COUNCIL MEETING

At a meeting of the Council held in the Council Chamber, Municipal Buildings, Huyton on Wednesday, 29 January 2020, the following Members were

Present:

Councillors

Mrs J Harris
The Mayor
(in the Chair)

Mrs D Arnall, Ms J E Aston, Ms C Bannon, K Bannon, D J Baum, H Bell, Mrs J Burke, T Byron, C Cashman, E Connor, C Dever, J Donnelly, S Donnelly, C Evans, Ms E Finneran, Ms G Flatley, A J Flute, R Gaffney, Ms L Harbour, Mrs M A Harvey, Ms D Johnson, M Kearns, Ms J Lilly, K W McGlashan, Ms L Mooney, Mrs K Moorhead, G J Morgan, J Morgan, Ms S O’Keeffe, Mrs M O’Mara MBE, Mrs S Powell, T Powell, T Rowe, I Smith, Ms M E Stuart, K Taylor, K F Walsh and Mrs F Wynn.

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors T Brennan, Mrs B Dunn, D Lonergan MRICS, H Malone and A Moorhead.

31. MINUTE’S SILENCE

The Mayor referred to Councillor Allan Harvey and former Councillors Diane Reid and Bill Brennan who had recently passed away. She highlighted that they had each served the residents of Knowsley over a substantial period of time – 8 years, 23 years and 25 years respectively – and Diane had also been Mayor of Knowsley in the year 2010 to 2011.

In addition, the Mayor referred to Holocaust Memorial Day, which had taken place the previous Monday. This was an international day of remembrance in relation to the Holocaust and subsequent genocides.

The Council therefore observed a minute’s silence as a mark of respect for Members’ former colleagues and in order to express support for Holocaust Memorial Day.

32. MINUTES

In considering the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 18 September 2019, Councillor Smith raised a query regarding an interest that had been recorded for him in relation to the receipt of an allowance from Knowsley Town Council in Minute Number 22. Councillor Smith confirmed that, although entitled to this allowance, he had not claimed or received it.

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 18 September 2019 be received as a correct record and signed by the Mayor subject to clarification in Minute Number 22 that, although entitled to an allowance in his
position as a Town Councillor on Knowsley Town Council, one had not been received by Councillor Smith.

33. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The Assistant Executive Director (Governance and Assets) reported that:

(a) declarations of interest had been submitted by Members in respect of agenda item 6 (minute number 37) – ’2020/21 Council Tax Base and Forecast 2019/20 Collection Fund Balance’ - as follows:-

**Disclosable Pecuniary Interests**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Councillor</th>
<th>Nature of Interest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mrs D Arnall</td>
<td>Council representative on Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority (a precepting/levying organisation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D Baum</td>
<td>On Knowsley Town Council for which an allowance is received</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H Bell</td>
<td>Involved in the management of Southdene Community Centre which has a tenancy agreement with the Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T Byron</td>
<td>Sits on the Volair Board which is a Council owned organisation contracted by the Council to provide services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E Connor</td>
<td>Sits on the Volair Board which is a Council owned organisation contracted by the Council to provide services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C Dever</td>
<td>Employed by Merseytravel (a precepting/levying organisation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J Donnelly</td>
<td>Member of Knowsley Town Council for which an allowance is received, and partner is employed at St Albert’s RC Primary School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs K Moorhead</td>
<td>Partner has a beneficial interest in Quality Protects Children and Flanagan Group which have contractual arrangements with the Council to provide services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G Morgan</td>
<td>Employed by Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority (a precepting/levying organisation); and partner is employed by an organisation that is in contractual arrangements with the Council (i.e. TARMAC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J Morgan</td>
<td>Involved in the management of Southdene Community Association which has a tenancy agreement with the Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms S O’Keeffe</td>
<td>Council representative on the Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority (a precepting/levying organisation)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Mrs S Powell  Sits on the Volair Board which is a Council owned organisation contracted by the Council to provide services

T Powell  Partner sits on the Volair Board which is a Council owned organisation contracted by the Council to provide services

I Smith  Receives a Social Care Direct Payment from the Council on behalf of a family member and Member of Knowsley Town Council for which an allowance is payable (but not received)

Mrs M Stuart  Employed by Southdene Community Association which has a tenancy agreement with the Council

F K Walsh  Sits on the Volair Board which is a Council owned organisation contracted by the Council to provide services

Mrs F Wynn  Employed by Volair which is a Council owned organisation contracted by the Council to provide services

Personal and Prejudicial

Councillor  Nature of Interest
Ms J Burke  Member of Prescot Town Council

E Connor  In receipt of a pension from Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority

S Donnelly  Resides with mother who is a Council Tax payer

R Gaffney  Member of Whiston Town Council

Mrs J Harris  Chairperson of the Knowsley Carers’ Board which receives funding from the Council

I Smith  Member of Prescot Town Council

K Taylor  Member of Prescot Town Council

F K Walsh  In receipt of a pension from the Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority

Mrs F Wynn  Member of Prescot Town Council

(b) in respect of:-

(i) the Disclosable Pecuniary Interests referenced at (a) above, all Members had applied for, and received, a dispensation from the Monitoring Officer to enable them to participate in, and vote on, the matter; and
(ii) the Personal and Prejudicial Interests referenced at (a) above, all Members affected could participate in, and vote on, the matter in accordance with section 8.6(f) of the Council’s Code of Conduct for Elected Members.

34. MAYORAL COMMUNICATIONS

(a) Mayoral Engagements

The Mayor drew the Council’s attention to the list of communications which had been circulated for the information of Members.

(b) Recognition of Community Achievements

(i) Queen’s Honours

The Mayor advised that, before moving the first item of recognition, she wanted to bring Members’ attention to a number of people with links to Knowsley who had been named in the Queen’s New Year’s Honours List 2020. These were:-

- former Knowsley Council employee, Tracy Fishwick, who was now at “Transform Live Company” at Blackburne House in Liverpool and had been awarded an OBE for services to unemployed people in the North West;

- Ann Marr, Chief Executive of St Helens and Knowsley Hospitals NHS Trust who had been awarded an OBE for services to NHS Leadership; and

- Christine Haywood, Clinical Director of Willowbrook Hospice who had been awarded a BEM for services to end of life care.

