

## Sunderland City Council

At a meeting of SUNDERLAND CITY COUNCIL held in the COUNCIL CHAMBER, CITY HALL, SUNDERLAND on WEDNESDAY 26 JANUARY 2022 at 4.00pm

**Present:** The Mayor (Councillor H Trueman) in the Chair  
The Deputy Mayor (Councillor A Smith)

Councillors	Ali	Gibson, E	McClennan	Scott
	Bewick	Gibson, P	McDonough	Smith, G
	Blackett	Gibson, P W L	McKeith	Smith, P
	Butler	Greener	Miller, F	Snowdon, D
	Chequer	Hartnack	Miller, G	Snowdon, D E
	Crosby	Haswell	Morrissey	Speding
	Dixon	Hodson	Mullen	Stewart
	Donaghy	Howe	Noble	Thornton
	Doyle	Johnston, K	O'Brien	Trueman, D
	Dunn	Johnston, S	Peacock	Tye
	Edgeworth	Lauchlan	Potts	Walker, M
	Essl	Laws	Price	Walker, P
	Fagan	Leadbitter	Reed	Warne
	Farthing	MacKnight, N	Rowntree	Williams
	Fletcher	Mann	Samuels	Wood, A
	Foster	Mason-Gage	Scanlan	Wood, P

### Also Present:-

Honorary Alderman Greenfield

The notice convening the meeting was read.

### Apologies

Apologies for absence were submitted to the meeting on behalf of Councillors Blackburn, Burnicle, Dodds, Heron, D MacKnight, Nicholson, Taylor, Wilson and Aldermen Arnott, Forbes and Tate.

### Minutes

- 40. RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 17 November 2021 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

## **Declaration of Interests**

The following declaration of interest was made and the Members concerned left the meeting during consideration of the item: -

Councillor N MacKnight	Item 14(ii) – Approval of Reason for Absence from Meetings	Family Member is the subject of the report.
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## **Announcements**

Councillor K Johnston informed Council that the Housing Team had been recognised nationally for its successful pre-eviction support service and had been highly commended at this year's Inside Housing UK Housing Awards within the "Homelessness Project of the Year" category.

This was a fantastic achievement and recognition for the team and all the hard work they did to help residents in the most difficult of times and circumstances.

## **Covid-19 – Verbal Update by the Leader of the Council**

The Mayor invited the Leader to provide a verbal update on the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Leader commented that when he last provided an update in November, the city was yet to see the full impact of the Omicron variant and he began by paying tribute to the phenomenal efforts of residents, volunteers, businesses, public sector organisations and service providers in keeping the city running.

In common with previous surges in infection rates - which, although starting to come down within the region and nationally, had been at highest levels seen at any time during the pandemic – the NHS and Care Sector heroes in particular, were continuing to work in the most challenging of circumstances. Those services had not only been faced with the highest levels of demand, but with much reduced resources as absence rates due to sickness and self-isolation correlated with very high infection rates.

The Leader stated that the Government's massive underfunding of the sectors was the root cause of the acute difficulties and challenges faced, with demand far outstripping capacity. They lacked any sort of understanding or appreciation of what was required to provide the health and medical care system which the nation should expect and had completely failed to plan for this or any other type of national crisis.

He added that fighting Covid-19 was never going to be a walk in the park, but the dire situation that the health and care sectors had been put in was not fair or necessary and they had deserved better over the past two years.

The Leader highlighted that Sunderland was a resilient city, and while the latest variant was having an impact on near enough every service, organisation and setting across the country in some way, incredible efforts were going into ensuring that particularly vital frontline services were kept going across the city and that the most vulnerable residents were supported, protected and had everything they needed.

The Leader expressed his huge gratitude to all involved and said that it had been a very long haul now but the dedication, flexibility and resilience demonstrated by the people in the city every single day was outstanding. The arrival of the Omicron variant had confirmed that the city was far from being out of the woods with Covid-19, but the vaccination and booster programmes had proved to be absolutely vital in the fight against Covid and the damage it could do, and had done, to people's health, lives and livelihoods.

The Leader made a plea to everyone across the city to ensure that they were as protected as they could be from becoming seriously ill with Covid and to get all of the doses of the vaccine they were eligible for as soon as possible. NHS teams and all those supporting them were working incredibly hard, as they had done for the past year, to keep Sunderland at the forefront of rolling out the vaccines and getting as many people vaccinated as possible. The Leader emphasised that everyone needed to keep on playing their part to drive infection rates down.

