



# STOCKPORT

METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

Meeting of the Council Meeting held by way of a Remote Meeting on 9 July 2020 at 6.00 pm.

## PRESENT

The Mayor (Councillor Dean Fitzpatrick) in the chair; Deputy Mayor (Councillor Chris Gordon); Councillors Malcolm Allan, Lou Ankers, Paul Ankers, Brian Bagnall, Sheila Bailey, Grace Baynham, Laura Booth, Kate Butler, Anna Charles-Jones, Angie Clark, Laura Clingan, Christine Corris, Stuart Corris, Becky Crawford, Dickie Davies, Will Dawson, Tom Dowse, Roy Driver, Colin Foster, Helen Foster-Grime, Charles Gibson, Graham Greenhalgh, Steve Gribbon, Yvonne Guariento, Philip Harding, Keith Holloway, Linda Holt, Mark Hunter, Mike Hurleston, Colin MacAlister, Carole McCann, John McGahan, Tom McGee, Wendy Meikle, David Meller, Janet Mobbs, Tom Morrison, Adrian Nottingham, John Pantall, Amanda Peers, Iain Roberts, Mark Roberts, Dena Ryness, David Sedgwick, Becky Senior, Lisa Smart, Charlie Stewart, John Taylor, Aron Thornley, Alanna Vine, Lisa Walker, Kerry Waters, Mark Weldon, Jude Wells, Wendy Wild, David Wilson, Elise Wilson, John Wright, Suzanne Wyatt and Matt Wynne.

## **1. FORMALITIES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### (i) Minutes

The Minutes (copies of which had been circulated) of the Annual Meeting of the Council held on 26 May 2020 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

### (ii) Urgent Decisions

No urgent decisions were reported.

### (iii) Mayor's Announcements

The Mayor reported that on 4 June 2020 in the wake of George Floyd's death in the USA and the ensuing Black Lives Matter protests around the world, Stockport Council had issued the following statement:

"We believe discrimination and oppression has no place in our society and we stand united in solidarity with those who seek to tackle inequalities.

Tolerance, kindness and respect are at the heart of our communities in Stockport and these values underpin our inclusive approach to the way we live. Racism and discrimination have no place in our society and we must, as a community, continue to make a stand.

"Tackling inequalities has always been, and will continue to be, our priority."

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The Mayor stated that this was signed by all party leaders and the chief executive of Stockport Council.

The Mayor further reported that during the week Stockport Council had also remembered the murder of more than 8,000 Muslim people in Srebrenica, 25 years on from the atrocity. The Mayor stated that such acts must never be allowed to happen again or for the kind of intolerance that led to the massacre be permitted to flourish in society.

The Mayor, on behalf of all Stockport party leaders, reiterated that discrimination and hate of any kind had no place in society whether this was based on race, faith, gender, age, sexuality, disability or any other reason.

The Mayor then referred to the format for this evening's meeting, and expressed his thanks to all of those who had worked to make it happen. The Mayor also thanked councillors for their commitment to democracy and for their patience and understanding throughout the evening's proceedings.

Finally, the Mayor reported that he had visited Beacon Counselling as his nominated charity during his Mayoral Year. The Mayor stated that Beacon Counselling had continued to support people with emotional and mental distress and that he had been holding discussions over how fundraising activities could continue during the year.

### (iv) Declarations of Interest

Councillors and officers were invited to declare any interests which they had in any of the items on the agenda for the meeting.

No declarations were made.

## **2. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

### (i) Public Question Time

Members of the public were invited to put questions to the Mayor and councillors on matters within the powers and duties of the Council.

Three public questions were submitted as follows:-

- Relating to whether it was proposed to deshelve, archive or remove from the online search facility any books in Stockport libraries.

The Cabinet Member for Citizen Focus & Engagement (Councillor Kate Butler) confirmed that there were no plans to reduce the number of books within the library service. It was further stated that four libraries were due to reopen from Monday, 13 July to test out the covid-secure arrangements with a view to rolling this out further.