The Mayor stated that these awards were well deserved and asked Members to join her in congratulating each of the individuals on their achievement.

(ii) Recognition of Jan Owens

The Leader, Councillor G Morgan, stated that the Council was extremely fortunate to be able to rely on the skills, connections and hard work of a wide variety of volunteers across Knowsley who made uniquely valuable contributions to helping the Borough’s communities to prosper. The Leader knew that such good deeds were common occurrences but considered that they should not be taken for granted and that the Council should recognise and thank its community champions.

In particular, the Leader referred to Jan Owens and her team of volunteers, who were the heart and soul of Swanside Community Centre, and were just the type of community champions the Council should acknowledge. He reported that Jan worked tirelessly to co-ordinate a programme of activities to benefit the whole of the community. The Leader stated that the list of events and activities which Jan and her colleagues had organised were
endless. In particular, through Jan’s efforts, the Swanside Community Centre provided much needed resources for all of the community, ranging from breakfast clubs for children, a homework club for young people, and lunch clubs for older residents.

The Leader reported that Jan’s team of volunteers provided line dancing, a toddlers group, family and tots groups, youth club provision, and exercise classes. In addition, Jan organised a weekly event for people living with dementia, which involved refreshments and singing and dancing, and it had proven extremely enjoyable for everyone.

Working with the Swanside Ward Elected Members, Jan had secured funding to create a new Community Garden; a fantastic environment for residents old and young to spend quality time and was also a haven for wildlife. In addition, following a spate of burglaries and car thefts, Jan had decided to spend her free time to set up and co-ordinate a new Neighbourhood Watch scheme. This had proven hugely successful and had helped the Police to reduce the incidents of crime. Jan had also linked in with a number of other Neighbourhood Watch schemes to share experiences and broadcast the positive message about the scheme.

The Leader advised that Jan also wrote poetry and read out an example of her work.

In conclusion the Leader asked Members to join him in thanking Jan, and her fantastic team of volunteers, on behalf of the Council for their outstanding contribution to the Swanside community.

The Mayor then invited Jan and her team of volunteers present forward in order to present them with a certificate in recognition of their contribution.

(iii) Recognition of George Bleasdale

Councillor Walsh reported that the Council was very privileged to have Huyton resident and armed forces veteran George Bleasdale here this evening as its guest.

Councillor Walsh advised that, in 1943 when George was just over 17 years old, he had enlisted in the Royal Navy. The Second World War was raging and George – despite his youth – had been keen to play his part. After his basic training, George was deployed to the Light Coastal Forces aboard a naval Motor Torpedo Boat.

In June 1944, when he was still only 19, George and the crew of MTB710 were deployed to escort the American Rangers landing craft to Omaha beach for the D-Day landings. Councillor Walsh stated that what happened next was way beyond the imagination of most people today and to be in the presence of someone who had lived through that experience was a great honour.

Councillor Walsh reported that more than 75 years after that historic event, in November of the previous year, George had received France’s highest order of merit – The Legion of Honour - for his contribution to the liberation of France during the Second World War. This was a very well
deserved honour and George had been invited to the meeting this evening in order that the Council could congratulate him on his award, formally recognise George’s courage and bravery and, importantly, to thank him for his service on behalf of the whole Borough.

The Mayor also thanked George for his services rendered in France and then invited George forward in order that she could present him with a certificate in recognition of his contribution.

(iv) Yvonne Ledgerton

Councillor Aston referred to Yvonne Ledgerton who was present in the Chamber that evening. Yvonne had retired from Knowsley Council at the end of the previous month. Councillor Aston stated that, due to the General Election, the December Council meeting had been cancelled and so Members had not been able to say goodbye properly; Yvonne had therefore been invited this evening for that purpose.

Councillor Aston advised that Yvonne had worked in local government since March 1980, over 39 years, and had been employed with Knowsley Council since 1 October 1990, which was over 29 years of outstanding service. Yvonne had been a great support for Members during her time at the Council and Councillor Aston stated that she would be missed.

Councillor Aston therefore asked Members to join her in thanking Yvonne for all her work and support over the years and wishing her a long, happy and healthy retirement.

The Mayor then invited Yvonne forward in order that she could present her with a certificate in recognition of her contribution.

35. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Members of the public were given the opportunity to ask questions which had been submitted in accordance with Council Procedure Rule No. 10.

(1) Sewer Baiting

Mr Golding directed the following question to the Leader of the Council:-

“It was stated at a recent Sustainable Borough Scrutiny Committee meeting that other neighbouring authorities work alongside United Utilities to bait or poison within the sewers to try to control the rat population below ground, and that they match fund to get this done, but that Knowsley have no such relationship with UU and consequently do not assist with sewer baiting. My question is why, historically, Knowsley have gone it alone locally and passed up the chances that neighbouring authorities have taken, and instead chose not to sewer bait to control the rats, and does the council agree that this has had a detrimental effect on pest numbers and increased the health risks in the Borough as a consequence?”

The Leader acknowledged the question and invited Councillor Mrs S Powell, Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods, to respond.
Councillor Powell commenced her response by reporting that, in 2011, the ownership of sewers and lateral drains had transferred from local authorities to the utility companies, including responsibility for the maintenance and control of rat activity. Since 2011, the Council had repeatedly lobbied United Utilities on this issue. The Council had always wanted United Utilities to introduce a sewer baiting programme and the decision not to sewer bait in Knowsley had been taken by United Utilities alone.

Councillor Powell stated that United Utilities had responsibility for the maintenance and control of the sewer systems across the whole of the North West region and there were a number of local authority areas in the North West where there was no sewer baiting programme. It was therefore not accurate to say that Knowsley had been the only area affected in that respect.

United Utilities had used evidence, provided by their own private pest control contractor, to decide where to bait sewers. They said that their contractor had told them that there was not significant activity in the sewers, and that was why they had decided that an annual programme was not required in Knowsley. Again, this was the position taken by United Utilities not the Council which had consistently challenged this position.

Councillor Powell reported that the Council had been unable to change United Utilities’ minds until very recently but she was pleased to report that the Council’s relentless efforts to push United Utilities to adopt a programme of sewer baiting had now paid off; United Utilities had finally agreed to conduct a targeted programme of sewer baiting during 2020/21. This had been agreed only on the basis that the Council provided match funding of £15,000 and Councillor Powell advised that this funding had been identified.

