

Decisions of the Council on Tuesday, 13 December 2022

These decisions are published for information in advance of the publication of the Minutes

Decisions

7. PETITIONS (Standing Order 11)

Residents' parking at Thornbury Drive, Bradford – Bradford Moor Ward

Resolved – That the petition be referred to Bradford East Area Committee.

9. MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES AND JOINT COMMITTEES (Standing Order 4)

Resolved – That the following membership changes be approved:

- a) That following a reduction in membership from four members to two members, Councillors Sue Duffy and Taj Salam be confirmed as the Council's representatives on the West Yorkshire Joint Services Committee.
- b) That Councillors Shakeela Lal and Rizwana Jamil be confirmed as alternates on the West Yorkshire Joint Services Committee.

12. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE EXECUTIVE AND COMMITTEES (Standing Order 15)

- a) At the meeting of Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 25 October 2022, consideration was given to a report of the Chair of Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee, which presented the draft Annual Overview and Scrutiny report 2021-22, for adoption by Council.

Resolved – That the Annual Overview and Scrutiny Report 2021-22 be adopted by Council.

Action – Overview and Scrutiny Lead

- b) At the meeting of Governance and Audit Committee held on 24 November 2022, consideration was given to a report of the Director of Finance and IT, which presented the Treasury Management Mid-Year Review up to 30 September 2022, for approval by Council.

Resolved – That the Treasury Management Mid-Year Review up to 30 September 2022, be approved by Council.

Action – Director of Finance and IT and Director of Legal and Governance

13. NOTICES OF MOTION (Standing Order 17)

Resolved – That the following notices of motion be approved:

13.1 – Anti-social use of fireworks

That with the addition of the following words the motion be amended to read as follows:

Moved by: Councillor Jabar
Seconded by: Councillor Azam

Council notes:

We extend our sincere condolences to the family of the 17-year-old young man who lost his life in Halifax on 5th November. This is a tragic loss of a young life.

Councillors and residents across the district are rightly angry and dismayed about the antisocial use of fireworks.

We thank council officers, fire crews, police, VCS organisations and volunteers for the superb partnership effort around Bonfire Night which passed with fewer serious incidents this year in the district than in recent years.

The Council's cross party Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Committee completed a fireworks review published in October 2021 to examine what more can be done nationally and locally to better regulate their use.

In line with the Scrutiny recommendations, the council has written to the district's MPs to call for lobbying on tougher action on the noise levels, sale, licensing and legislation of fireworks.

The Scrutiny review noted it will also depend on action at a national level to tackle this problem, given that local authorities are bound by limits to our powers on this issue.

The Conservative government does not accept fireworks are a serious problem. When the issue was discussed in parliament, Conservative government spokesperson Jacob Rees-Mogg said he was "unsympathetic" to calls for tougher action on fireworks as they are "a little bit of harmless fun".

Council resolves to:

- Continue delivery against the Scrutiny recommendations and consider the contents of any updates from Scrutiny on an ongoing basis taking action as necessary.
- Following the Scrutiny Review, to again write to government calling on them to acknowledge the seriousness of this issue for residents in our district and to call for tougher action including consideration of new legislation that the Council could then use around the sale, use and noise levels of fireworks and specifically to:
- Reduce the noise levels of all categories of fireworks;

- Stop the sale of the more powerful fireworks, such as category 3 and 4 other than for professional firework displays.
- For individuals who sell fireworks to have a licence, which demonstrates that they are a fit and proper person to be able to sell fireworks;
- Instigate a Private Members Bill to discuss the licensing, planning and legislation arrangements in place, relating to fireworks.
- Make it more difficult for members of the public to buy fireworks from wholesalers in large quantities.
- Continue strong partnership work with other district agencies such as police, fire, health, VCS, community groups and Trading Standards to build on recent progress to tackle the antisocial use of fireworks.

