

**THE ROLE OF MAYOR-BASED LEADERSHIP IN PROMOTING
SUSTAINABLE LOCAL POLICIES
A CASE OF BRISTOL, THE UNITED KINGDOM**

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Abstract

Numerous public and research bodies strongly indicate the crucial role of local action in addressing local issues concerning sustainable development. Nevertheless, there is hardly ever further reference given as to the political management of that local action towards sustainability, In particular, the role of local elected politicians and the notion of local leadership. This paper aims to investigate and evaluate the role of a relatively new form of urban governance, namely the directly elected mayor (DEM) at city level in the UK, in affecting the sustainability performance of local policies. The research employed qualitative inductive approach and qualitative methods such as policy document analysis and semi-structured interview at both collecting and analysis data stages. It is reasonable to assume that the mayor had manifested, visions and actions in closely associated with sustainable development concept to address local issues. Several policies, schemes and actions have been introduced and enthusiastically welcomed by the DEM. Thus the study conclude that the directly elected mayor model was deemed to possibly promote the sustainable local policies and yet, the DEM would have made more progress in promoting and delivering sustainable local policies.

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List of Acronyms Used

Acronym	Meaning
DEM	Directly Elected Mayor
DEMM	Directly Elected Metro Mayor
RPS	Residents Parking Scheme
UNCED	United Nations Conference on Environment and Development

1. Introduction

1.1 Research Problem

Over recent decades, sustainability and sustainable development have emerged as fundamental elements in many government policies as well as urban planning practices. In this sense, sustainable development could be considered to be an effective solution that encourages fruitful collaboration and balance between the environment, society, and the economy in order to tackle the tremendous impacts of climate change (Roseland 2000).

On the other hand, Meadowcroft (1997) draws attention to the vital role of the urban level where many environmental issues tend to have direct and strong effects on the citizens. Numerous public and research bodies strongly indicate the crucial role of local action in addressing local issues concerning the economy, society and the environment. Nevertheless, there is hardly ever further reference given as to the political management of that local action towards sustainability. In particular, the role of local elected politicians and the notion of local leadership has been widely ignored in the debates on establishing and implementing policies towards sustainable development.

On the other hand Roseland (2000, p.108) has rightly empathised that *“Sustainability will be adopted through active pressure on governments ... and through the power of the electoral system”*. In a similar vein, Copus & Dadd (2014) suggest that the introduction of the directly elected mayor model will be able to draw a quick and more legitimate counter to local government strains on globalisation, urbanisation, and improvement in public services and increasing public’s demand for greater input in policy-making.

Consequently, the published literature concerning the influence of the mayoral governance fail to address the potential of the DEM in improving sustainable development at local level, restricting it to economic growth and leadership skills. Besides, the British government, in terms of centralised government model and the power party politics seems, to have an undue influence over local governments (Rydin 2011; Hambleton 2015).

1.2 Research Aims and Questions

1.2.1 Research Aim:

This paper aims to investigate and evaluate the role of a relatively new form of urban governance, namely the directly elected mayor (DEM) at city level in the UK, in affecting the sustainability performance of local policies. It is thus concerned with establishing the extent to which (and under what conditions) the increased occurrence of an elected mayor in the UK has led to policy outputs and outcomes that are more consistent with sustainable development.

1.2.2 Research Questions:

Based on the research aim, the research questions have been formulated, as shown in Table 1, in order to study the relationship between the directly elected mayor and sustainable development:

Table 1: The Research Questions

Main research question	To what extent does the new form of city governance, the directly elected mayor, help promote the sustainable development of local policies?
Sub-question 1	To what extent does a directly elected mayor seek to influence the sustainability performance of local policies?
Sub-question 2	What processes or mechanisms were used by the directly elected mayor to achieve these effects?
Sub-question 3	To what extent and in what directions have local policies been changed (in the direction of sustainable development) as a result?