In conclusion, Councillor Powell reported that the Council took the issue of pest management and any associated public health risks very seriously. As well as looking to fund the sewer baiting programme, the Council’s Environmental Health Officers and Pest Control Technicians would continue to monitor the situation and carry out prevention and education work across the Borough.

(2) Considerate Constructors

Mr Heffey directed the following question to the Leader of the Council:-

“When the council sell land to developers, whether they are housebuilders, supermarkets or whatever, what assurances and commitments do you impose upon such land purchasers to ensure that they register with schemes such as Considerate Constructors?”

The Leader acknowledged the question and commenced his response by advising that, when the Council sold land, it went through a competitive tender process. As part of the evaluation of the tenders, the Council considered a developer’s track record in construction. Specifically, bidders were asked to provide three examples to demonstrate that they had successfully delivered housing developments of a type and scale similar to what was being proposed for the land which the Council was selling. All bidders had to demonstrate that they had the necessary experience and expertise if to be successful.
The Leader reported that, currently, the Council had not made it mandatory for bidders to sign up to the Considerate Constructors Scheme but many of the sites across the Borough were registered for the scheme anyway such as the sites at Whiston Lane, Scotchbarn Lane, Rockford Road and Tower Hill. However, the question was very timely as the Council had recently incorporated membership of the Scheme as a mandatory requirement as part of its next land sale due to be completed at the end of the month and a further one planned for the Summer.

In conclusion, the Leader stated that he was not sure if Mr Heffey’s enquiry related to the Rupert Road site. That particular site had been sold to a developer by Knowsley Community College. The Council had had no role in that sale but it was continuing to work with local residents and Bellway Homes to do what it could to help to resolve any issues associated with that development.

36. **PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION RESULTS (12 DECEMBER 2019)**

The Returning Officer reported that, at the election of Members of Parliament held on 12 December 2018, the number of votes cast for each candidate and the names of the persons elected were as follows:-

**PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS 12 DECEMBER 2019**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Knowsley Constituency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NAME OF CANDIDATE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raymond Frank Catesby</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George Edward Howarth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timothy Jude McCullough</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rushi Millns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joseph Robert Slupsky</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paul Woodruff</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(NB There were 133 votes rejected; i.e. 0.23% of the votes cast.)
Garston and Halewood Constituency

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME OF CANDIDATE</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
<th>NUMBER OF VOTES</th>
<th>% OF VOTES CAST</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kristofor Iain Brown</td>
<td>Liberal Democrats – To stop Brexit</td>
<td>3324</td>
<td>6.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Maria Eagle</strong></td>
<td><strong>Labour Party</strong></td>
<td><strong>38578(E)</strong></td>
<td><strong>72.14</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jake Fraser</td>
<td>Brexit Party</td>
<td>2943</td>
<td>5.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jean-Paul Roberts</td>
<td>Green Party</td>
<td>1183</td>
<td>2.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canso Neva Sadikoglu-Novaky</td>
<td>The Conservative Party Candidate</td>
<td>6954</td>
<td>13.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hazel Lee Williams</td>
<td>Liberal Party – Steve Radford’s Candidate</td>
<td>344</td>
<td>0.64</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(NB There were 147 votes rejected; i.e. 0.29% of the votes cast.)

St Helens South and Whiston Constituency

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME OF CANDIDATE</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
<th>NUMBER OF VOTES</th>
<th>% OF VOTES CAST</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daniel Oxley</td>
<td>Brexit Party</td>
<td>5353</td>
<td>10.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Marie Elizabeth Rimmer</strong></td>
<td><strong>Labour Party</strong></td>
<td><strong>29457(E)</strong></td>
<td><strong>58.48</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richard Alan Short</td>
<td>Conservative Party Candidate</td>
<td>10299</td>
<td>20.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brian Thomas Spencer</td>
<td>Liberal Democrat</td>
<td>2882</td>
<td>5.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kai Anthony Taylor</td>
<td>Green Party – Save Our Green Space</td>
<td>2249</td>
<td>4.47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(NB There were 129 votes rejected; i.e. 0.25% of the votes cast.)

37. 2020/21 COUNCIL TAX BASE AND FORECAST 2019/20 COLLECTION FUND BALANCE

The Council considered the report of the Executive Director (Resources) which set out information on the proposed Council Tax Base for 2020/21. The report also detailed some technical changes to the Authority’s Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme and provided information on the forecast balance on the Council Tax Collection Fund for 2019/20.

Councillor Ms J Aston MOVED and Councillor G Morgan SECONDED the recommendations set out in the report.
RESOLVED – That:-

(i) the technical changes to the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme as outlined in paragraph 4.4.2 of the report submitted and detailed at Appendices B(i) and B(ii) to the report, be approved;

(ii) subject to the outcomes of a short public consultation exercise, the long-term empty Council Tax Premium be increased to the maximum level from 1 April 2020 and an associated appeal process be developed as discussed in section 4.5 of the report submitted;

(iii) the Council Tax Base for 2020/21 as set out in paragraphs 4.7.1 and 4.7.2 of the report submitted be agreed; and,

(iv) the approach to declaring the estimated Council Tax Collection Fund balance as set out in section 5.1 of the report submitted be agreed.

(Note: That in accordance with the provisions of Section 28(2) of the Localism Act 2011, and the Council’s Code of Conduct for Elected and Co-opted Members:-)

(a) Councillors Mrs D Arnall, D J Baum, H Bell, T Byron, E Connor, C Dever, J Donnelly, K Moorhead, G J Morgan, J Morgan, Ms S O’Keeffe, Mrs S Powell, T Powell, I Smith, Mrs M Stuart, F K Walsh and Mrs F Wynn declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in the above item but, having received a dispensation from the Monitoring Officer, remained in the meeting and voted thereon; and

(b) Councillors Ms J Burke, E Connor, S Donnelly, R Gaffney, Mrs J Harris, I Smith, K Taylor, F K Walsh and Mrs F Wynn declared a Personal and Prejudicial Interest in the above item but, in accordance with the provisions of Section 8.6(f) of the Council’s Code of Conduct for Elected Members, remained in the meeting and voted thereon.)