13.2 – Community food cultivation

That with the addition of the following words the motion be amended to read as follows:

Moved by: Councillor Duffy
 Seconded by: Councillor Hinchcliffe

Council notes that:

- In light of food quality (including safety) and sourcing scandals in recent years, the public are keen to take more informed choices, regarding the quality, ethical production of and origins of their foods.
- Food price inflation is currently roughly 13% (at the time of typing).
- Food supply security is currently more precarious than in living memory.
- A strategic approach to our food system in the district is imperative for ensuring a healthy and sustainable future for our district.
- Throughout 2022 a council led partnership has co-produced the Good Food Strategy. This involved consulting with over 50 local food system partners, organisations, businesses and over 1,000 residents.
- The priorities identified for our district in terms of food are:
 1. Creating an Eating Well culture – developing knowledge and skills, and access to healthy affordable food.
 2. Tackling Food Insecurities – increasing access to, and availability of, healthy fresh low cost food.
 3. Community-led food growing – sustaining and expanding local food production.
 4. A sustainable food system for all – creating a resilient and sustainable food system which protects bio-diversity and reduces impact on climate change.

This council resolves to:

- Reflect on the results of the consultation and commit to now publishing the Good Food strategy action plan following the Sustainable Food Places framework.
- Specifically, on community-led food growing, commit to:

- 1) consider how to enable communities to access small areas of land close to areas that lack food-growing opportunities (for example in places that have no, or not enough, allotment provision)
- 2) explore and understand current barriers to community-led growing and build solutions and opportunities to enable community use
- 3) engage with schools and local organisations to find key residents and groups to champion the issue; map available projects, skills and resources
- 4) explore how to expand local growing initiatives, such as community gardens and community allotments, and how to link them to local community groups or foodbanks who can use surplus produce, and potentially link up with local commercial distribution services and supply chains in the longer term.

13.3 – Housing Crisis

That with the addition of the following words the motion be amended to read as follows:

Moved by: Councillor Ross-Shaw

Seconded by: Councillor Hinchcliffe

Council notes:

- According to Shelter, over one million households are waiting for social homes. Last year, 29,000 social homes were sold or demolished, and fewer than 7,000 were built.
- More people than ever are struggling to afford a secure place to live. Yet, not enough social homes are being built. In the 2021- 22 financial year, only 149 new units were provided within the Bradford District.
- There are approximately 31,500 socially rented housing units in Bradford - the vast majority of these are not council-owned or controlled and are run by Registered Social Housing (RSH) providers like Incommunities, Yorkshire Housing and Clarion.
- The undersupply of affordable housing over a number of years, further exacerbated by the pandemic, is not unique to Bradford. Comparisons to other West Yorkshire Local Authorities demonstrate that the delivery of affordable housing falls some way short of the target regionally.
- The Council's Empty Homes team works to reduce the number of long-term empty properties across the district and has issued more Compulsory Purchase Orders to take over such properties than any other authority in West Yorkshire. The number of empty homes in Bradford has fallen by a third over the last 10 years, reducing blight in neighbourhoods and maximising use of existing housing stock.
- The Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016 required registered providers of social housing in England to reduce social housing rents by 1% a year for four years from April 2016. This was good for tenants but it severely impacted social landlords' finances thereby reducing their ability to develop new homes over the last 4-5 years.
- Further, the impact of the rent cap announced in the autumn statement last month is still being modelled by providers but fears are that, without additional investment, it will fetter their ability to invest in new social housing and this is now exacerbated by inflationary pressures.

- Government policies prioritise other forms of ‘affordable’ housing such as rents set at 80% of market value, Starter Homes and Discounted Market Sales rather than social rents. Therefore, despite some ‘affordable’ homes being built, they are often out of reach to people who require social housing.
- The Government’s Brownfield Housing Fund does not work for large parts of the North of England as land values are too low, meaning RSH in Bradford cannot access it.
- Through Housing Options, Incommunities-owned housing is allocated to many people based on need:
 - Band 1 – Urgent Need - these include households who are owed homeless duty and those whose housing needs arise from other council service priorities / duties.
 - Band 2 – High Need - households in unsuitable housing requiring urgent re-housing.
 - Band 3 – Medium Need - households in unsuitable housing but with less serious need than those in Band 2, and households with a band 1 or 2 need but with no local connection to the District.
- As of 30/11/22, across all three bands there are a total of 9,927 households yet for 2021/22 there were only 746 placements through Housing Options. Whilst the “wait” time published is measured in days, councillors know that in effect some residents face waiting years for an appropriate property to become available.
- The financial pressures on local authorities like Bradford, driven by twelve years of ideologically driven austerity policies and low Government capital investment, means that we are less able to tackle these problems using local land and local council taxpayers’ revenue.