The Leader referred to the announcement from the Government that, along with a reduction in the self-isolation timeframes, the Covid Winter Plan B measures, including work from home guidance and the wearing of face coverings, would be lifted. He understood that this return towards normality would be welcomed by many, particularly in seeing the example set, or rather not set by No 10 throughout, but he emphasised how important it was for everyone to keep acting responsibly, and to continue to be aware of the real danger Covid posed if efforts were allowed to suddenly slip.

As restrictions were lifted, and possibly come to an end altogether, in the next few months, individuals had to be mindful of the situation they were in and to think about how they could prevent the virus from spreading. If that meant testing and isolating if positive, maintaining social distance or wearing a face covering in enclosed spaces, especially around vulnerable people, then the Leader was confident that Sunderland people would do the right thing and make the right choices.

There were many exciting things in the pipeline for 2022 in the city, creating lots of opportunities of all kinds for Sunderland residents, and he encouraged people to keep up the good work and Covid-19 at bay. The Leader thanked the Mayor for receiving his update.

**41. RESOLVED** that the update from the Leader be noted.

### **Citywide approach to carbon reduction – Verbal update by the Deputy Leader of the Council**

The Deputy Leader provided an update on the ongoing progress being made in relation to the city's goal of being carbon neutral by 2030 and reducing its carbon emissions. The Deputy Leader highlighted key progress and development work that had taken place in recent months which included:-

- The recent publication of the 2020-21 Annual Report for Low Carbon Data, covering both the Council's emissions and City-wide emissions. Key headlines were:
  - The Council's operational greenhouse gas emissions in 2020/21 were 8,546 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>, which represented a 13.2% reduction from the previous year.

Two areas which would need a particular focus to help to accelerate emissions reductions were gas consumption and the vehicle fleet ;

- City-wide, 1.18 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> were emitted in Sunderland in 2019 (the most recent year for which there was data), representing a 5.8% reduction from the previous year. Sunderland was on the way to meeting the recommended interim target suggested by the Tyndall Centre for 2015-2020 of a 16.1% reduction, which was aligned to the city's overall carbon budget covering the period 2018-2020. Two areas which would need a particular focus to help to accelerate emissions reductions as a city were domestic gas and road transport as these were currently the greatest challenges to decarbonisation at a city-wide level.
- In the city's first ever submission to the Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP), Sunderland was awarded grade 'A' status. This was a huge achievement and meant that Sunderland was one of just 11 UK cities (and 95 cities worldwide) to be recognised as a 'leader' in the fight against climate change.
- Following Cabinet approval earlier this month, the Council had reaffirmed its commitment to UK100 by signing its new, more ambitious pledge. This committed the Council to seek to become Net Zero by 2030, building on the existing target of being carbon neutral by 2030 - and committed the city as a whole to being net zero by 2045 or sooner, if possible.

In addition to significant work on the detail of monitoring and reporting, work had continued to progress in each of the priority areas set out in the Low Carbon Framework in recent months with a strong focus on engagement. The Deputy Leader highlighted the following activity:

- The Council had coordinated a very successful tree planting day in December at the former Elemore Golf Course site. Sixty schoolchildren attended (from a total of six local nursery, primary and secondary schools), helping to plant a total of 420 trees. This action supported the wider proposals to create an eco-park on the site and linked with the priorities of the Coalfield Neighbourhood Investment Plan;
- Funding for the North East Community Forest had now been approved to create a Forest Classroom for the new Sunningdale School site by Doxford Park and to plant a new orchard at Hetton Park this Winter. In addition, the charity Trees for Cities had also agreed to pay for a further 8,500 trees to be planted at Elemore Park;
- The Council also helped facilitate the second meeting of the Environmental Green and Sustainable Group (EGSs) last week which provided children and young people with the opportunity to feed their ideas into the 2030 Shadow Board and identify activity which they could take forward. One of the first areas of focus for the young people linked to school and community growing projects and they had been learning about a number of city projects as well as sharing information on their own activity;
- Work was continuing as part of the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme – under which Sunderland was awarded £2.2m to install air source heat pumps at eight Council operational buildings. Due to supply chain and storm delays, the

Government had extended the programme to enable all physical works to be completed by June 2022;