- Relating to the response made by Stockport Green Party to the Council's climate strategy and whether this had been shared with members of the Climate Emergency Task Group; when measurable timescales and targets would be agreed and whether there were plans to convene a 'Citizen's Assembly'.

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The Cabinet Member for Sustainable Stockport (Councillor Sheila Bailey) replied that the response of Stockport Green Party had been circulated to officers. However, it was stated that work that had previously been scheduled with regard to the climate strategy had been necessarily delayed as a result of the Council's response to the Covid-19 pandemic. It was confirmed that there would be a restart of the process shortly with a meeting of the Climate Emergency Task Group due to be convened shortly. Councillor Bailey undertook to respond to the questioner in writing with a detailed list of those activities that had taken place since the strategy had been developed.

- Relating to the name of the company that had been contracted to run the One Stockport campaign.

The Cabinet Member for Economy & Regeneration (Councillor David Meller) responded that One Stockport was a campaign to capture the spirit of togetherness that had been experienced over the past few months. The campaign had been conceived by the Council and would be supported by and delivered in partnership with representatives from across the borough. Councillor Meller stated that the campaign was being managed by 'Design by Future' which was a local Stockport-based design agency that had been selected following a procurement process, and their bid also included the use of Marketing Stockport to provide marketing and communications expertise.

### (ii) Petitions and Presentations

There were no petitions or presentations.

### (iii) Joint Authorities

#### (a) Greater Manchester Police and Crime Panel

RESOLVED – That Councillor Amanda Peers be appointed to answer questions in relation to the business of the Greater Manchester Police and Crime Panel.

There were no questions in relation to the business of the Greater Manchester Police and Crime Panel.

#### (b) Greater Manchester Combined Authority

RESOLVED - That the following councillors be appointed to answer questions in relation to the discharge of the functions of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority, the Transport for Greater Manchester Committee and the Greater Manchester Waste Committee:-

Greater Manchester Combined Authority	- Councillor Elise Wilson
Transport for Greater Manchester Committee	- Councillor David Meller
Greater Manchester Waste Committee	- Councillor Roy Driver

### Questions

Councillor Mark Hunter asked the Leader of the Council whether she shared his concerns about the ongoing uncertainties over the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework and the government requirement to base future housing needs on out of date national population

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and growth estimates that did not account for the economic impact of either Brexit or Covid-19. Councillor Hunter further stated that there had been a failure to properly fund 'brownfield first' development and the necessary infrastructure improvements meant that the government was forcing all ten Greater Manchester authorities to build on far more green belt land than may be necessary.

The Leader of the Council (Councillor Elise Wilson) responded that the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework had been in progress for a significant period of time and that prior to the current Covid-19 pandemic, there had been a consultation undertaken the responses to which were currently being analysed along with further viability and feasibility work to ensure that the proposals were robust. It was further stated that the government had recently made announcements in relation to funding to kickstart brownfield development. Councillor Wilson also confirmed that the decision in relation to the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework would come before the Council Meeting.

Councillor Hunter then asked the Leader of the Council whether she would confirm that as the schedule presently stood, the Council would be taking a decision on this matter in October of this year and then the final public engagement would follow that in November and that this final public engagement would be for only six weeks as opposed to the 12 weeks that had previously been undertaken.

The Leader of the Council (Councillor Elise Wilson) responded that the final proposition would come before the Council Meeting for approval, which would then be subject to public consultation, the responses to which along with that final proposition would then be submitted to the government and the Inspector who would then make recommendations which would return to Greater Manchester for formal adoption.

Councillor Lisa Smart asked the Leader of the Council whether Stockport Council was getting the coronavirus data it needed to do its job of protecting residents.

The Leader of the Council (Councillor Elise Wilson) responded that Greater Manchester was working together to set up 'track and trace' which was a crucial component of being able to ease the current lockdown measures. It was confirmed that the council received postcode data, however it did not currently receive specific patient level information and representations were being made to government in relation to the need for that data.