Council also notes that:

- The Council has worked with RSH providers to recently introduce a new Choice Based Lettings System of allocations to improve Housing Options outcomes.
- Taking into account the ‘Climate Crisis’ and the ‘Cost of Living Crisis’ there is a need to ensure that new social housing is built with the highest possible energy efficiency standards, which often requires additional public subsidy to deliver.
- A sizeable percentage of social housing tenants rely on public transport and as such planning for housing needs to consider transport infrastructure alongside housing delivery.
- The West Yorkshire Mayor has prioritised improving bus services with more local control, which in the longer term will allow services to be better aligned with planned housing growth.
- The Council has recently decided to open a Housing Revenue Account. This will be supplemented by a growth strategy setting out the approach to increasing the housing stock through ensuring best use of council land and assets to meet our priorities and maximise housing outputs.
- The Government’s Brownfield Housing Fund is not designed to benefit places like Bradford district.

Council therefore resolves to:

- Accept that the situation with the provision of affordable social housing is at crisis point and that urgent action is required.
- Progress delivery of the Housing Revenue Account and potential options for accelerating housing delivery, including utilising council-owned land, with regular progress reports to the relevant Scrutiny Committee.
- Work with RSH providers through the Housing Place Group to address issues around social housing delivery and how this can be addressed through the Local Plan and other means.
- Instruct the Local Plan team to report to the Local Plan Cross Party Reference Group on how the Council can influence homes to be more energy efficient, including reference to the proposed Design Code but also the Local Plan and the Homes & Neighbourhood Design Guide, and what measures can be taken to encourage the development of more social housing across the district.
- Lobby national Government to amend the criteria for the Brownfield Housing Fund so that Housing Providers in Bradford can also access this fund.

13.4 – Safer homes, improved support and a sustainable future for exempted accommodation

Moved by: Councillor Sunderland

Seconded by: Councillor Stubbs

This Council believes that everyone has the right to adequate housing and that adequate housing must provide for more than four walls and a roof.

This Council notes:

1. There has been a significant increase in exempt accommodation in Bradford which can provide an important part of a range of supported housing.
2. There are now around 2000 claims on housing benefit for exempt accommodation many from people who have experienced or are dealing with challenges that mean they have few housing options.
3. The Council lost £1.4 million pounds last year in Housing Benefit Subsidy.

This Council further notes:

4. Concerns raised in various arenas by Members of the Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Committee, housing providers, Councils, the media and the BBC etc. raising concerns ranging from the quality of the accommodation, support being offered to tenants, safety and security, concerns around clarity of ownership and excessive profits homes, poor management to concerns around ownership, the impact on local communities and anti-social behaviour.
5. Bradford has experience of all of this issues and evidence of good working too however it is sufficient to say that the current system is not what the District needs.
6. The Council has been successful in bidding for Government funding from the Supported Housing Improvement Programme to build on the outcomes and good practice from the pilots to drive up quality and value for money in supported housing.

This Council instructs the Chief Executive to:

1. Identify at a Strategic level an individual to lead on the collaboration between all of the partners to the Bradford District Partnership on the planning, commissioning and delivering of supported housing by liaising with all stakeholders and setting the cross-organisational agenda. Collaboration should include but not be limited to shared objectives and ways of working.
2. Report regularly to the appropriate Scrutiny Committee progress on the Supported Housing Improvement Programme including how this is leading to a better managed local supported housing market and how the improvements have ensured that rogue landlords cannot exploit the system to the detriment of local residents at the expense of tax-payers with specific reference to how children and those most vulnerable are protected.
3. Writes to the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities requesting the implementation of:
 - a. A National Standard for Exempted Accommodation to address the premises standards, the provision of care and support and the management of both care and premises.
 - b. A Scheme of Inspection giving the Local Authority the Power to Inspect.

13.5 – Supporting Bradford’s Carers

That with the addition of the following words the motion be amended to read as follows:

Moved by: Councillor Hinchcliffe

Seconded by: Councillor Thirkill

This Council notes:

- Carers UK defines an unpaid carer as a person who is looking after someone who is older, disabled or seriously ill. The care they give is unpaid. These people are called carers but they would often say they were just "looking after someone" as their personal duty to their loved one. However, this means that carers are not always getting the support they are entitled to.
- Analysis conducted by Carers UK of a GP patient survey in 2021, found that 60% of carers suffer from a long term health condition or disability themselves.
- Carers UK found that over quarter of carers said that they always or often felt lonely.
- On average 600 people a day have to leave work to take on caring responsibilities.
- Currently carers allowance is only £67.25 a week. That is £269 every four weeks to live on.
- Caring for many is a full-time job and therefore they do not have the luxury of being able to supplement their income with part time work.