The first question seeks to investigate whether or not the DEM has manifested visions, aims and priorities towards sustainable development in order to address local issues, particularly affecting local policies. On the basis of these findings, the second question serves to explore which strategies, initiatives, mechanisms, and special characteristics of the DEM have been used to bring about any changes in sustainability performance. Finally, the third question aims to examine the extent to which local policies and agendas can actually promote and deliver sustainable development under the influence of the DEM. The research will further assess in which areas the DEMs have progressed policies towards sustainable development and where progress has been limited.

1.3 Research Scope, Case study, and Structure of the dissertation

Research Scope:

Set within a broader framework of planning, urban governance and sustainable development, this research will focus on the influence of directly elected mayors on the sustainability performance of local policies. The DEM could be perceived as part of representative democracy, a representative of the local community (Fenwick & Elcock 2014), and as a relatively new form of urban governance, particularly in the English local government context (Hambleton & Sweeting 2014). The mayoral models of governance have consistently stressed the local leadership roles of mayors (Fenwick & Elcock 2010; Hambleton & Sweeting 2014).

The concept of sustainable development, and its implementation in local policies, and the study of the DEMs seem to have been studied almost entirely separately. Research to date has tended to focus on the former component in terms of its interpretation and practical implementation in local policies introduced by local authorities, rather than the power and initiatives taken by local elected politicians (Rydin 2011). The latter usually focuses on the urban leadership, governance and performance of the mayoral form, and the reform and internal operations of local government structures (Hambleton 2013), but ignore substantive policy changes in spheres such as sustainability.

This research attempts to combine both components by analysing the relationship between them in the context of emerging actions towards sustainability in cities.

Single Case Study:

To draw up a pertinent strategy for this study, the researcher proposes to do an in-depth case study of Bristol, in the UK. Bristol offers a unique and intriguing case study as its citizens ('Bristolians') surprisingly voted in a referendum in 2012 to introduce a mayoral model of governance into the city as a radical reform of the city governance arrangement (Hambleton & Sweeting 2014). In addition, the mayoral model has brought substantial changes to the way the city is governed (Hambleton & Sweeting 2015). This may influence the development of the sustainability of local policies and plans. Therefore, the case study of Bristol might allow the researcher to explore the possibilities of the relationship between elected mayor-based leadership (i.e. the role of mayor) and sustainability of local policies and their implementation (described in point 3.2).

Structure of the dissertation:

The research is divided into four main sections. Firstly, seeking to establish an appropriate theoretical framework, the researcher discusses the notion and debates around sustainable development and the role, influence, and leadership of directly elected mayors in the UK in the literature review. Moreover, this also provides a rationale for this study and contextualises the research findings within the wider academic literature. Secondly, an overview of the research strategy, method, and tools to conduct this study are adopted. Thirdly, the research findings present and discuss the data in relation to each of the research questions. Finally, the study concludes the overall findings and provides recommendations for further research.

2. Literature review

This chapter of the thesis reviews the existing literature in terms of the notion of the directly elected mayor and its influence on sustainable development policies which are used in order to support for this study. The review divided into three main sections. These sections are definitely organised around the four research questions mentioned during the introduction chapter. To be more specific, literature regarding the rise of electoral mayor in the UK is discussed in the very beginning of this chapter. The second section reviews theory associated with sustainable development. The literature in relation to the directly elected mayor practice in local sustainable development policies is introduced during the third section of this chapter. The final section 2.4 identifies the research gap and draws conclusions.

2.1 The rise of the elected mayor in the UK

2.1.1 The directly elected mayor system

Since the 1980s, a new model of local governance, directly elected mayors, has been increasingly adopted in many countries and cities (Hambleton & Sweeting 2014). It is important to consider the role of the mayor and how it should be structured to strengthen local leadership. Rydin (2011, p.100) has pointed out that the mayoral form of governance tends to have more legitimacy because “*they raise the level of involvement in local politics and put an individual in a position of personal accountability for local decision*”. Supporting Rydin’s views, Hambleton (2015) emphasises that strong leaders can further enhance the quality of life of local residents through conducting deliberative and effective exercise of local power. Nevertheless, in the UK, the power of the national government seems to have an undue influence over local governments (Rydin 2011; Hambleton 2015).