- Between January and November 2021, external funding from the ECO3 and ECO3-Flex schemes had invested over £600,000 into 287 fuel poor households through supporting gas boiler upgrades and insulation.
- A Government grant offer from BEIS (the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy) of £2.22m had been awarded for Pilot Boreholes, which could lead to the harnessing of green energy via geothermal heat from the former Wearmouth Colliery. This power would be used to heat new homes at Riverside Sunderland as well as other buildings across the City Centre;
- Grant funding for SMEs through the regional BEST project – which helped small and medium sized businesses with energy efficiency improvements - was now fully allocated, with 55 successful applications from Sunderland and a likelihood that the greenhouse gas saving target of 614 tonnes would be exceeded through the investments which the BEST project had supported in businesses across the city.
- Grant funding through the city-wide BREEZ project had recently been able to be increased from £135,000 to over £500,000 which would allow more businesses across Sunderland to be supported with energy efficiency improvements. Solar PV and battery storage would be able to be installed at St Mary's and Farringdon Row multi-storey car parks as well as solar PV at the Bunnyhill Centre.
- Phase 3 of the Sunderland Strategic Transport Corridor (or SSTC) was opened in November, linking the Northern Spire bridge to the City Centre. The route would help to relieve traffic congestion, provided a dedicated walking and cycle route along the full length of the route - as the city sought to encourage active and low carbon transport - and also involved the planting of 1,700 trees and 25,000 shrubs;
- Sunderland Council was awarded 1<sup>st</sup> place in the Cycle September Global "Love to Ride" Bike Challenge as a result of encouraging 21 of its staff to ride 2,888 miles (and thereby saving 250 kg of CO<sub>2</sub>). In relation to this, by the end of 2021 the Council's Cycle to Work scheme had completed 130 orders in total. By providing the scheme, it was estimated that the alternative trips undertaken by bike would save over 7,000kg of carbon;
- In terms of the use of E-Scooters, a Rider Survey carried out in November 2021 found that 31.8% of e-scooter trips directly displaced car trips in Sunderland, which equated to over 25,670 car trips displaced and over 9,220kg CO<sub>2</sub> saved in the first eight months of the scheme; and
- With regards to the Mobility Hub at Riverside Sunderland, the Council was expecting to take delivery of the first seven Nissan LEAFs in January 2022, with the remaining vehicles to follow early February.

The Deputy Leader stated that she hoped that she had provided a useful and positive update on work that was ongoing and would continue to provide updates to Council as appropriate going forward.

**42. RESOLVED** that the information be noted.

## **Outstanding Motions from the last ordinary meeting of the Council**

### **(i) Events on Council Land**

Councillor Mann, duly seconded by Councillor Mullen, moved the following motion: -

Council recognises the environmental damage and harm to both domestic and wild animals that can be done by balloons, paper lanterns and extremely loud fireworks. In recent months, Gateshead Council and North Tyneside Council have taken action to limit the harms to the environment and to animals caused by these.

It is time for Sunderland City Council to take similar action.

Council therefore resolves to:

- Ban balloon and lantern releases on Council land
- Request a report to Cabinet on appropriate plots of Council land that can be transformed into a memorial meadow, where residents can plant seeds/flowers in memory of loved ones, and ask that Portfolio Holder to establish at least one memorial meadow in the city
- Enforce the use of low noise fireworks for all events on Council land, by default, except in exceptional circumstances, when the Portfolio Holder should be required to sign off on the decision to use fireworks that are not low noise.

Councillor Williams, duly seconded by Councillor P Walker, moved the following amendment: -

Delete second paragraph and add new paragraph as follows:

“In September 2018 Sunderland City Council therefore adopted a policy which banned the organised release of balloon and sky lanterns from Council land and at events supported, financially or otherwise, by Sunderland Council including those not on Council owned land.”

Delete third paragraph and add new paragraph as follows:

“In order to revisit this priority”

After “Council” delete “therefore”

First bullet point – Delete and replace with:

“Use our comms team to remind residents that organised balloon and lantern releases are banned.”

Second Bullet point – Delete and replace with:

“Request a report to Cabinet on appropriate plots of Council land that can be transformed into memorial meadows. Residents could then plant seeds/flowers in memory of loved ones.”

Third Bullet Point – Delete and replace with:

“Use the event application process to require event organisers to use silent/quiet fireworks.”

**So that the amended motion would read:**

“Council recognises the environmental damage and harm to both domestic and wild animals that can be done by balloons, paper lanterns and extremely loud fireworks.