38. PUBLIC HEALTH ANNUAL REPORT 2018/19

The Council considered the report of the Assistant Executive Director (Public Health) which presented the 2018/19 Public Health Annual Report “Keeping Knowsley Active.”

Councillor S Donnelly MOVED and Councillor Ms J Aston SECONDED the recommendations in the report.

In moving the recommendations Councillor S Donnelly highlighted the key issues in the report and the benefits in keeping active. In conclusion he thanked the Director of Health (the Assistant Executive Director (Public Health)) for this excellent piece of work.

RESOLVED – That:-

(i) the significance of having public health interventions in place to provide the necessary support to encourage residents to lead active lifestyles be noted and endorsed; and
(ii) the recommendations identified in the report be noted and endorsed.

39. KNOWSLEY STRATEGIC YOUTH JUSTICE PLAN 2019/20

The Council considered the report of the Executive Director (Children's Services) setting out the Strategic Youth Justice Plan for 2019/20 and its process for submission to the Ministry of Justice in July 2019.

It was noted that the Plan formed part of the Council’s Policy Framework in accordance with the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000; however, the associated timescales for approval or amendment to this plan set out within the Policy Framework Procedure Rules in the Council’s Constitution did not accord with the timeline set by the Ministry of Justice. It was therefore proposed that delegated authority be granted to the Executive Director (Children’s Services), in consultation with the Children's Services Cabinet Member, to make any future amendments, modifications, revisions or variations to the Knowsley Strategic Youth Justice Plan in order to comply with the Ministry of Justice’s requirements.

Councillor Mrs M Harvey MOVED and Councillor Ms J Aston SECONDED the recommendations set out in the report.

In moving the recommendations, Councillor Harvey reported that, since the Strategic Youth Justice Plan 2019/20 had been devised, Knowsley’s Youth Offending Service had focused on youth justice delivery for local children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, and had worked with partners to improve services and outcomes, particularly for those children placed in custody.

In September 2019, the Association of Youth Offending Service Managers in partnership with ‘Achievement for All’ had met with the Knowsley partners to assess these improvements. They concluded that the Knowsley partners were delivering consistent high levels of practice - in fact, that they were ‘leaders in the industry’ in this respect - and awarded the Knowsley Local Area Partnership with the ‘Youth Justice SEND Quality Lead Award’. This award recognised that Knowsley provided widespread effective practice for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children, thereby ensuring positive outcomes for children in the youth justice system with underlying special educational needs and disabilities. Councillor Harvey therefore congratulated the Knowsley Youth Offending Service partnership on this achievement.

RESOLVED – That:-

(i) formal approval of the draft Knowsley Strategic Youth Justice Plan 2019/20 (as attached at Appendix A to the report submitted) be agreed; and

(ii) in accordance with the Council’s Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules and also Regulation 4(4) of The Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000, authority be delegated to the Executive Director (Children’s Services) in consultation with the Children’s Services Cabinet Member to make any future amendments, modifications, revisions or variations to the Knowsley Strategic Youth Justice Plan in order to comply with the Ministry of Justice’s requirements.
40. LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1985 - SECTION 41 - JOINT AUTHORITIES

In accordance with Section 41 of the Local Government Act 1985 and Council Procedure Rule No. 11, Members of the Council were given the opportunity to raise questions in relation to the discharge of the functions of the following joint authorities, the minutes of which had been circulated previously:-

(1) Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority

Councillor Mrs E Finneran directed the following question to the representative of the Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service:-

“Can the Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority representative provide an update on the outcome of the detailed inspection undertaken in 2019?”

Councillor Ms S O’Keeffe commenced her response by advising that Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service had been the only Fire and Rescue Service in England to receive two “Outstanding” judgements - in how it prevented fires and other risks and how it respond to national risk - in the first national inspection of all 45 English Fire and Rescue Services which took place in 2018 and 2019. This was a clear affirmation of the Service’s commitment to keeping the communities of Merseyside safe.

Councillor O’Keeffe advised that Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services was independent of the Government and they had made it clear that they would pull no punches when delivering the results of the inspections, so to achieve such a glowing endorsement of the Service’s work was very pleasing.

It was noted that the report had assessed the Service as ‘Good’ across the three inspection themes which were:

- how effective the fire and rescue services were in keeping people safe from fire and other risks;
- how efficient they were in keeping people safe from fire and other risks; and
- how well they looked after their people.

The Inspectors were incredibly impressed by the Service’s prevention work, its understanding of risks and the Service’s partnership work, including its close working relationships with local authorities. They saw clear evidence that the Service trains and equips firefighters well and has maximised the time available to carry out prevention and protection activities, with the work undertaken to prevent fires resulting in the lowest number of fire deaths on record. They commended the Service’s approach to staff wellbeing and the positive impact that it had had on the whole workforce and made explicit reference to the Service’s national role and how it assisted other services in times of real need. It was also really pleasing to see that the value that the Service placed on its support staff had been acknowledged in the report.

Councillor O’Keeffe reported that, like with any assessment, the inspectors did find some areas where they felt the Service could improve and those areas now formed part of the 2019/20 Service Delivery Plan and the Service was pleased with the progress it was making.
Councillor O’Keeffe stated that the last few years had not been without their challenges – dealing with cuts and implementing change was difficult and could feel relentless at times. That said, the Service had worked hard to explain the decisions it had had to make to all its stakeholders and the Chief Fire Officer was pleased to publish a supplement to the Authority’s Integrated Risk Management Plan in July 2019 that put resources back into the Service for the first time in several years, something that no other fire and rescue service was doing currently.

In conclusion, Councillor O’Keeffe reported that the Service was ambitious and optimistic for the future and confident that its actions would further improve safety in Merseyside communities. Its firefighters and support staff had been pivotal in achieving such an excellent outcome and the Service was very grateful to each and every one of them. The next inspection for Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service would take place in July 2020.

(2) Merseyside Recycling and Waste Authority

No questions received.

In addition, in accordance with Council Procedure Rule No. 11, Members of the Council were given the opportunity to raise questions in relation to the discharge of the functions of the following bodies:

(3) Combined Authority

No questions received.

(4) Merseytravel Committee

No questions received.

