

BOLTON COUNCIL

Members of the Council are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the Council to be held in the Council Chamber, 2nd Floor, Town Hall on Wednesday next, 22nd June, 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 18th May, 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)

Licensing and Environmental Regulation Committee
(See Section C)

6. Scrutiny Committees

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

Corporate and External Issues Scrutiny Committee (See Section D)

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

Place Scrutiny Committee (See Section F)

Children's Services Scrutiny Committee (See Section G)

7. Motions under Standing Order No.4

(a) Motion in the name of Councillor McMulkin –

The value and importance of parks and green spaces to local residents has been brought strikingly home since the onset of the Covid pandemic, especially for residents living in homes without access to outdoor living space. Public Parks and green spaces are not only a cornerstone in our efforts relating to the climate crisis, but significantly contribute to health and wellbeing and should not simply be judged by what they cost to maintain.

We know from numerous research studies that access to local quality green spaces improves the physical and mental health and wellbeing of all sections of the community. Indeed, the Marmot Review of 2010, recommends that improving the availability of good quality green spaces across the social gradient will help reduce health inequalities.

In terms of health, parks and green spaces save the NHS at least £111 million per year through prevented GP visits, which is enough to pay for more than 3,500 nurses.

Fields in trust research confirms that any decision by a public body to remove a park or green space is often short-sighted and will, in most cases, cost more money than is saved.

The evidence is clear: green spaces are good; they do good and they need to be protected for good.

I therefore call on this Council to as a matter of urgency hold a PDG to consider how it can establish protection of all the eligible public parks and green spaces in the Borough from being sold off or built upon in perpetuity and agree to appoint the mover of the motion as a member of this PDG.

(b) Motion in the name of Councillor Newall –

Many of the streets in this borough consist of traditional terraced houses and the only parking available to residents is on the street. Even in non-urban areas of the borough, we still have many properties that again only afford parking on the main road. Common courtesy usually prevails when it comes to motorists parking outside a disabled resident's home. However, there are an increasing number of disabled residents who are coming forward and vocalising how they struggle when motorists park outside their home resulting in the inconvenience in either parking their own car or being picked up/dropped off as a passenger. Of course, many other councils in the UK now allow disabled residents to have markings outside their home to remind motorists of the fact that a particular space is there for a disabled person at that address.

This Council acknowledges that presently – due to lack of available Council resources – that any cost associated with marked disabled parking bays should be borne by residents, as is the practise of many other Councils in the UK. However, in recognition of the problem this Council agrees to convene a Policy Development Group to explore the extent to which a scheme can be introduced that could result in disabled residents having marked parking bays on the road outside their home.

(c) Motion in the name of Councillor McKeon –

In his recent letter to Boris Johnson, Conservative MP, Jesse Norman described the Home Office's proposal to send asylum seekers to Rwanda as 'ugly.' The Archbishop of Canterbury in his Easter sermon said of the proposed scheme that it 'cannot stand God's judgement.' This Council expresses its agreement with Jesse Norman and Justin Welby and declares its view that the scheme is cruel and inhuman. It bases this contention on its understanding of the Refugee Convention and the well established culture of welcome that Bolton has offered to refugees and asylum seekers over many years. The plan to send asylum seekers to Rwanda represents a denial of British values of justice and compassion and is a betrayal of our obligation to support the vulnerable. This Council instructs its Chief Executive to write to the Home Secretary, Priti Patel and to the Borough's three MPs to object in the strongest terms to a policy that brings shame on our country.

(d) Motion in the name of Councillor Hayes –

Council welcomes any sensible initiative to increase home ownership and allow residents to get on to the housing ladder.

However, Council has severe reservations about recently announced plans to extend the 'Right to Buy' to tenants of Housing Associations. Based on the experiences of the similar initiative launches by the Thatcher Government any such policy would be likely to lead to:

- a further reduction in the supply of social housing for rent as promises to replace those properties sold were not kept;
- a steep increase in rents in both the social and private rented sectors; and
- a deterioration in standards of remaining social housing.

