

## **BOLTON COUNCIL**

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Members of the Council are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the Council to be held in the Council Chamber, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Town Hall on Wednesday next, 12<sup>th</sup> October, 2022 at 7.00p.m. when the following business is proposed to be transacted: -

**1. Minutes**

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the proceedings of the meetings of the Council held on 7<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> September, 2022 (Section A).

**2. Changes in Committee Membership and Appointments to Other Bodies**

**3. Questions under Standing Order No. 9(a)**

**4. Questions under Standing Order No. 9(c)**

**5. Committee Proceedings**

To approve the proceedings of the following Committee:-

Planning Committee (See Section B)

**6. Scrutiny Committees**

To receive and consider the proceedings of the undermentioned Scrutiny Committee:-

Health Overview and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee (See Section C)

## **7. Motions under Standing Order No.4**

### **(a) Motion in the name of Councillor McKeon –**

In April 2022 the Elections Act 2022 was passed by Parliament. The Act will require voters in Great Britain to show photo ID before being issued with a ballot paper at UK elections and local elections in England. This council believes that this legislation is unnecessary; it addresses a problem that doesn't exist. The need to present photo ID will be a deterrent to the many voters who don't possess valid photo ID at a time when our focus ought to be on encouraging greater participation in elections. If implemented, this policy will have a detrimental effect on the democratic process in Bolton. It will also present a further burden on already overstretched Council officers as they will need to train polling clerks and presumably create a system for voters who don't have accepted forms of photo ID. The Council instructs its Leader to write to the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to urge him not to implement this policy for the local elections in May 2023. In the event that the Minister refuses to respond positively to the request of this Council, the Chief Executive is urged to initiate a public information campaign to alert voters to the proposed changed arrangements at polling stations and to suggest that postal voting may be an option from which voters may benefit.

### **(b) Motion in the name of Councillor Bullock -**

In 2025 Stockton & Darlington are to celebrate their George Stephenson designed railway bi-centenaries-by progressing a HAZ-Heritage Action Zone-with the support of both the UK Government and Historic England, along with the support from local landowners, interested local companies and

importantly residents-with much happening including a full archaeological survey of the route.

With the recent listing of this area by Historic England as a 'Scheduled Monument', the historic and probably unique 'CHEQUERBENT EMBANKMENT', now is the perfect time to bring a similar initiative to our area for the benefit of local people?

Starting at the original 'Daubhill ' station site on Adelaide St., crossing over St. Helens Rd., running alongside Hulton Playing Field, through Winterfield Dr./Beaumont Chase green path system and linking up with and extending the Bolton Public Right of Way WES121 on the Bolton & Leigh Railway route and on to 'Chequerbent Embankment' Scheduled Monument section, across the A6 down the Chequerbent Incline (one of the world's steepest adhesion worked routes) down to the Atherton rail line on the border of Bolton with Wigan.

Not only would this provide an opportunity to preserve and enhance an important piece of our history, it would provide a new Active Travel Route through mainly open spaces and countryside, protecting some of Bolton's most historic railway heritage-whilest connecting some of its highest levels of deprivation and most built-up areas in Rumworth, Daubhill and Deane with our countryside and green spaces, creating health and wellbeing benefits and opportunities for those who most need it.

'I ask....

That this Council sets up a PDG to:-

-Target applying for a HAZ-Heritage Action Zone along the remaining sections of the historic 'Bolton & Leigh Railway' route within Bolton between Daubhill and the Atherton boundary.

-Looks at ways that Bolton might participate in and permanently benefit from a programme to celebrate

in 2025, the bi-centenary and beyond of our early railway history of the 'B&L', including but not limited to Bolton Museum (with a new upgraded display), Westhoughton Library and Horwich Loco. Works. With enhanced station platform signs at both Bolton and Horwich Parkway.

-Enhanced route markings and Public Rights of Way access, establishing this route as a new Active Travel & Walking Route, so that people who live in some of the most built-up areas of our town can easily access our countryside and leisure areas.