41. Members’ Question Time

Members of the Council were given the opportunity to ask questions which had been submitted in accordance with Council Procedure Rule No. 11.

(1) Management Estate Charges

Councillor Smith directed the following question to the Leader of the Council:

“How is the Council helping to alleviate the distressful issue of the leaseholder scandal and that of excessive year on year increased management estate charges applied to leaseholders and freeholders in Knowsley?”

The Leader acknowledged the question and commenced his response by stating the Council had, for a number of years, taken steps to help tackle unscrupulous practices taking place in the residential leasehold market both within Knowsley and nationally.

At the Council meeting in March 2017, Members unanimously agreed to call upon the Government to introduce a number of regulations. It was
noted at that meeting that ground leases had been a feature of the housing market, particularly in North West England, for many years. When used responsibly, they were a sensible way of ensuring that housing developments were managed for the benefit of all residents in the long-term. However, the advent of so-called ‘housing ground rent investment specialists’ had marked a shift in the way ground rents were perceived. The Leader stated that, unfortunately, some of those investors saw the housing ground rent investment market as an opportunity to buy up existing ground rents and exploit their position to the detriment of householders.

The Leader highlighted that the motion previously agreed called on the Government to introduce regulation to tackle the poor and unscrupulous practices being carried out by some private sector businesses.

It was noted that, for two years now, the Council had had its own policy in place to help tackle this issue. The Council’s policy was one which ensured that any new properties built on Council-owned land could only be sold on a “freehold” basis. In addition, any residents already owning a leasehold property had been given the opportunity to buy their freehold at fair market value. This affected around 160 homeowners in Knowsley. The Leader stated that it was important to note that the existing ground rents in these cases had been set on fair and transparent terms and that the householders had entered into those agreements freely.

The Leader reported that the real problems lay with other landowners, and that was why the Council had called for the Government to intervene. He stated that sadly, but not surprisingly, the Government still had not taken any action to protect the people affected. In view of the inaction by Government, the Rt. Hon. Sir George Howarth MP had recently met with Esther McVey, the Government’s Minister of State for Housing and Planning, to request her intervention.

In conclusion, the Leader stated that people living in the Borough could be reassured that the Council had taken every proactive step possible to protect homeowners at a local level. The Council would continue to work closely with local Labour MPs to lobby for the introduction of regulation and the Leader encouraged Councillor Smith to do the same.

(2) Previous Green Party Group leaflet and MIPIM

Councillor Ms J Burke directed the following question to the Leader of the Green Party Group:

“Further to the question submitted at the previous meeting regarding a previous Green Party Group leaflet and MIPIM, can the Leader of the Green Group provide an update on his position in this respect?”

Councillor K Taylor, the Leader of the Green Party Group, acknowledged the question and commenced his response by stating that many in the Chamber would be aware of a Green View leaflet circulated around the Borough earlier that year, which had alleged that Council Leader Graham Morgan had misled the chamber, and the public, in connection with the Council’s dealings with MIPIM, an exhibition, conferencing and networking event. MIPIM had been held in London in 2018 and in the South of France in 2019.
Councillor Taylor had asked a question of Councillor Morgan about the cost of having Knowsley represented at the event in the South of France in 2019. Councillor Morgan replied that one councillor and one officer had attended, at a cost of less than £4000, and that the Council had not actually taken its own stall there but had attended as part of a larger delegation from the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority.

Councillor Taylor reported that, at around the same time, he was sent a photograph of a Knowsley stall at a MIPIM event, which he wrongly assumed was the event in the South of France in 2019. Following this he made the false allegation that Councillor Morgan had misled the chamber and the public. Councillor Taylor stated that he now knew, and completely accepted, that this photo had been taken at the event in London in 2018. Councillor Taylor confirmed that he was therefore entirely wrong to accuse Councillor Morgan of misleading the chamber, or the public, and accepted that Councillor Morgan’s replies to his questions were in fact correct. Councillor Taylor apologised to Councillor Morgan unreservedly and gave a solemn undertaking not to repeat any such allegation in the future.

In conclusion Councillor Taylor stated that, whilst he maintained that he believed it was inappropriate for councillors to be sent on visits given the Council’s current financial situation, he was always happy to be corrected when he got details wrong and he looked forward to continuing to work constructively with Councillor Morgan on future aspects of council business.

In view of the above statement, the Mayor invited Councillor G Morgan to respond and Councillor Morgan thanked Councillor Taylor for the apology.

(3) Attendance at MIPIM in France

It was noted that Councillor Byron had previously submitted the following question to be directed to the Leader of the Council:-

“Given the concerns expressed by the Leader at the last Council meeting, will Councillor Taylor now be taking the opportunity to apologise for the previously misleading remarks about councillors’ attendance at MIPIM in France?”

However, in view of the question and response set out at (2) above, and with the consent of the meeting, Councillor Byron withdrew his question.

(4) Support Provided to Town Centres

Councillor J Donnelly directed the following question to the Leader of the Council:-

“Can the Leader please update Members as to the support provided by this Council to our town centres in the run up to Christmas and what plans there are moving forward?”

The Leader acknowledged the question and invited Councillor S Donnelly to respond.
Councillor S Donnelly commenced his response by stating that the Council was determined to ensure that its town centres thrived despite the difficult trading conditions being experienced nationally. To date, it had committed over £90 million towards the regeneration of the Borough’s town centres, which was clear evidence of the extent of the Council’s commitment. Councillor S Donnelly stated that this had led to others now following and he advised that private sector investment was coming through such was the confidence and trust which investors and local businesses had in the Council.

Councillor S Donnelly highlighted that, in Kirkby, the Council’s investment had resulted in it acquiring the town centre and then, only a couple of weeks later, the build of the long-awaited new retail development had commenced, something which the private sector had failed to deliver in over two decades.

It was noted that, in Prescot, work was pushing ahead with the development of the new Shakespeare North Playhouse and the upgrading of all of the public realm. In addition, in Huyton, the Council was now finalising a delivery plan which would see new development brought forward.