Councillor Brian Bagnall whether the Leader of the Council would confirm whether it would be a decision of Stockport Council whether it took part in the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework; that if the Council pulled out of the GMSF at this stage then it would be required to provide further homes; and that the GMSF was not just about building on the green belt but also about providing infrastructure, schools and jobs.

The Leader of the Council (Councillor Elise Wilson) confirmed again that the matter would be decided by the Council Meeting. Councillor Wilson stated that she disagreed with Councillor Bagnall in that the GMSF was never about building on the green belt, but rather about protecting the green belt and trying to impact as little as possible on the green belt and green spaces. It was further stated that in Stockport this has been about prioritising and delivering 'brownfield first' through ambitious developments such as the Stockport Mayoral Development Corporation.

### **3. LEADER'S REPORT AND CABINET QUESTION TIME**

#### **(i) Cabinet Business**

The Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Devolution (Councillor Elise Wilson) reported that over the last four months, the UK had experienced an international health crisis and that 44,602 people had died in the UK so far with over 288,000 cases confirmed nationally. In Greater Manchester 2,7040 deaths had been confirmed of which 353 were Stockport residents. Councillor Wilson expressed the Council's condolences to all those who had lost loved ones during the pandemic.

Councillor Wilson stated that from the outset the cabinet had ensured that the council had responded quickly; supporting our communities, delivering essential services, including setting up a new ones and protecting the people of this borough. New civil resilience structures had also been set up through Greater Manchester including a GM Covid-19 Committee of which Councillor Wilson was a member and which was chaired by the Mayor of Greater Manchester. The committee had played a key role in escalating issues to government but also in providing support to the ten boroughs such as through the procurement of PPE.

Councillor Wilson then paid tribute to those working for the council, frontline workers across Stockport and in voluntary and community groups.

The Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Resources, Commissioning & Governance (Councillor Tom McGee) reported on the Medium Term financial Plan and financial landscape from now until the end of the year. It was stated that the revenue element posed the most challenging aspect. When the Council Meeting last met on 27 February 2020 a surplus was predicted by year end which was achieved, and a balanced budget was agreed for 2020/21.

However, since that point the landscape had changed significantly. The original estimate was that for the next two years there would a shortfall of £28 million in addition to this year's current shortfall of £10 million coupled with an increased population and in particular of over-65s and a rising demand for services before the Covid-19 pandemic emerged. Councillor McGee stated that the council needed more certainty now to plan over the next couple of years to work through the current recession and into the recovery phase. While the chancellor had announced an autumn statement and budget, if the council needed to wait until mid-December for the announcement on the local government settlement, as was usually the case, this would not provide sufficient time to plan effectively.

It was further stated that in February it was reported that the council had received some windfall monies and it was intended to make a number of positive investments across the borough to tackle a range of issues, however it remained to be seen whether it would be possible to implement those and that it was unlikely that further such windfalls would be forthcoming in the coming years.

Councillor McGee stated that it was important over the remainder of the year that the council worked out whether its priorities and commitments remained the same. Councillor McGee referred to the statement from Paul Johnson from the Institute for Fiscal Studies who had said if it turned out that the coronavirus pandemic represented only short term disruption then the planned budgets would remain robust, however if went on for

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significantly longer than it will lead to a bigger deficit than currently planned and it won't be sufficient to support public services, support the vulnerable and insulate the economy from its long-term effects.

The council had spent nearly £24 million in additional expenditure and there had been a number of grants from government which came to within £1 million of that expenditure. However, it was also stated that the council had lost a further £34 million in sales, fees, charges, parking, venue hire, commercial rents, Manchester Airport and Council Tax and Business Rate collections. It was reported that it was announced at the LGA that the council would get a share of £0.5 billion in grants and that the government would also make a 75% contribution to allowance income losses. However, this would not include support for commercial losses such as at the airport which for Stockport would represent £15 million in this year alone, and that excludes council tax and business rate losses.

The Cabinet Member for Sustainable Stockport (Councillor Sheila Bailey) reported on the impact of the coronavirus pandemic since the start of lockdown measures which included some public realm works ceasing or being curtailed such as grass cutting, grounds maintenance, tree planting and green bin collections. Leisure centres has also been subject to closure, although discussions were ongoing with Life Leisure in relation to the safe and phased reopening of facilities after 25 July.