This Council recognises:

- £67.25 per week for an unpaid carer is woefully inadequate compared to £351.50 a full-time employed carer on minimum wage would earn for a week of work (notwithstanding that this wage in itself is inadequate).

- The person receiving care may receive Personal Independence Payment and/or Disability Living Allowance but that is to cover that individual's care needs, transport, and any other support they may need.
- Given the financial worries, feelings of isolation, and the lack of time to do the things they need to do, it's no surprise unpaid carers feel undervalued, and that their physical and mental health is suffering.
- The council is proud to provide significant funding to Carers' Resource in Bradford which provides outstanding support to carers across the district of all ages, including young carers. Through their work and organisations like them carers get access to a lot of valuable information, resources and support.
- The Council's Anti-Poverty Strategy identifies the unique challenges carers face, as it:
 - recognises that family carers are more likely to experience poverty and hardship given the additional expenses related to having a disability in the cost of living crisis;
 - recognises the commitment of young carers to their family members and the sacrifices they make; and
 - is pleased to prioritise provision of a specific grant for family carers through the Household Support Fund to financially support those who find themselves in need of assistance this winter.

This Council resolves to:

- Increase the advertising of Carers' Resource and other support organisations for carers, to help more carers become aware of the help and support available.
- Raise the issue of family carers at the partnership board for communities as part of our Act as One health and care system governance. This will aim to gain the widest system commitment to joint campaigns that raise awareness of family carers and signpost where they can go to get advice, including through local GP surgeries, other NHS settings, pharmacies, community centres and public buildings.
- Lobby all the main parties to make sure that manifestos at the next election commit to an improved package of support for unpaid carers, including higher benefit payments but also to provide statutory paid leave for carers who currently have to take annual leave to manage their caring responsibilities.

13.6 – Local public services paying the price for the Government crashing the economy

Moved by: Councillor Hinchcliffe

Seconded by: Councillor Khan

Council notes:

Due to government cuts, our NHS, our Police and our Councils are facing increasing levels of need for their services. Bradford Council alone has had to find over £310m in budget cuts and savings since 2011.

The government's disastrous mini-budget of 23rd September has cost the country over £30bn, according to the independent Resolution Foundation. As a result, many families have seen their mortgages and other household costs increase considerably.

During a cost of living crisis, the like of which has not been seen in our country for 40 years, our residents will rely even more on good local services to keep them going, amid a real terms fall in wages and a UK recession predicted to be more severe than in neighbouring European countries.

Councils face a perfect storm of on-going government funding cuts, unprecedented inflation and rising demand for services. Inflation, alongside the National Pay Award and rises in the National Living Wage, will add an estimated £58.6m cost to our budget in 2023-24.

The government's over-reliance on council tax to plug the gap left by their funding cuts is counter to levelling up. When the Chancellor expects councils to increase council tax by 5%, that raises half the amount per property in Bradford than in Elmbridge in Surrey relative to size. Indicatively, if 5% raises £11m in Bradford, it would raise £22m in Elmbridge, Surrey. People in places that can least afford it, pay a higher proportion of their income on council tax than wealthier people and places.

The cross-party Local Government Association says councils face a £3.4bn shortfall in 2023-24 and £4.5bn in 2024-25. Chair of the LGA, Conservative councillor James Jamieson, has called on government to "come up with a long-term plan to manage this crisis... reserves can only be spent once; a local service cannot be cut twice".

Despite these challenges, our ambitions for the Bradford district remain as strong as ever and we continue to invest in good services and to stimulate economic growth and opportunities for all our residents.

Council resolves to:

- Work with the Local Government Association to continue to make the case to Government for more investment in local services.
- Stand alongside other public agencies including the NHS and the Police to push for better funding of much needed local services.
- Repeat our invitation to the Secretary of State for Levelling Up to come to Bradford district to show him first-hand the unparalleled opportunities for clean growth and the transformative regeneration our district offers.
- Deliver our ambitious clean growth and regeneration schemes at pace to ensure a strong recovery from the UK recession and to secure Bradford's position as the UK's number one levelling up opportunity.