(c) Motion in the name of Councillor Newall –

This Council recognises that many residents look forward to the wonder of fireworks during traditional events that are enjoyed by many of the cultures and faiths of the Bolton family. Whether it is Bonfire night, Diwali, Chinese New Year or the traditional western New Year, many people – especially younger people – love the spectacle of pyrotechnic displays lighting up the sky in all parts of the borough.

This Council commends the supermarket 'Sainsbury's' for the outright ban on the sale of fireworks and also welcomes the introduction of a low noise range of fireworks by 'Asda', along with the previous removal of BANGERS from 'Tesco's' range, but this action is not uniform and does not address the problem empirically.

This Council acknowledges the progress made in Scotland on 29th June 2022 when the Fireworks and Pyrotechnic Articles (Scotland) Bill was passed by MSP's without a single vote against. The legislation not only brings in new restrictions on the sale and use of fireworks, it will also allow Councils to ban their use in certain areas other than in a firework display or for "essential purposes". Councils in Scotland will be able to establish

Firework Control Zones, where it will be an offence for pyrotechnics to be used.

The Bill will also mean that fireworks can only be bought and used by members of the public at certain times of the year, including Bonfire Night, Hogmanay, Chinese New Year, Diwali etc.

It also creates a new licensing system which will mean that people will need a license to buy and use fireworks and that businesses and shops will have to check if those buying pyrotechnics have a license.

This provides a balance between a legitimate right to use fireworks with the need to protect public safety and animal welfare. Without this type of protection, many people and animals will continue to be deeply affected by the use and deliberate misuse of fireworks.

There was a petition to Parliament with over 300K signatures, that called for the limit of sale and use of fireworks to organisations for Licensed Displays only – the narrative of the petition stated that there is a lot of strong feeling among the public, from many diverse areas, that legislation must restrict the use of fireworks and pyrotechnics to that of a safe and acceptable level. The petition, which ran in 2019 argued that current legislations allows for public use of fireworks for 16 hours a day, every day, make it virtually impossible for vulnerable groups to take the necessary precautions against the harm and distress they can cause and that the enforcement of existing laws, even to a higher standard, is not enough ,and that limiting the sale of fireworks and the licensing of displays only, was necessary.

At present, it is the Fire Service that issues licenses to retailers to store and sell fireworks following a premises inspection.

This Council agrees that:

1. elected members and officers shall meet with Fire Officers and representatives of all the big retailers in Bolton to see if there is a way forward to creating a voluntary “Bolton Code” for the regulation of the sale of fireworks and pyrotechnics in the Borough. This will be supported by a proactive local advertising campaign to schools, clubs and other organisations to ensure that the message is heard in all quarters of our borough.
2. Council writes to the Government, urging them to consider entering the equivalent The Firework and Pyrotechnic Articles Bill (Scotland) into English statute at their earliest opportunity, thereby ensuring a safer environment for our most vulnerable members of society and to those animals who look to us to protect them from harm.

(d) Motion in the name of Councillor Hayes –

Council notes and reaffirms the decisions related to the possibility of extraction of shale gas by hydraulic fracturing (fracking) in the area.

In particular Council recognises that

- i) there are considerable public concerns about the possible effects of earth tremors, contamination of ground water, air pollution and the possible impact on human health as a result of fracking;
- ii) a draft DEFRA report in 2014 forecast that house prices are likely to fall by up to 7% within a mile of fracking wells, and that the price of house insurance will rise within 5 miles of fracking wells.

Council reaffirms its decision taken in 2015 that:

- a) the Council in its role as landowner will not allow any exploratory drilling or fracking on land it owns or controls;
- b) the Council will strongly oppose any attempt to weaken or override its powers as a planning authority when considering any applications for fracking

Council recognises the need to ensure secure supplies of power, and regrets the decision of government to reduce incentives to switch to renewable sources such as solar and wind power. Council urges Government to reverse this decision and also to commence a programme to ensure that all homes are properly insulated.

Council resolves to acquaint the Borough's MPs with this view and ask for their support.