In particular, Councillor S Donnelly highlighted that Christmas was obviously a key trading period for the Borough’s town centre businesses, so the Council had worked with a range of partners to deliver a series of high profile and well-supported events bringing additional people into each of the centres. In Prescot, a very successful Christmas Lights Switch-on event and firework display had been organised. The event took place on Saturday 16 November and there were over 11,000 people in Prescot town centre; an increase of 142% on a typical Saturday. In simple terms, the event brought in an additional 6,500 people over the day, or five times more than the same event organised the previous year. Local restaurants and shops stayed open to take advantage of the additional people in the town centre and the feedback from the public had been excellent.

Councillor S Donnelly also advised that, in Huyton, the Christmas Lights Switch-on and Huyton Live event had taken place on Friday 22 November. Almost 14,500 people attended which was a 73% increase on a typical Friday or an additional 6,100 people coming into Huyton Village.

In Kirkby, the Christmas Lights Switch-on event had taken place on Thursday 21 November and attracted an additional 7,523 visitors compared to an average Thursday.

Councillor S Donnelly hoped that every Member present would recognise that these were a remarkable set of figures and a welcome boost to the Borough’s town centres.

In conclusion, Councillor S Donnelly stated that, when it came to the Borough’s town centres, it was fair to say that the Council’s approach was the envy of many places across the country and he could not see how anybody could justifiably complain.
NOTICES OF MOTION

(1) Declaration of a Climate Emergency

The Council considered the following motion, proposed by Councillor Mrs S Powell and seconded by Councillor K Walsh, notice of which had been given in accordance with Council Procedure Rule No. 12:

“The impacts of climate change are now being seen across the world and there is no doubt that urgent action is needed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and limit global warming to 1.5°C as recommended by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

We need to look to the future for the sake of young people across the world who will experience the most significant impacts in the years to come.

The Government has set a target of net zero carbon emissions by 2050 in order to meet the UK’s obligations under the Paris Agreement. Local authorities across the country have been responding to this challenge by declaring “Climate Emergencies” and setting their own net zero carbon targets. The Liverpool City Region Combined Authority has set a target for our City Region to be an emitter of net zero carbon earlier than the national target, i.e. by 2040.

This Council notes that:-

- The current levels of global warming and predictions of future warming constitute an emergency for the planet and need to be urgently addressed;
- Tackling this challenge adequately requires a response from all levels of government, including the local government sector;
- Significant progress has previously been made in reducing carbon emissions from Knowsley Council’s estate and services – there has been a reduction of 36% since 2009;
- Borough-wide carbon emissions have reduced by 28% since 2009;
- To build on the success in reducing carbon emissions to date and achieve net zero carbon emissions, the Council’s action plans need to be reviewed in order to include more radical action;
- Green spaces play a crucial role in addressing climate change. They contribute to carbon reduction by absorbing carbon emissions from the atmosphere, provide spaces for producing local food on allotment sites, and provide the opportunity for environmental education and the production of biofuels. They also play a key role in mitigating the effects of climate change, such as the management of surface water during heavy rain events and the provision of shaded areas in heat waves.

This Council therefore resolves to:-
(1) Declare a Climate Emergency;

(2) Develop an action plan with the aim of achieving net zero carbon emissions from the Council’s estate and services by 2040 – ten years ahead of the national Government target. In order to achieve this, a full and detailed review will be undertaken and Action Plan created by 31 December 2020 to include:

Preventing Knowsley’s existing designated parks and public open spaces from the risk of future development – protecting these spaces from future housing and/or commercial development other than necessary improvements/enhancements to their infrastructure

Investing in and enhancing Knowsley’s designated parks and public open spaces to maximise their contribution to addressing climate change - significantly increasing the amount of trees in the Borough, investigating the feasibility of additional allotment plots, the production of biofuels, the installation of sustainable urban drainage schemes, and the provision of environmental education

Reducing energy use across the Borough’s street lighting infrastructure – replacing Knowsley’s street lighting with low energy LED lighting

Reducing emissions from the Council’s vehicle fleet - increasing the number of electric vehicles in the Council’s fleet and investigating the replacement of the whole fleet with electric and/or hydrogen vehicles

Reducing energy and water use from Council buildings - redeveloping Huyton Village Centre, whilst rationalising the Council’s main campus through the demolition of inefficient buildings and the construction of new energy efficient buildings. All other Council buildings will also be reviewed and plans will be produced to improve their energy efficiency

Reducing emissions from waste - Council offices already have extensive recycling facilities, but a review will be undertaken to ensure that facilities are available at every Council site and that the Authority’s staff are aware of and make full use of such facilities

A behaviour change programme – implementation of a Climate Champions programme, establishment of a new Climate Emergency Scrutiny Committee (whose Chairperson would then act as an Elected Member Champion on this issue), and provision of training in the assessment of climate impacts and building audits to identify issues (e.g. how to control heating systems, use of recycling facilities);

(3) Work with partner agencies across the Liverpool City Region to reduce carbon emissions, including:-

Working with the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority on issues which are more appropriate to be addressed at a regional level whilst lobbying the Government for support to local communities to address climate change
Supporting and influencing stakeholders across Knowsley, including Knowsley Chamber of Commerce, local businesses, housing providers, developers, environmental organisations, transport providers, educational establishments, and local communities to reduce carbon emissions through activities such as:-

- Provision of new and improved green infrastructure in major development schemes, such as Halsnead Garden Village, East of Halewood and Earlsfield Park;
- Review of the Planning Policy Framework to incorporate relevant requirements, such as the provision of electric charging points to commercial premises, providing a choice of sustainable travel, and further guidance on sustainable urban drainage schemes;
- Sustainable transport infrastructure schemes, such as improving walking and cycling routes and public transport facilities; and,
- Completion of the business case to establish a new municipal energy services company which would supply locally generated heat and electricity to businesses on Knowsley Business Park.

Councillor K Taylor then MOVED and Councillor Ms J Burke SECONDED the following amendments to the motion:-

“Amendments to the declaration of a Climate Emergency.

1) On Resolution point 2 Line 2 replace the text “2040 – ten years ahead of the national Government target” with “2030 – twenty years ahead of the national government target”.

2) Resolution point 2, create a new paragraph at the end with the following text “the Council commends the work carried out by Friends of The Earth to assist local authorities with tackling the Climate Crisis, particularly the list of thirty three recommendations Local Councils can take to fight the Climate Crisis. This Council resolves to take the Friends of the Earth recommendations into account and request that when reporting back with the Action Plan, officers should explain which of the 33 recommendations have been/have not been included.”