A number of staff members had had to self-isolate because they or a member of their family had symptoms which had impacted on the council's ability to respond to the crisis, but with most council staff working from home the emphasis had moved from providing normal council services to organising with great speed, support for vulnerable people in Stockport.

Councillor Bailey then reported that at the start of the lockdown measures, she had taken the decision to remove charges from all council-owned car parks to help key workers. It was confirmed that now that shops had started to open up, car parking charges were due to be reinstated on 13 July 2020 which had given shops and businesses a further month of free parking from when they were first able to open.

During the lockdown, both council and TLC staff had provide essential crematorium, cemetery and grave digging services for bereaved families in as sensitive a way as was possible under the restrictions. Play areas and bowling greens had now reopened and it was stated that the last few months had demonstrated the value of Stockport's parks and green spaces.

With regard to the bin collection service, apart from a short spell, there had been a regular collection of black, brown, blue and green bins which had been a credit to the refuse collection staff. The collections schedule for brown and black bins had not changed, while blue bins were being collected monthly and green bins fortnightly. It was confirmed that the situation was reviewed weekly however TLC was not currently at full capacity and it was anticipated that the service would not be at full capacity until the end of August, however it was the aim to reinstate a full service as soon as practicable.

The Cabinet Member for Citizen Focus & Engagement (Councillor Kate Butler) reported that the net loss of income across the portfolio was so far projected to be at about half the full year budgeted income. Councillor Butler stated that the libraries, museums and events

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services had been largely closed and staff from the libraries service had been deployed working on the coronavirus helpline.

A cautious approach was being taken with regard to the reopening of libraries with the phased reopening taking place at Hazel Grove, Marple, Reddish and the Heaton libraries with a view to rolling this out to other libraries if the measures implemented work effectively.

Councillor Butler stated that the council's communications team had worked exceptionally over the last three months to ensure that the leader's voice had been heard clearly across media platforms, and had made the very most of social media channels.

Councillor Butler reported that within the registrars service there remained a backlog of birth registrations following government guidance to stop such registrations and as a result it would take some months to work through. Other parts of the council were stepping in to support the registrars team in this work.

The Cabinet Member for Children, Family Services & Education (Councillor Colin Foster) started by congratulating the huge number of staff across children, families and in schools who had completely changed the way in which they approached things in response to the current crisis. Councillor Foster stated that on 18 March, the council was advised that schools would be reduced to being available for vulnerable children and the children of key workers. Following work between schools and the council, the vast majority of schools in Stockport were open the following Monday morning to receive those children. Schools and social work staff maintained contact with Stockport's most disadvantaged families to ensure that they were provided for and over 2,000 food parcels were distributed.

The reopening of schools had been very contentious and in Stockport it was decided to open on 10 June to reception, year 1 and year 6 children with 80% of schools doing so with the remainder opening on 22 June. Secondary schools had opened from the beginning of June. There had been a large increase in the number of children attending schools and Stockport had the highest attendance in Greater Manchester.

Finally, it was reported that the Dedicated Schools Grant consultation review would shortly be launched.

The Cabinet Member for Economy and Regeneration (Councillor David Meller) reported that the council had distributed over £60 million in grants to 5,229 qualifying businesses. The council continued to encourage applications for grants from eligible businesses. This included £3.2 million in discretionary grants of which there was £1.25 million left, and as a result a fourth phase of the scheme was due to be launched that would support Stockport-based businesses that had not been able to access any grant support which included businesses that were based at home as well as the newly self-employed.

Councillor Meller stated that Stockport had seen a significant rise in unemployment claimant figures and that between March and May the number of claims had more than doubled, although these figures were still much lower than the majority of Greater Manchester overall. Councillor Meller stated that the Stockport Jobs Match service had launched 100 days ago, and since then 300 urgent-to-fill jobs had been supported with 938 job-seekers registered, and over 5,000 CVs sent to 96 local businesses.