- (e) Motion in the name of Councillor Peel –

Council notes that in 2016 the Labour council stated that it would not allow exploratory drilling or infrastructure associated with fracking on land it controls or owns. It further stated that it will "rigorously scrutinise" any planning applications for fracking.

Council notes that the Government temporarily banned fracking in 2019, but has now changed its mind, and now fully supports the practice, which is a clear breach of its manifesto promises.

Council further notes that this U Turn was firmly supported by the Conservative cabinet member for Environmental Services, during the meeting of the Council on September 7th 2022, and therefore expresses its concern that the current council policy on fracking is in danger of being abandoned by the Conservative led Council.

Council therefore resolves to:

1. reiterate its policy of not allowing any activity associated with fracking to take place on land it controls or owns.
2. To write to the Secretary of State to outline our opposition to fracking and to disagree with his statement that “fracking is in the national interest”.
3. To seek clarification from the Secretary of State as to how local support for fracking (which he says will be needed before the practice can go ahead) will be measured.

(f) Motion in the name of Councillor Peel –

This Council has no confidence in the ability of the current Prime Minister, Liz Truss, nor her Government to deal with the serious economic issues and the cost of living crisis that is badly affecting the people of this Borough.

(g) Motion in the name of Councillor Mort –

Council believes that football, the national game in the UK, is currently in crisis. COVID-19 has devastated the revenue of many lower-league clubs, with the loss of some notables, and dozens more clubs teetering on the brink of survival. Frequently bad management has gone unnoticed or ignored and clubs are run unsustainably, putting at risk all the history, heritage, and economic benefit they bring to an area – often in pursuit of short-term gain.

Council believes that football clubs are not ordinary businesses; they are historic sporting institutions that are both a civic and community asset, and a source of pride and unity, in their hometown or city.

Council therefore supports Fair Game, a national campaign that seeks radical reform of the way football is managed and run, specifically its call for:

- An independent regulator for the sport.
- A refocus on 'values' rather than profit.
- The establishment of a Sustainability Index, which will reallocate the payments made to clubs to reward those which are run well, respect equality standards and properly engage with their fans and their community.
- Fans to be given the final say on any proposed change to a club's 'crown jewels', including the club's name, nickname, colours, badge and the geographical location from where the club plays.
- Council also notes that former Sports Minister Tracey Crouch MP has published a Government-commissioned fan-led review into football governance and that a vast majority of its findings mirror Fair Game's aspirations.

Council therefore resolves to:

- Declare its support for the Fair Game manifesto, 'Solutions for our National Game', and calls on other councils to join us in our support.
- Ask the Chief Executive to write to the Minister for Sport, our local Members of Parliament, and the Chair of the Local Government Association Culture, Tourism and Sport Board, asking them to support and work towards implementing Fair Game's manifesto and the findings of the fan-led review led by Tracey Crouch MP.
- Ask the Council's representatives to encourage other like-minded councils to support Fair Game.

(h) Motion in the name of Councillor Hayes –

Council condemns the ineptitude and lack of compassion shown by the Government in drafting and announcing its recent 'mini budget'. To even consider proposing a massive tax cut for the better off and removing the cap on bankers' bonus when a large number of Bolton residents are struggling to cope with increasing costs of heating their homes and buying essential items is mind-blowingly insensitive.

Council resolves to make these views clear to the Borough's Members of Parliament and ask them to vote and campaign against any such proposals.

(i) Motion in the name of Councillor Veevers –

Council congratulates the Labour Party on finally coming to the realisation that Britain needs a system of fair votes for UK General elections.

Council looks forward to seeing this measure included in the Labour Party manifesto for the next General Election.

*S. Johnson*

SUE JOHNSON  
Chief Executive  
Town Hall, Bolton

5<sup>th</sup> October, 2022

The proceedings of the Executive Cabinet Member Portfolio meetings from 12<sup>th</sup> September to 26<sup>th</sup> September, 2022, together with the Audit Committee, Active Connected and Prosperous Board and Chief Officers Appointments Panel, are included for information only in a separate volume.