

THE MEETING OF EXETER CITY COUNCIL

Guildhall
Tuesday 25 April 2017

The Right Worshipful the Lord Mayor (Cllr Thompson)
The Deputy Lord Mayor (Cllr Holland)
Councillors Ashwood, Baldwin, Bialyk, Brimble, Denham, Edwards, Foale, Foggin, Gottschalk, Hannaford, Hannan, Harvey, D Henson, Mrs Henson, Leadbetter, Lyons, Mitchell, Morse, Newby, Owen, Packham, Pearson, Prowse, Robson, Sheldon, Sills, Spackman, Sutton, Vizard, Wardle and Warwick

18 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the Extraordinary meeting and the Ordinary meeting held on 21 February 2017 and the Extraordinary meeting held on the 21 March 2017 were moved by the Leader and seconded by Councillor Sutton, taken as read and signed as correct.

19 **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Branston, Lamb, Musgrave and Wood.

20 **PLANNING COMMITTEE - 13 FEBRUARY 2017**

The minutes of the Planning Committee of 13 February 2017 had previously been presented at the meeting of Council on 21 February 2017 and had been inadvertently replicated on the agenda for this meeting.

21 **PLANNING COMMITTEE - 20 MARCH 2017**

The minutes of the Planning Committee of 20 March 2017 were presented by the Chair, Councillor Sutton, and taken as read.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Planning Committee held on 20 March 2017 be received.

22 **PLANNING COMMITTEE - SPECIAL - 27 MARCH 2017**

The minutes of the Special Planning Committee of 27 March 2017 were presented by the Chair, Councillor Sutton, and taken as read.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Special Planning Committee held on 27 March 2017 be received.

23 **LICENSING COMMITTEE - 28 MARCH 2017**

The minutes of the Licensing Committee of 28 March 2017 were presented by the Chair, Councillor Spackman, and taken as read.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Licensing Committee held on 28 March 2017 be received.

24

PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 2 MARCH 2017

The minutes of the People Scrutiny Committee of 2 March 2017 were presented by the Chair, Councillor Wardle, and taken as read.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the People Scrutiny Committee held on 2 March 2017 be received.

25

PLACE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 9 MARCH 2017

The minutes of the Place Scrutiny Committee of 9 March 2017 were presented by the Chair, Councillor Brimble, and taken as read.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Place Scrutiny Committee held on 9 March 2017 be received.

26

CORPORATE SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 23 MARCH 2017

The minutes of the Corporate Services Scrutiny Committee of 23 March 2017 were presented by the Chair, Councillor Sheldon, and taken as read.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Corporate Services Scrutiny Committee held on 23 March 2017 be received.

27

JOINT STRATA SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 16 MARCH 2017

The minutes of the Strata Joint Scrutiny Committee of 16 March 2017 were presented by Councillor Lyons and taken as read.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Strata Joint Scrutiny Committee held on 16 March 2017 be received.

28

JOINT STRATA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE - 27 MARCH 2017

The minutes of the Strata Joint Executive Committee of 27 March 2017 were presented by Councillor Edwards, and taken as read.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Strata Joint Executive Committee held on 27 March 2017 be received and, where appropriate, any recommendations contained therein approved.

29

EXECUTIVE - 14 MARCH 2017

The minutes of the Executive of 14 March 2017 were presented by the Deputy Leader, Councillor Sutton, and taken as read.

RESOLVED that the minutes of Executive held on 14 March 2017 be received and, where appropriate, adopted.

30

EXECUTIVE - 11 APRIL 2017

The following Councillors declared disclosable pecuniary interests as Directors of the Estuary League of Friends and left the meeting during consideration of the item.

COUNCILLOR	MINUTE
Baldwin	53
Leadbetter	53

The minutes of the Executive of 11 April 2017 were presented by the Leader, Councillor Edwards, and taken as read.

In respect of Minute 44 (Leisure Complex and Bus Station Programme Board Minutes - 22 March 2017) and in response to a Member, the Leader reported that contract discussions were on-going and that an update report would be made to Members as soon as possible.