13.7 – Residents of Bradford District will not tolerate Dangerous Driving

Moved by: Councillor Edwards

Seconded by: Councillor Watson

Council notes:

- Dangerous driving is a scourge on our district. It impacts pedestrians, cyclists as well as other road users with children being most at risk from injury and death caused by dangerous driving.
- Local public agencies are doing lots of good work in this area including Operation Steerside to reduce speeding and other dangerous and illegal driving. For example, between September 2021 and August 2022 there were:
 - 101 pre-planned operations
 - 2871 Fixed Penalties, Traffic Offence Reports, Vehicle Defect reports
 - 357 reports for summons/charges
 - 391 vehicles seized
 - 81 arrests
 - 55 PSPO notices issued.

This Council applauds this work and wants to see its continuation.

- The adoption of Vision Zero in West Yorkshire, led by the West Yorkshire Mayor, will enable a whole systems approach to casualty prevention and look at pre-collision investigation and programmes that prevent death and serious injury from occurring in the first place.
- Work with the West Yorkshire Safety Camera Partnership around the new camera deployment guidance which for the first time will enable us to install average speed cameras and will also enable us to install camera monitoring anywhere in the district where there is a need.
- Our rollout of 20mph zones around schools and urban centres. Continued implementation of active travel facilities such as dedicated cycleways and footpaths, and an expansion of School Streets and Active Travel Neighbourhoods.
- Introduction of a public space protection order for anti-social driving behaviour.
- Work with schools and community partners through our Road Safety team.
- Annual implementation of road safety infrastructure, including through Area Committees.

Council also notes that:

- Safety is often raised as the main barrier to Bradford residents to switching from car travel to public transport, cycling or walking. As such improving road safety will have significant additional benefits to air pollution, congestion and public health.

Council resolves to:

- Continue our strong support of the police in tackling dangerous and illegal driving through Operation Steerside.
- Implement Vision Zero at pace and report to Scrutiny on its progress.
- Make every effort to secure the necessary funding for road safety measures – particularly for pedestrians and cyclists from sources such as grants, section 106 funding and revenue raising measures such as taking up the newly available power to enforce against moving traffic offences and issue penalty charge notices for contraventions.
- Support a publicity campaign in the run-up to Christmas to encourage people to keep themselves and others safe on the roads.

- Continue working with our district's MPs raising this issue on a national level.
- Ask the government to increase funding for Local Authorities like Bradford to ensure we have the financial resources to deliver on our commitment to make roads safer.
- Ask the Government to get on with the introduction of graduated driver licences so that those drivers who drive well are able to access cheaper insurance, rewarding good drivers.
- Ask the Government to accelerate the legislation around the use of Noise Cameras. We are pleased to be a pilot in Keighley for the noise camera however until the Home Office has approved their use nationally roll-out cannot happen.
- Ask the Government to invest more in local policing, recognising that the 20,000 new police officers being recruited nationally will only get us back to the police numbers we had before the start of the Government's austerity drive in 2010.

14. COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW FOR CHANGES TO LOCAL COUNCIL ARRANGEMENTS IN THE HAWORTH, CROSS ROADS AND STANBURY AREA

Resolved – That the Council approves the Reorganisation Order attached as Appendix 3 to the report and that the Director of Legal and Governance be authorised to affix the Council's seal to the Order to bring it into effect.

Action – Director of Legal and Governance

15. PAY POLICY STATEMENT UPDATE FOR 2022/23

Resolved –

- a) That the amended Pay Policy Statement for the financial year 2022/23 as set out at Appendix 1 to the report, be approved.
- b) That the Chief Executive be given authority in consultation with the portfolio holder for Children's Services, and also after undertaking consultation with the S151 Officer, the Department for Education and the Children's Commissioner, to authorise an appropriate remuneration package in respect of the Director of Children's Social Care and Practice.

Action – Director of Human Resources

FROM: Asif Ibrahim
Director of Legal and Governance
City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council

Committee Secretariat Contact: Guy Close, Governance, Scrutiny and Members' Support Manager, tel: 07811 503906 or e-mail guy.close@bradford.gov.uk