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As part of the recovery, the council was looking to 'build back better' and he reiterated his support for bus franchising. He stated that in the light of ongoing cuts to bus services, the reduction in traffic on the roads and cleaner air as a result it was more important than even to pursue this further. Councillor Meller reported that work was underway on the temporary bus station on the Heaton Lane car park which was a key step towards delivering Stockport Interchange. It was also commented that there had been a rise in cycling of approximately 22%, and that the business cases for the Mayoral Challenge Fund schemes for the Heaton Cycle Link, Bramhall park to A6 and the A6 MARR schemes had been signed off with the aim of delivering the schemes during the summer. It was further reported that the council had made three bids for monies from the Department for Transport's emergency active travel fund.

Finally, Councillor Mellor stated that the Council had recently launched the One Stockport campaign that sought to bring together the borough in the spirit of community, collaboration and unity that had been fostered in recent months. For now it was focussing on being an economic recovery campaign that stresses the need for residents to support local businesses and shop local.

The Cabinet Member for Inclusive Communities (Councillor Amanda Peers) reported that during the last few months many of Stockport's well and able citizens had rallied to offer their services and support to meet the needs of those who couldn't independently access basic essentials such as food and medication. In a relatively short space of time a small army of individuals, community organisations, charities and local businesses came together to volunteer their services.

It was stated that an emergency funding pot was opened through the Stockport Local Fund to enable mutual aid groups and community response groups to access funding to deliver specific support to meet the needs of their communities with over £50,000 awarded to those groups. It was stated that they had delivered 29 food projects, eight helpline projects and seven virtual activity projects aimed at children and young people. Councillor Peers expressed her thanks to the volunteers who gave up their time freely, the businesses who donated food and repurposed to deliver food parcels and medicines, and to those services that repurposed to deliver welfare support to vulnerable people.

Councillor Peers stated that under the One Stockport banner the council would invest in locally based infrastructure to the third sector and support community organisations to further develop a robust, resilient, empowered and influential third sector in Stockport that would support the local economy.

The Cabinet Member for Adult Care & Health (Councillor Jude Wells) expressed her thanks to all of the council's staff in adult care and to public health, colleagues across the health sector and third sectors and to partner providers for their response during the current crisis. Councillor Wells highlighted the work of care homes and care staff who were at the forefront of tackling the pandemic and their commitment and dedication.

Councillor Wells stated that despite the overnight changes to the way that people had to work, support to residents and the rapid commissioning of new services including an intensive and comprehensive range of mental health and wellbeing services had been undertaken.



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The council had put in place a robust financial package to underwrite and assure the market and had guaranteed a 90% occupancy payment for care homes which also included non-commissioned services. It was stated that the package of support that had been put in place amounted to circa £2 million. An additional £3.1 million in infection control monies had been distributed to providers. This included provision for tablets to care homes to ensure that residents could continue to maintain contact with relatives.

### (ii) Questions

The Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Devolution; and the Cabinet Members for Adult Care & Health, Children, Family Services & Education, Economy & Regeneration, Inclusive Neighbourhoods and Sustainable Stockport answered questions and responded to comments relating to the business of the Cabinet in accordance with Council Meeting Procedure Rule 11.

### (iii) Minutes

The Mayor declared the Minutes of the Cabinet held on 4 February, 17 March and 23 June 2020 (copies of which had been circulated) and the record of executive decisions taken (copies of which were circulated) since the last meeting of the Council to be duly received.

## **4. SCRUTINY**

### (i) Scrutiny Business

There were no reports from the Chairs of the Scrutiny Committees on the conduct of their business since the last Council Meeting.

### (ii) Questions

There were no questions relating to the business of the Scrutiny Committees in accordance with Council Meeting Procedure Rule 11.