So that the Motion would then read as follows:-

“The impacts of climate change are now being seen across the world and there is no doubt that urgent action is needed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and limit global warming to 1.5°C as recommended by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

We need to look to the future for the sake of young people across the world who will experience the most significant impacts in the years to come.

The Government has set a target of net zero carbon emissions by 2050 in order to meet the UK’s obligations under the Paris Agreement. Local authorities across the country have been responding to this challenge by declaring “Climate Emergencies” and setting their own net zero carbon
targets. The Liverpool City Region Combined Authority has set a target for our City Region to be an emitter of net zero carbon earlier than the national target, i.e. by 2040.

This Council notes that:

- The current levels of global warming and predictions of future warming constitute an emergency for the planet and need to be urgently addressed;

- Tackling this challenge adequately requires a response from all levels of government, including the local government sector;

- Significant progress has previously been made in reducing carbon emissions from Knowsley Council’s estate and services – there has been a reduction of 36% since 2009;

- Borough-wide carbon emissions have reduced by 28% since 2009;

- To build on the success in reducing carbon emissions to date and achieve net zero carbon emissions, the Council’s action plans need to be reviewed in order to include more radical action;

- Green spaces play a crucial role in addressing climate change. They contribute to carbon reduction by absorbing carbon emissions from the atmosphere, provide spaces for producing local food on allotment sites, and provide the opportunity for environmental education and the production of biofuels. They also play a key role in mitigating the effects of climate change, such as the management of surface water during heavy rain events and the provision of shaded areas in heat waves.

This Council therefore resolves to:

(1) Declare a Climate Emergency;

(2) Develop an action plan with the aim of achieving net zero carbon emissions from the Council’s estate and services by 2030 – twenty years ahead of the national Government target. In order to achieve this, a full and detailed review will be undertaken and Action Plan created by 31 December 2020 to include:

Preventing Knowsley’s existing designated parks and public open spaces from the risk of future development – protecting these spaces from future housing and/or commercial development other than necessary improvements/enhancements to their infrastructure

Investing in and enhancing Knowsley’s designated parks and public open spaces to maximise their contribution to addressing climate change - significantly increasing the amount of trees in the Borough, investigating the feasibility of additional allotment plots, the production of biofuels, the installation of sustainable urban drainage schemes, and the provision of environmental education
Reducing energy use across the Borough's street lighting infrastructure – replacing Knowsley's street lighting with low energy LED lighting

Reducing emissions from the Council's vehicle fleet - increasing the number of electric vehicles in the Council’s fleet and investigating the replacement of the whole fleet with electric and/or hydrogen vehicles

Reducing energy and water use from Council buildings - redeveloping Huyton Village Centre, whilst rationalising the Council’s main campus through the demolition of inefficient buildings and the construction of new energy efficient buildings. All other Council buildings will also be reviewed and plans will be produced to improve their energy efficiency

Reducing emissions from waste - Council offices already have extensive recycling facilities, but a review will be undertaken to ensure that facilities are available at every Council site and that the Authority’s staff are aware of and make full use of such facilities

A behaviour change programme – implementation of a Climate Champions programme, establishment of a new Climate Emergency Scrutiny Committee (whose Chairperson would then act as an Elected Member Champion on this issue), and provision of training in the assessment of climate impacts and building audits to identify issues (e.g. how to control heating systems, use of recycling facilities);

(3) Work with partner agencies across the Liverpool City Region to reduce carbon emissions, including:-

Working with the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority on issues which are more appropriate to be addressed at a regional level whilst lobbying the Government for support to local communities to address climate change

Supporting and influencing stakeholders across Knowsley, including Knowsley Chamber of Commerce, local businesses, housing providers, developers, environmental organisations, transport providers, educational establishments, and local communities to reduce carbon emissions through activities such as:-

- Provision of new and improved green infrastructure in major development schemes, such as Halsnead Garden Village, East of Halewood and Earlsfield Park;

- Review of the Planning Policy Framework to incorporate relevant requirements, such as the provision of electric charging points to commercial premises, providing a choice of sustainable travel, and further guidance on sustainable urban drainage schemes;

- Sustainable transport infrastructure schemes, such as improving walking and cycling routes and public transport facilities; and,
• Completion of the business case to establish a new municipal energy services company which would supply locally generated heat and electricity to businesses on Knowsley Business Park.

(4) This Council commends the work carried out by Friends of The Earth to assist local authorities with tackling the Climate Crisis, in particular the list of thirty three recommendations of action Local Councils can take to fight the Climate Crisis. This Council resolves to take the Friends of the Earth recommendations into account and request that when reporting back with the Action Plan, officers should explain which of the 33 recommendations have been/have not been included.”

A vote was taken on the amendment and it was rejected.

The Mayor then put the original motion to the vote and it was:

RESOLVED – That the motion be agreed.

(2) Fireworks

The Council considered the following motion, proposed by Councillor Ms J Burke and seconded by Councillor K Taylor, notice of which had been given in accordance with Council Procedure Rule No. 12:

“Fireworks are used by people throughout the year to mark different events. While they can bring much enjoyment to some people, they can cause significant problems and fear for other people and animals. They can be a source of fear and distress for many animals (including pet animals, farm livestock and wildlife) and people. Animals affected not only suffer psychological distress but can also cause themselves injuries, sometimes very serious ones, as they attempt to run away or hide from the noise.

This Council resolves:

• to require all public firework displays within the local authority boundaries to be advertised in advance of the event, allowing residents to take precautions for their animals and vulnerable people;

• to actively promote a public awareness campaign about the impact of fireworks on animal welfare and vulnerable people – including the precautions that can be taken to mitigate risks;

• to encourage local suppliers of fireworks to stock ‘quieter’ fireworks.”

As part of the subsequent debate Councillor Mrs S Powell, Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods, set out the reasons why she considered the motion to be unnecessary; i.e. as she considered that it did not add any new value over and above what was already being done.