Council resolves to:

1. reflect these concerns in any consultation about changes or extensions to Right to Buy policy; and
2. Make its views known to the Borough's Members of Parliament and ask for their support in opposing any proposals to extend the policy.

(e) Motion in the name of Councillor Peel –

Council notes with disappointment that a letter from the Secretary of State, George Eustace to the Mayor of Greater Manchester dated 1st June 2022, again confirms the Government's intention to impose a "category C charging scheme" within Greater Manchester. This is in direct opposition to the proposals and developing plan by the 10 GM authorities for category B non-charging CAZ. This is also in direct contradiction to pledges made during the recent local elections from Conservative candidates across GM to scrap any form of CAZ charging.

Council also notes that the Government has imposed CAZ charging on other cities in England; a clear track record on the subject.

Council reaffirms its belief that an incentive driven scheme and not a charging scheme is the best way for all of the 10 boroughs of Greater Manchester to achieve clean air compliance

Council notes that the Secretary of State has suggested that the charging zone could cover only an undefined city centre area of Manchester, however council further notes that the legal directive from the Government on Bolton Council to take action to reduce emissions in the shortest possible time and no later than 2026, remains in place. As the directive hasn't been lifted, the latest

Government statement appears to forget that it exists! It is noted that private hire, taxi and white van drivers from Bolton will still be subject to daily charging as they go about their business in the undefined city centre area. It is further noted that a charging zone in one borough of GM would not alter levels of exceedance in Bolton or the other boroughs. Council can only therefore conclude that the letter from the Secretary of State demonstrates a lack of understanding about clean air issues across GM as well as the basic and economic geography of the region.

Council is heartened by the fact that despite the confirmation of the intent to impose charging by the Secretary of State, the reply by Andy Burnham on 2nd June makes it crystal clear that GM officials will continue to present evidence based proposals for an investment led approach that delivers clean air benefits through the appropriate financial support to those most polluting vehicles to upgrade as soon as possible.

Council resolves to write to the Secretary of State to reiterate our opposition to any form of charging CAZ and support for a non-charging investment led CAZ within the GM region.

(f) Motion in the name of Councillor McGeown –

Council believes that the most valuable resource the health service has is its staff. Yet the NHS is in the midst of a chronic workforce crisis, driven by years of insufficient investment in training new staff, inadequate workforce planning and lack of government accountability.

Council believes that compared to other nations, England has a very low number of doctors relative to the population. The average number of doctors per 1,000 people in OECD EU nations is 3.7, but England has just 2.9. Germany, by comparison,

has 4.3. The NHS was once the envy of the world but not today.

Furthermore, in February 2020, in a bid to reverse the stasis in GP workforce numbers, the Government announced a drive to recruit an additional 6,000 GPs by 2024 and yet in the year between March 2021 and April 2022, the NHS lost 379 GP partners and 364 salaried and locum GPs. This means that the number of fully qualified GPs by headcount decreased by 743 net in just under a year.

Council and the Primary Care Networks/ Neighbourhoods have taken huge strides to try and fill the shortfall with specialist nurses and paramedics but even with the 2022 Health & Care Act the figures don't lie and we know the NHS is in serious trouble. This is not uniform across the country, and we know that the North is one of the worst areas for patient to GP ratio.

Accordingly, Council resolves to:

1. Request the Government to acknowledge that due to failures in their policies access to health has fallen sharply in places like Bolton.
2. Request the Government to urgently review primary care in areas such as Bolton as part of the workforce plan due in the autumn, outlined by Amanda Pritchard Chief Exec NHSE to Health Select Committee on 7th June and create extra funding to improve our health outcomes.
3. Request the Government to aid our new local integrated care system to prioritise primary care in their overall strategy and funding.
4. Make these views known to the Borough's MPs and ask for their support

S. Johnson

SUE JOHNSON

Deputy Chief Executive
Town Hall, Bolton

15th June, 2022

The proceedings of the Cabinet and Executive Cabinet
Member Portfolio meetings from 21st March to 25th April, 2022,
together with the Audit Committee and Constitutional Panel,
are included for information only in a separate volume.