### (iii) Minutes

The Mayor declared the Minutes of the following Scrutiny Committees (copies of which had been circulated with the Summons) to be duly received:-

Adult Social Care & Health – 14 January, 25 February and 11 June 2020

Children & Families – 22 January, 4 March and 10 June 2020

Communities & Housing – 20 January, 2 March and 8 June 2020

Corporate, Resource Management & Governance – 21 January, 3 March and 9 June 2020

Economy & Regeneration – 23 January, 5 March and 11 June 2020

Scrutiny Co-ordination – 16 March and 1 June 2020

## **5. ORDINARY AND AREA COMMITTEES**

### (i) Regulatory Business

There were no reports from the Chairs of the Planning and Highways Regulation;

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Licensing, Environment and Safety; or Audit Committees on the conduct of their business since the last Council Meeting.

### (ii) Questions

There were no questions relating to the business of the Ordinary and Area Committees in accordance with Council Meeting Procedure Rule 11.

### (iii) Minutes

The Mayor declared the minutes of the following 'Ordinary' and Area Committees (copies of which had been circulated with the Summons) to be duly received:-

#### Ordinary Committees

Appointments – 25 February 2020  
Contributors – 30 January 2020  
Employment Appeals – 23 January, 4 March and 11 March 2020  
Funding – 12 February 2020  
Health & Wellbeing Board – 29 January and 10 June 2020  
Health & Wellbeing Board (Better Care Fund) Sub – 24 January 2020  
Licensing, Environment & Safety – 12 February 2020  
Licensing, Environment & Safety Sub – 20 February and 5 March 2020  
Member – 17 February 2020  
Planning & Highways Regulation – 9 January and 13 February 2020

#### Area Committees

Bramhall & Cheadle Hulme South – 30 January, 12 March and 18 June 2020  
Central Stockport – 30 January, 12 March and 18 June 2020  
Cheadle – 28 January, 10 March and 16 June 2020  
Heatons & Reddish – 27 January, 9 March and 15 June 2020  
Marple – 29 January, 11 March and 17 June 2020  
Stepping Hill – 28 January, 10 March and 16 June 2020  
WWerneth – 27 January, 9 March and 15 June 2020

## **6. MOTIONS - NOTICE OF WHICH HAVE BEEN GIVEN UNDER COUNCIL MEETING PROCEDURE RULE 12**

### (i) Care Workers vs COVID-19 Motion

RESOLVED - This Council commends the incredible work of care workers during the COVID-19 pandemic caring for the most vulnerable people in Stockport.

This Council notes the results of a survey conducted by UNISON North West which found that 8 out of 10 care workers would not receive their full normal pay if they were ill or had to self-isolate or shield because of COVID-19. As a result of the lack of occupational sick pay, some care workers said that they may have to attend work whilst ill as they could not afford to live off statutory sick pay (SSP).

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This Council believes that this situation poses a serious public health risk to people that receive care and frontline care workers. Indeed, official figures from the Office for National Statistics show that care workers are twice as likely to die from coronavirus than NHS staff.

This Council acknowledges its responsibility under the Government's Infection Control Fund to administer the distribution of additional funding to social care providers to reduce the spread of infection, including maintaining normal wages for COVID-19 related absence.

This Council believes that no care worker should have to choose between their own health or hardship. This Council welcomes UNISON North West's Care Workers vs COVID-19 Campaign which is calling for care workers to receive the support and resources they need to combat the virus.

This Council notes that 12 local authorities in the North West have already supported the Care Workers vs COVID-19 Campaign or made similar commitments around maintaining normal pay for all COVID-19 related absence.

This Council also notes that a significant number of individual Councillors from parties across Stockport Council have already supported the pledge.

As a supporter of UNISON's Ethical Care Charter and founding member of the Greater Manchester Good Employment Charter, this Council undertakes to:

- 1) Formally support and promote UNISON's Care Workers vs COVID-19 Campaign;
  - 2) Put clear systems and requirements in place to ensure that additional funding is used by social care providers to pay care workers their full normal pay for all COVID-19 related absence, including sickness, self-isolation or shielding;
  - 3) Write to all current providers of Council-commissioned care services at the earliest opportunity to advise them of this requirement;
  - 4) Review procurement and commissioning policies with view to increasing the weighting of social value commissioning and to ensure it includes specific requirements around occupational sick pay.
- (ii) Release the reporting into the barriers faced by disabled people entering into public office

RESOLVED - This Council notes:

- A report commissioned into the barriers faced by disabled people entering into public office was completed and handed over to the Government Equalities Office in April 2019.
- Only 5 MPs, less than 1% of all MPs, are describe as disabled, and in the last census carried out by the LGA only 16% of Councillors described themselves as having a long-term health problem or a disability.