In September 2018 Sunderland City Council therefore adopted a policy which banned the organised release of balloon and sky lanterns from Council land and at events supported, financially or otherwise, by Sunderland Council including those not on Council owned land.

In order to revisit this priority Council resolves to:

- Use our comms team to remind residents that organised balloon and lantern releases are banned.
- Request a report to Cabinet on appropriate plots of Council land that can be transformed into memorial meadows. Residents could then plant seeds/flowers in memory of loved ones.
- Use the event application process to require event organisers to use silent/quiet fireworks.”

Upon being moved the amendment was declared to be carried unanimously.

The Mayor read the new Substantive Motion.

Councillor P W L Gibson had given notice of his intention to move an amendment to the original motion. The Leader of the Council raised a point of order that the amendment brought forward a separate issue to the subject of motion. The Mayor upheld the point of order and Councillor P W L Gibson agreed to withdraw his amendment.

The Mayor then put the new substantive motion to the meeting and accordingly it was: -

**43. RESOLVED that: -**

Council recognises the environmental damage and harm to both domestic and wild animals that can be done by balloons, paper lanterns and extremely loud fireworks.

In September 2018 Sunderland City Council therefore adopted a policy which banned the organised release of balloon and sky lanterns from Council land and at events supported, financially or otherwise, by Sunderland Council including those not on Council owned land.

In order to revisit this priority Council resolves to:

- Use our comms team to remind residents that organised balloon and lantern releases are banned.
- Request a report to Cabinet on appropriate plots of Council land that can be transformed into memorial meadows. Residents could then plant seeds/flowers in memory of loved ones.
- Use the event application process to require event organisers to use silent/quiet fireworks.

**(ii) Establishment of Shadow Young People's Consultation Board (SYPCB)**

Councillor McKeith, duly seconded by Councillor S Johnston, moved the following motion: -

Council resolves to establish a Shadow Young People's Consultation Board, through which the Council and its leadership will consult with young people on important issues to them and on key areas of the Council's operations, such as budget setting.

This Board will also invite partners such as TfC, CCG, Nexus and others to consult with young people on what they are doing in their area of service provision to enable young people to share what they think they can be improved upon and what changes or developments they wish to see.

This Board will consist of young people, councillors and leadership of all political parties on the Council, working together to improve young people's representation in the city.

Councillor Farthing, duly seconded by the Leader, Councillor G Miller, moved the following amendment: -

**First Paragraph**

after "resolves to" delete the words "establish a Shadow" and add "explore the establishment of a"

after "young people on" delete "important issues to them" and add "issues over which the Council has influence or control"

**Second Paragraph**

after "this Board" delete "will" and add "may"

after "also invite" delete "partners" and add "other bodies"



after TfC delete “CCG, Nexus and others” and add “Police, the Commissioners and providers of health and public transport etc.”

after “think” delete “they”

Additional fourth paragraph

Add “That a report be brought back to Cabinet at the earliest opportunity and no later than six months from the adoption of this motion on the establishment of the Board.”

**So that the amended motion would read:**

“Council resolves to explore the establishment of a Young People's Consultation Board, through which the Council and its leadership will consult with young people on issues over which the Council has influence or control and on key areas of the Council's operations, such as budget setting.

This Board may also invite other bodies such as TfC, Police, the Commissioners and providers of health and public transport etc., to consult with young people on what they are doing in their area of service provision to enable young people to share what they think can be improved upon and what changes or developments they wish to see.

This Board will consist of young people, councillors and leadership of all political parties on the Council, working together to improve young people's representation in the city.

That a report be brought back to Cabinet at the earliest opportunity and no later than six months from the adoption of this motion on the establishment of the Board.”

Upon being put the amendment was declared to be carried with the following Members requesting that their votes against be recorded: -

Councillors	Crosby	Gibson, P W L	Morrissey	Smith, G
	Edgeworth	Haswell	O'Brien	Wood, A
	Fagan	Hodson	Potts	

The Mayor then put the new substantive motion to the meeting and it was: -

**44. RESOLVED** that: -

Council resolves to explore the establishment of a Young People's Consultation Board, through which the Council and its leadership will consult with young people on issues over which the Council has influence or control and on key areas of the Council's operations, such as budget setting.

This Board may also invite other bodies such as TfC, Police, the Commissioners and providers of health and public transport etc., to consult with young people on what they are doing in their area of service provision to enable young people to share what they think can be improved upon and what changes or developments they wish to see.

