicholson, Riley, Singh, R Smith and Ms Watkin.

Absent/ Did Not Vote (7)

Councillors Derrick, James, Jordan, Sam Leaves, Mrs Pengelly and Wiggins.
Lord Mayor – Councillor Mavin

The motion regarding the Re-opening of Plymouth Libraries was lost:

For (21)

Councillors Ball, Mrs Beer, Bowyer, Mrs Bowyer, Mrs Bridgeman, Carson, Churchill, Cook, Darcy, Deacon, Downie, Dreaan, Mrs Johnson, Kelly, Mike Leaves, Loveridge, Nicholson, Riley, Singh, R Smith and Ms Watkin.

Against (29)

Councillors Allen, Mrs Aspinall, Buchan, Corvid, Coker, Dann, Davey, Evans OBE, Haydon, Goslin, Hendy, Laing, Lowry, McDonald, Morris, Murphy, Neil, Parker-Delaz-Ajete, Penberthy, Rennie, P Smith, Stevens, J Taylor, K Taylor, Tuffin, Tuohy, Vincent, Wheeler and Winter.

Absent/ Did Not Vote (7)

Councillors Derrick, James, Jordan, Sam Leaves, Mrs Pengelly and Wiggins.
Lord Mayor – Councillor Mavin

37. **Conservative Proposals to Remove Residents' Voices from the Planning System**

Councillor Stevens introduced the Motion on Conservative Proposals to Remove Residents' Voices from the Planning System. This was seconded by Councillor Allen.

Following a debate the motion was carried.

For (28)

Councillors Allen, Mrs Aspinall, Buchan, Corvid, Coker, Dann, Davey, Evans OBE, Haydon, Goslin, Laing, Lowry, McDonald, Morris, Murphy, Neil, Parker-Delaz-Ajete, Penberthy, Rennie, P Smith, Stevens, J Taylor, K Taylor, Tuffin, Tuohy, Vincent, Wheeler and Winter.

Against (21)

Councillors Ball, Mrs Beer, Bowyer, Mrs Bowyer, Mrs Bridgeman, Carson, Churchill, Cook, Darcy, Deacon, Downie, Drear, Mrs Johnson, Kelly, Mike Leaves, Loveridge, Nicholson, Riley, Singh, R Smith and Ms Watkin.

Absent/ Did Not Vote (8)

Councillors Derrick, Hendy, James, Jordan, Sam Leaves, Mrs Pengelly and Wigen.
Lord Mayor – Councillor Mavin

38. **Questions by Councillors**

The Lord Mayor invited Members to submit questions to the Leader, Cabinet Members or Chairs in writing in order for a response to be provided after the meeting.