The UK’s extensive debate about strengthening local leadership by introducing the directly elected mayor has been ongoing for over forty years (Hambleton & Sweeting 2014). In the 1990s, Prime Minister Tony Blair claimed that a new form of leadership, the directly elected mayor, could reinvigorate interest in local government (Hambleton & Sweeting 2014). Furthermore, in order to satisfy the demands and aspirations of local communities and individuals, many in local government believed that certainty and stability for local authorities and their framework was needed, which could allow them to properly fulfil their potential in terms of promoting initiatives and innovation in local areas (Stewart 2014). Since the 2000s, the introduction of the directly elected mayor of London for the first time in the UK has slowly led to a mayoral revolution across England (Adonis & Gash 2012). However, in contrast to the enthusiasm of central government, the mayoral model of local governance has not been widely accepted by most local councils. The Local Government Act 2000 required all English local authorities to replace the traditional committee-based system to adopt one of three alternative

approaches: a leader appointed by the council and cabinet; directly elected mayor and cabinet; or directly elected mayor and council manager (Hambleton & Sweeting 2014; Stewart 2014). The most popular system adopted thus far has been the leader and cabinet model. Despite this, the innovative idea of the directly elected mayor continued to receive the endorsement of the May 2010 Coalition Government (the Conservative and Liberal Democrat coalition government) and framed the government's localist agenda. The government made a renewed effort to push forward the mayoral model of governance by giving mayoral councils more freedom with the establishment of the Localism Act 2011 (Copus & Dadd 2014). The Act is closely associated with the doctrine of localism, decentralisation and rebalancing which mainly focuses on giving more authority, power and resources to local government, communities and businesses in order to develop practical approaches and policies that are tailored to local situations and – in particular - foster economic growth (Tomaney *et al.*, 2011).

The Act 2011 required the twelve largest cities in England to hold referendums in May 2012, giving the public the choice to adopt an elected mayoral system (Hambleton & Sweeting 2014). Various inducements and growing support for the DEM model were offered by central government, with high-level cross-party support and the future attractive prospect of a mayors' cabinet with the prime minister himself (Sweeting 2013; Eckersley & Timm-Arnold 2014). Nevertheless, the DEM model appeared to attract limited public support and was not widely accepted by many of England's largest cities (Fenwick & Elcock 2014). As Marsh (2012) points out, there was an apparent inconsistency between the mayoral governance model offered by central government and the power and accountability of the DEMs, as the mayoral agenda in 2012 was ambiguous and rather problematic. Consequently, currently only 16 cities (apart from Greater London, where the mayor has subtly different powers under the Greater London Authority Act 1999) have adopted this new mayoral governance model (Eckersley & Timm-Arnold 2014).

In recent times, the Conservative Government, elected in May 2015, has introduced the Cities and Local Government Devolution Act in which they strongly advocate the concept of the DEMs for English city regions, also known as the directly elected metro mayor (DEMM) (Gains 2015; O'Brien & Pike 2015). This new executive arrangement does not replace existing local authorities but creates a new tier of local government. Greg Clark, the former Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, firmly argued that, compared to other leadership models, the mayoral form of governance has the greatest capacity and potential for improvement (quoted in Hambleton & Sweeting 2015). The election of the first DEMMs will be held by six combined authorities across England in May 2017 (Sweeting & Marsh 2017). The directly elected metro mayors will have legislative power, money from the national government, and responsibility for the strategy development of the city region and local and regional decisions, particularly when it comes to stimulating economic growth. Additionally,

the DEMM will assume particular control over regional issues that extend beyond local authority boundaries, such as transport, housing and planning, health and social care, and skills (Sweeting & Marsh 2017). On the other hand, the directly elected city mayors are leading their own authority and taking charge of delivering local public services. Some commentators have suggested that the city mayor will collaborate with the metro mayor on city and regional problems as members of an imminent Combined Authority (Jeffrey 2016; Sweeting & Marsh 2017). However, it remains to be seen whether such collaborative partnership between the newly emergent directly elected metro mayor and the directly elected city mayor, combined with the high aspirations of the Conservative Government towards the creation of the DEMM, will make a difference and produce positive results for the regional and local economy, society, and the environment.