This Board will consist of young people, councillors and leadership of all political parties on the Council, working together to improve young people's representation in the city.

That a report be brought back to Cabinet at the earliest opportunity and no later than six months from the adoption of this motion on the establishment of the Board.”

The following Members requested that it be recorded that they voted against the motion: -

Councillors	Crosby	Gibson, P W L	Morrissey	Smith, G
	Edgeworth	Haswell	O'Brien	Wood, A
	Fagan	Hodson	Potts	

### **Reception of Petitions**

- 45. RESOLVED** that the petitions listed below submitted by the Councillors named be received and referred to the appropriate Chief Officer for consideration in accordance with the Council's Petitions Scheme: -

Councillor Doyle – Petition asking that the Council save the Sea Road Supermarket site.

Councillor Mullen – Petition asking the Council to find Luciano's a new city centre space and to support their relocation and secure their future in the city.

Councillor McDonough – Petition asking the Council to add Arbroath and Archer Roads, Farringdon to the priority gritting routes.

Councillor Crosby – Petition asking the Council to remove the £25 fee for a replacement wheelie bin where one has been stolen, set on fire, where a resident moves into a new property or where a resident cannot afford the fee.

Councillor Noble – Petition asking the Council to look at traffic calming measures between Dartington Close, Dellfield Drive and St John's Vale.

### **Written Questions by Members of the Public under Rule 10**

Pursuant to Rule 10 of the Council Rules of Procedure, the Leader and Members of the Cabinet were asked questions which had been submitted by members of the public.

### **Written Questions by Members of the Council under Rule 11**

Pursuant to Rule 11 of the Council Rules of Procedure, the Leader and Members of the Cabinet were asked questions which had been submitted by Members of the Council.

## Report of the Cabinet

The Cabinet reported and recommended as follows: -

### 1. **Sunderland City Plan 2019-2030 – Annual Assurance Process**

That they had given consideration to a report of the Executive Director of Corporate Services (copy attached) which detailed the City Plan and Indicative Timeline assurance process and the proposed updating of the Plan and Timeline.

At the meeting of Scrutiny Coordinating Committee on 9 December 2021, Members recommended that some of the components of the *Carbon Neutral City Council by 2030*, and *Adult Mental Health Strategy Delivered (in 2026)* timeline activities be inserted into the timeline in the intervening years. This would help demonstrate progress towards completion of these activities and also their relationship with the delivery of other objectives.

Where possible, this additional detail and contributing activities would be added to the timeline in advance of publication of the final, approved version. No entries would be removed from the timeline as set out in the attached draft plan, in the process.

Accordingly, the Cabinet, having considered the details of the City Plan and Indicative Timeline assurance process, recommended the Council to approve the proposed updates to the City Plan and Indicative Timeline (as an Article 4 Plan under the Constitution).

### 2. **Council Tax Base 2022/2023**

That they had given consideration to a report of the Executive Director of Corporate Services (copy attached) on the calculation of the Council Tax Base for 2022/2023 and to seek approval to recommend to Council the Council Tax Base for 2022/2023 in accordance with the Local Government Finance Act 1992 as amended by the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012.

Accordingly, the Cabinet recommended to Council that:-

- (a) The report for the calculation of the Tax Bases for the City Council and Hetton Town Council for 2022/2023 be approved; and
- (b) That pursuant to the report and in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base) Regulations 1992 and the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012, the amount calculated by Sunderland City Council as its Council Tax Base for the year 2021/2022, shall be 72,161 and for the area of Hetton Town Council shall be 4,052.

### **3. Local Council Tax Support Scheme**

That they had given consideration to a report of the Executive Director of Corporate Services (copy attached) requesting that Cabinet consider, for the purposes of paragraph 5 of Schedule 1A to the Local Government Finance Act (LGFA) 1992, whether the Local Council Tax Support Scheme (LCTSS) –which is the Council’s Council Tax Reduction Scheme under section 13A(2) LGFA 1992 – should be revised or replaced with another scheme for the financial year 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023.

Accordingly, the Cabinet recommended to Council that:-

- (i) The current LCTSS for the City of Sunderland, the main features of which are set out at Appendix A, be amended from 1 April 2022 to incorporate any legislative changes to the prescribed requirements for the Scheme (the Scheme) but that it be not otherwise revised or replaced; and
- (ii) The approved LCTSS for the financial year 2022/2023 be published on the Council’s website and in any additional manner determined by the Executive Director of Corporate Services in consultation with the Cabinet Secretary.