This Council further notes:

- Disabled people are falling further behind' as detailed in the 2018 Equality Human Rights Report 'Is Britain Fairer'.

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- The positive effect of support schemes such as the EnAble Fund for Elected Office, which ran from 3rd December 2018 to 1st April 2020, to help overcome these barriers.

This Council believes:

- Disabled people face additional obstacles in daily life including entry into public office.
- The Government has no reasonable justification to delay the report, which could help the public sector make informed decisions on removing the barriers disabled people face.

This Council resolves to:

- To call on the Chief Executive to write to the Government Equalities Office asking for the immediate release of the report.
- Consider the recommendations of the report in relation to the Council's equality and diversity policy if or when released.

(iii) Commemorating those lost and thanking those who have supported our community during the COVID-19 pandemic

RESOLVED - This council meeting recognises:-

- the huge impact that the COVID-19 pandemic has had on our communities in terms of loss of loved ones, widespread compliance with the lockdown, shielding, disruption to schools and other services, and disruption to shops, hospitality and other businesses;
- that the actual loss of life, as measured by the increase in excess deaths against the previous five-year average, appears to be much higher than the official statistics suggest, with some recent weeks seeing over double the average number of deaths; and
- that according to the office for National Statistics, a full analysis of the total impact "will only be possible in several months' time when longer-term effects and additional data, both death registrations and other sources, can be considered".

This council meeting also notes the huge financial impact the pandemic has had, with many local businesses having to close and Stockport Council having directly related additional spending and lost income currently estimated at almost £60m, with government support so far leaving a shortfall of over £35m.

Despite these stark statistics, this council meeting proudly acknowledges the response from residents across the borough in the face of this adversity. From the council's own staff and those working in our partner organisations, through NHS workers and care staff, teachers and early years providers, to other key workers such as supermarket staff and delivery drivers, this council meeting applauds the work they have undertaken during the lockdown to support our communities.

This council meeting further acknowledges the huge community effort in the creation of support groups, mutual aid groups and other networks across the borough, demonstrating the wider effort by local volunteers who have helped their communities during these stressful months, and believes that the contribution they have made in helping others to cope during this unprecedented crisis is immeasurable.

This council meeting therefore resolves:

- to ask the Chief Executive write an open letter, through the Stockport Express and the council's various online presences, to our residents, groups and key workers, thanking them for their service so far; and
- once the current crisis is passed, to form a cross-party working group to agree an appropriate way to permanently commemorate those lost to COVID-19 as well as to mark the contribution of our residents, groups and key workers and to celebrate their hard work and community spirit, including marking a day in the Stockport calendar to remember the efforts which have showcased what a wonderful borough we live in.

## **7. THE COUNCIL'S CONSITUTION**

### **(i) Proposed Amendments to the Council's Constitution**

The Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Resources, Commissioning & Governance submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) detailing a number of recommendations relating to various amendments to the Constitution.

RESOLVED – That approval be given to the proposed amendments to the Council's Constitution as detailed in the report.

### **(ii) Proposed amendments to the Council Meeting Procedural Rules - Part 5 of the Constitution**

The Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Resources, Commissioning & Governance submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) detailing a series of proposed amendments to Part 5 of the Council's Constitution (the Council Meeting Procedure Rules).

It was noted that consideration of this matter had stood adjourned from the last ordinary meeting of the Council on 16 January 2020 in accordance with Council Meeting Procedure Rule 24.2.

RESOLVED – That approval be given to the proposed amendments Part 5 of the Council's Constitution (the Council Meeting Procedure Rules) as detailed in the report.

The meeting closed at 9.47 pm