Following the debate the Mayor put the motion to the vote and it was:-

RESOLVED – That the motion be rejected.
Statement of Commitment for Holocaust Memorial Day

The Council considered the following motion, proposed by Councillor G Morgan and seconded by Councillor Mrs S Powell, notice of which had been given in accordance with Council Procedure Rule No. 12:

"Holocaust Memorial Day is the national commemoration day dedicated to the remembrance of those who suffered in The Holocaust, under Nazi Persecution, and in subsequent genocides in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosinia and Darfur. It was first held in January 2001 and has been on the same date every year since. The chosen date is the anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz–Birkenau concentration camp by the Soviet Union in 1945, with 27 January 2020 marking 75 years since this date. It also marks the 25th anniversary of the genocide in Bosnia.

This Council has previously adopted the definition of antisemitism as set out by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance and has pledged to combat this pernicious form of racism.

This Council therefore now also resolves to adopt the Holocaust Memorial Day Statement of Commitment as follows:-

- We recognise that the Holocaust shook the foundations of modern civilisation. Its unprecedented character and horror will always hold universal meaning.

- We believe the Holocaust must have a permanent place in our nation’s and community’s collective memory. We honour the survivors still with us, and reaffirm our shared goals of mutual understanding and justice.

- We must make sure that future generations understand the causes of the Holocaust and reflect upon its consequences. We vow to remember the victims of Nazi persecution and of all genocides.

- We value the sacrifices of those who have risked their lives to protect or rescue victims, as a touchstone of the human capacity for good in the face of evil.

- We recognise that humanity is still scarred by the belief that race, religion, disability or sexuality make some people’s lives worth less than others’. Genocide, antisemitism, racism, xenophobia and discrimination still continue. We have a shared responsibility to fight these evils.

- We pledge to strengthen our efforts to promote education and research about the Holocaust and other genocides. We will do our utmost to make sure that the lessons of such events are fully learnt.

- We will continue to encourage Holocaust remembrance by commemorating Holocaust Memorial Day through raising the flag on 27 January each year and a minute’s silence at the January meeting of Full Council. We condemn the evils of prejudice, discrimination and racism. We value a free, respectful, and democratic society."
RESOLVED – That the motion be approved.

(4) **Use of Live Reindeer at Events Organised by Knowsley Council**

It was noted that, with the consent of the meeting, this motion had been withdrawn pending further discussions between the Green Party Group and the Labour Group.

(5) **Reviewing the Governance Model of Knowsley Council**

The Council considered the following motion, proposed by Councillor K Taylor and seconded by Councillor Ms J Burke, notice of which had been given in accordance with Council Procedure Rule No. 12:

“This Council notes that:

Prior to the introduction of the Local Government Act 2000, local authorities had taken decisions through a committee-based structure whereby most policy and many operational decisions were taken by service-based committees. The decision-making process via these arrangements was considered to be slow, with two stages to go through to get the most important decisions made. Representation on the committees was on a politically proportionate basis. Some decisions were reserved for full Council; in such circumstances, the role of a committee was to make a recommendation to Council for subsequent decision.

The Localism Act 2011 has now given Councils much more freedom to choose their decision-making structure. The purpose and objective of any decision-making structure is to ensure effective decision making. Under current legislation, the following types of decision-making structures are available:

Leader and Cabinet – this is the system operated by most local authorities, and this Council. The Leader appoints a Cabinet of at least 2 and up to 9 Councillors. These Councils must have Overview and Scrutiny arrangements.

Directly Elected Mayor and Cabinet – this system allows a directly elected executive mayor with wide decision-making powers. The Mayor appoints a Cabinet made up of other Councillors, who may have decision making powers. These Councils must have Overview and Scrutiny arrangements.

Committee system – in this arrangement, most decision are made in committees, which are made up of a mix of Councillors from across all political groups. Council appoints Members to the committees on a politically proportionate basis, and sets their terms of reference.

Under the current system, despite having forty five elected members, most of the decision making power lies with The Leader and a small number of cabinet members, thereby disengaging elected members from the decision making process.

Important decisions have been taken by the cabinet without consultation with the full council, thereby removing any chance of debate and discussion.
This Council therefore resolves to instruct the Assistant Executive Director (Governance and Assets) to carry out a review into the Governance models available for Knowsley, impartially assessing their strengths and weaknesses for consideration, with the objective to produce, in December 2020, an interim report of options and a preferred outline for further consideration by the Council."

As part of the subsequent debate Councillor G Morgan, the Leader of the Council, set out the reasons why he considered that this motion should not be supported. Following the debate the Mayor put the motion to the vote and it was:-

RESOLVED – That the motion be rejected.

(6) Background Checks for Elected Members

The Council considered the following motion, proposed by Councillor K Taylor and seconded by Councillor Ms J Burke, notice of which had been given in accordance with Council Procedure Rule No. 12:

"The opportunity to serve as an elected Borough Councillor for the people of Knowsley is not only an overwhelming privilege but a significant responsibility. As one of the most deprived boroughs is the United Kingdom, our residents face significant problems and Councillors often act as a life line for many residents, connecting them with vital services, signposting and supporting residents with a wide range of issues.

A huge amount of trust is placed in Councillors by members of the public, who are often shocked to discover no formal checks are undertaken.

This Council notes that:

1. Currently only a small number of Councillors who carry out regulated activity are required to take DBS checks.

2. Knowsley Council has a duty to its residents to carry out basic background checks on elected members.

This Council therefore resolves to:

(a) adopt a policy of conducting a Basic DBS check for all Members of the Council, notwithstanding a Councillor may undertake certain roles which, in line with the legislation, required them to undergo an enhanced DBS check in relation to their contact with vulnerable adults or children or both or, is a member of a Committee which discharges a relevant function;

(b) that representations be made to Government regarding the current criteria which excludes the position of Councillor as named in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (meaning there was currently no eligibility in law for requiring a DBS certificate, solely on the basis of being a Councillor); and

(c) that Officers be asked to establish a Risk Assessment process that can be used to assess and record the risks of a Councillor in their role where
a DBS certificate shows relevant convictions or other relevant information."

As part of the subsequent debate Councillor Ms J Aston, Cabinet Member for Resources, set out the reasons why she considered the motion should not be supported. Following the debate the Mayor put the motion to the vote and it was:-

RESOLVED – That the motion be rejected.

Minutes 31 to 42 received as a correct record the 22nd day of May 2020.

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The Mayor

(The meeting closed at 7.56 pm)