### **4. Members’ Allowances Scheme - Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel**

That they had given consideration to a joint report of the Executive Director of Corporate Services and Assistant Director of Law and Governance (copy attached) on the Members’ Allowances Scheme for the next financial year.

The Independent Remuneration Panel had considered the number and level of allowances currently paid to Members and its report was attached as Appendix 1. The Panel had recommended that the basic allowance be increased by 2% to £8,536 with effect from 1 April 2022. As the NJC pay award for 2021/22 had not yet been confirmed, with the current offer by employers of 1.75% not having been accepted by Trades Unions the proposed increase was in line with the assumption included in the Council’s medium term financial plan for the main pay award for Council staff, excluding any separate pay award increases that were given to specific groups, such as lower paid staff or Chief Officers.

Cabinet noted the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel but considered that in light of the ongoing pandemic and the financial pressures being faced by residents in the City, the scheme should remain unchanged.

Accordingly, the Cabinet recommended the Council:-

- (i) to note the report of the Independent Remuneration Panel; and
- (ii) to approve that the scheme of allowances remain unchanged for the following financial year, as it was considered that there should not be any increase to members' allowances at this time, in view of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic and the financial pressures being faced by residents in the City.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor G Miller, duly seconded by the Deputy Leader, Councillor Rowntree, moved the report of the Cabinet.

**46. RESOLVED** that the report of the Cabinet be approved and adopted.

### **Action taken on petitions**

The Council received and noted the report below which detailed the action taken in relation to the following petition which had been presented to the Council.

#### **Petition – Pallion Shipyard Partnership – Presented by Councillor Mann on 17 November 2021**

The Pallion Shipyard Partnership presented a petition to the full Council meeting urging it to support and assist a new operator to reopen the site and commence offshore support services, initially repair and maintenance activity. The Partnership cited interest from a third party and general market opportunities in North Sea offshore renewable energy business as the basis for securing this support.

The Pallion Shipbuilding Yard closed to commercial shipbuilding in December 1988. The current owners (Pallion Engineering) had undertaken no shipbuilding activity at this facility since this time.

The City Council had repeatedly requested sight of a full and comprehensive business plan that established if this private sector investment was indeed feasible, both in economic and environmental terms, (including previously from the Pallion Shipyard Partnership), so that it could take advice on its content, however this had not been forthcoming. Fundamental to this was confirmation (or otherwise) of potential support by the site owner for their proposals.

Any future plans for the Pallion shipyard site, which was owned by Pallion Engineering (with no Council interest), would potentially be subject to the site owner's own internal investment appraisals of the financial returns of any project and whether this required their own or any third-party capital investment.

The petition was at this time declined on the basis that Sunderland City Council could not give any indication of support or otherwise from any interest in the reopening of the Pallion Shipbuilding Yard, without sight of a full and comprehensive business plan which established whether this private sector investment was indeed feasible, both in economic and environmental terms.

**47. RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

## **Report on Special Urgency Decisions**

The Leader of the Council submitted a quarterly report on executive decisions which had been taken as a matter of special urgency, which advised that there were no such instances since the last report.

The Leader of the Council, duly seconded by the Deputy Leader, moved the report.

**48. RESOLVED** that the report be received and noted.

## **Approval of Reason for Absence from Meetings**

The Assistant Director of Law and Governance submitted a report asking Members to consider approval of a period of absence for Councillor D MacKnight.

Section 85(1) of the Local Government Act 1972 provides that “if a member of a local authority fails throughout a period of six consecutive months from the date of his last attendance to attend any meeting of the authority, he shall, unless the failure was due to some reason approved by the authority before the expiry of that period, cease to be a member of the authority”.

The last attendance at a meeting by Councillor D MacKnight was 6 September 2021 and she had been unable to attend a meeting since. In view of the provisions of the Act regarding absence from meetings, it was considered appropriate to request Council to approve a period of absence by reason of ill health.

The Leader of the Council, duly seconded by the Deputy Leader, moved the report and accordingly it was:

**49. RESOLVED** that Councillor D MacKnight's absence from meetings due to ill health be noted and, in accordance with section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972, the reason for her absence from meetings be approved for a period up to and including the last day of her current term of office.

The meeting adjourned at this point, having reached three hours' duration.

**(Signed) H TRUEMAN,**  
**Mayor.**