In respect of Minute 47 (Public Engagement in the Democratic Process and Webcasting) Councillor Prowse, seconded by Councillor Newby, moved an amendment to recommendation (3) to remove the word "not". A Member, in supporting the motion, felt that the very essence of Council business was vested in the Leader and that the public liked to see the response of this postholder to the issues of the day.

The Portfolio Holder for Support Services stated that the issue of public engagement had been thoroughly considered at the Corporate Services Scrutiny Committee prior to Executive with support for the recommendations with another Member pointing out that the public were able to put questions to the Council's three Scrutiny Committees as well as the Exeter Board. The Leader added that the public were also able to put questions via their Ward Councillors for raising at Council meetings.

Another Member remarked that webcam coverage of County Council meetings received a minimal number of hits.

The amendment proposed by Councillor Prowse was put to the vote and lost.

The substantive motion was put to the vote and carried

In respect of Minute 53 (Estuary League of Friends), a Member thanked the Council for the loan of £500,000 to the League of Friends which undertook excellent work in support of the ill, the elderly and the disadvantaged, not only in Topsham, but across the City as well as outlying areas.

RESOLVED that the minutes of Executive held on 11 April 2017 be received and, where appropriate, adopted.

31 **NOTICE OF MOTION BY COUNCILLOR PACKHAM UNDER STANDING ORDER
NO. 6**

Councillor Packham, seconded by Councillor Foale, moved a Notice of Motion in the following terms:-

Education Motion

This Council notes the concerns regarding education funding expressed by the Devon Association of Secondary Heads and the Devon Association of Primary Heads. In an unusual letter to County Councillors, Heads from Local Authority schools and academies across Devon have expressed "serious concerns about escalating funding pressures" and describe the situation as "a real crisis in point in the immediate future".

This Council further notes that the cumulative impact of the “National Funding Formula” and an 8% real terms cut by 2020 means, on average, each Exeter student faces a cut of £420 in annual funding comparing 2015/16 with 2019/20.

This Council notes that the stated aim of the proposed National Funding Formula was to bring fair funding to schools in Devon, bringing funding closer to the national average (Devon currently receives £290 per pupil less). The proposed increase by 2019/20 would increase overall funding for the County by just 0.38%.

This Council notes the further impact of the £2.22 million transfer in the Designated Schools Budget to the High Needs Block to cover a deficit in the budget for children with special educational needs and disabilities which will result in a further reduction in funding of £33 per pupil in every Devon School.

This Council believes that Exeter pupils, and pupils across Devon, deserve better: a fully funded and properly resourced education system.

This Council resolves to write to Justine Greening, Secretary of State for Education, and Nick Gibb, Schools Minister (as requested by the Devon Association of Primary Heads and the Devon Association of Secondary Heads) expressing our concerns regarding the serious funding situation facing Devon schools and academies. Furthermore, this Council demands that the National Funding Formula is revised so that Devon schools no longer fall below the national average, and that central government funding is provided to erase the 8% real terms cut.

In presenting the Notice of Motion, Councillor Packham reported that schools across the country were already being forced to make impossible decisions with increased class sizes, curriculum choices being cut, Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) pupils losing vital support and school staff losing their jobs. She highlighted the issue with reference to Montgomery Primary in her ward of St Thomas where the cuts equated to 14% or £548 per pupil together with the £33 cut per pupil to cover the transfer to the Devon High Needs Block.

Councillor Foale, in seconding the motion, stated that his research amongst former teaching colleagues had confirmed that 99% of schools would suffer cuts and that cuts in primary schools approximated £103,000 on average and £470,000 in secondary schools.

Councillor Leadbetter supported the motion and confirmed that Devon County Council was also lobbying the Government on this matter

Councillor Packham, in response, thanked all Members for their support, stating that the Government would be asked to review the national funding formula and to reverse the 8% real term cuts to education funding.

The Notice of Motion was put to the vote and carried.

In accordance with Standing Order 27(1), a named vote on the Motion was called for, as follows:-

Voting for:

Councillors Ashwood, Baldwin, Bialyk, Brimble, Denham, Edwards, Foale, Foggin, Gottschalk, Hannaford, Hannan, Harvey, D Henson, Mrs Henson, the Deputy Lord

Mayor, Leadbetter, Lyons, Mitchell, Morse, Newby, Owen, Packham, Pearson, Prowse, Robson, Sheldon, Sills, Spackman, Sutton, Vizard, Wardle and Warwick

(32 Members)

Abstain:

The Lord Mayor

(1 Member)

Absent:

Councillors Branston, Keen, Lamb, Musgrave and Wood.

(5 Members)

32

QUESTIONS FROM A MEMBER OF THE COUNCIL UNDER STANDING ORDER
NO. 8

In accordance with Standing Order No. 8, the following question was put by Councillor Mitchell to the Leader.

Question – The Russian flag flies outside our Civic Centre in recognition of our twinning relationship with Yaroslavl. As the Leader will be aware there are now well documented human rights abuses in relation to the Russian Federation and its republics. In particular within the last few weeks more than 100 members of the LGBT community have been rounded up, held in concentration camps, tortured, beaten and killed within the Russian Republic of Chechnya.

Will he join me in condemning these actions and does he believe this Council should suspend its current twinning relationship with Yaroslavl until a time when international human rights are respected within all regions of the Russian Federation.

The Leader thanked Councillor Mitchell for raising this issue. He replied that of course he was sure he was speaking on behalf of everyone inside this Chamber this evening, in deploring any breaches of human rights, irrespective of gender, race, religion or sexual orientation.

You will no doubt recall that this is similar to an issue you yourself raised by way of a notice of motion, at the Council meeting on 8th April 2014 when the Council resolved:-

1. To write to the Foreign Secretary and Russian Ambassador to the United Kingdom, expressing this Council's disquiet at the continuing Civil Rights issues occurring in Russia, including the systematic discrimination towards the LGBT community; and
2. That it considers the above matter to be in direct contravention of the Twinning Agreement between the Cities of Exeter and Yaroslavl, dated 17 October 1989, and as such requests officers:-
3. To write to the City Administration in Yaroslavl offering its support to the LGBT community in Yaroslavl in particular and in Russia as a whole; and

4. To make representations to this effect to the official delegation from Yaroslavl during their forthcoming civic visit to the City in July 2014.

You will also recall that you met with the then Acting Mayor of Yaroslavl during the subsequent official visit in July of that year, when you first hand put yours, and the above Council's views to him. I believe the Acting Mayor listened to your views.

Members will also recall the Corporate Services Scrutiny Committee's consideration, at its meeting on 24th November last year, of a review of the Council's International Cooperation Strategy on which the Council's twinning arrangements are based. This work is on-going, including discussing the content of the Co-operation Strategy with our twinned cities.

Creating conversations are the cornerstone of solving some of the world's biggest issues, including items such as this. It is important not to use broad brush strokes - the equivalent to accusing everyone in England of having extremist views just because of the actions of some. Partnerships and opening dialogue have never been more important in international relations and Exeter and twinning will continue to play its small but important part in joining cultures and sharing experiences by extending the hand of friendship.

I believe that the withdrawal of our twinning arrangement with Yaroslavl, as you suggest, will cut off the opportunity for us to have these meaningful discussions and will actually be counterproductive to the aims you are trying to achieve.

Responding, Councillor Mitchell stated that the abuses referred to were well documented at both the United Nations and the European Union and that his question covered different issues to that of the notice of motion at Council in April 2014. He asked whether the Leader and others could meet with him to discuss how the City Council could respond.

In response to the supplementary question, the Leader considered that responses on this matter might be more appropriate at the national level and that from a local point of view, especially in respect of the City's twinning relationship with Yaroslavl, maintaining dialogue was important.

(The meeting commenced at 6.00 pm and closed at 6.43 pm)

Chair