By drawing on the body of literature concerning elected mayors, three main reasons for promoting mayoral models of leadership can be established, as follows: (1) transforming traditional bureaucracy, (2) implementing strong leadership, and (3) the characteristics of a mayoral system suited to a New Labour culture (Fenwick & Elcock 2005; Marsh 2012; Hambleton & Sweeting 2014). The mayoral model of governance was seen to offer the prospect of moving away from the traditional committee-based structure, which was shown to be weak and inadequate in terms of inefficient decision-making and perceived problems of local leadership, and in the representation of local communities and individuals. In terms of local government, the New Labour emergent culture and discourse has particularly focused on notions of partnership, public engagement and 'modernisation' (Orr 2004). In addition, it is worth noting that directly elected mayors play a key role in representing specifically local concerns when exerting their influence upon local policies and practices.

Furthermore, subtle changes in the local leadership structure and urban governance are slowly taking place in many UK cities as they aim to increase their power and authority over decision-making and finances (Copus & Dadd 2014). Adonis and Gash (2012) clearly point out that the relatively new mayoral governance model has shown considerable improvement on its predecessor. Nevertheless, there are still some serious questions that need to be addressed, concerning the full implications of this new political executive model (Orr 2004; Stewart 2014), transparency and accountability in decision-making (Rydin 2011), and the extent to which mayors affect local democracy and local policies.

2.1.2 Discourse of the directly elected mayor model

Lengthy debates about the influence of directly elected mayors on the city have included the views of both advocates and critics. Drawing on the major studies of the DEM,

the researcher attempts to outline the main advantages and disadvantages of the mayoral governance model.

Most advocate that the new model has sought to improve the low performance of local government in terms of decision-making capacity, quality of services, poor co-ordination, wasted time and money, and issues of weak local political leadership (Fenwick & Elcock 2005; Copus & Dadd 2014; Marsh 2012; Eckersley & Timm-Arnold 2014; Hambleton & Sweeting 2014; Stewart 2014). They also notice that the political executive model, the directly elected mayor, has brought about a considerable change in local government structure. Agreeing with the main rationale of the UK government for introducing the DEM, commentators strongly argue that this model can substantially help to reinvigorate local democracy as it allows local citizens to elect the mayor directly, thus strengthening local accountability as there is wider recognition for the decisions made by the DEM (Adonis & Gash 2012; Sweeting 2013). This will also attract the attention of potential mayoral candidates from outside the political parties and allow traditional models of government to be challenged (Hambleton & Sweeting 2014). To support this view, one study emphasises the vital role of directly elected mayors in significantly improving accountability, visibility, cohesion and stability in the decision-making processes of local authorities (Eckersley & Timm-Arnold 2014). Furthermore, other commentators point out that the previous system of administration, the leader and cabinet model or the committee structure, revealed inadequacies and instability within local government and the low visibility of the leader. Similarly, Marsh (2012) points out that a directly elected mayor with a four-year term seems to bring more stable leadership compared to the leader cabinet model. He also argues that, by concentrating power in the hands of a directly elected mayor, he or she can seek to not only impose a comprehensive, strategic and articulate vision, but also convey the vision to the council. In a similar vein, Eckersley and Timm-Arnold (2014, p.347) and Sweeting (2013) strongly suggest that this local government reform not only allows a popular mandate to be obtained by a single person who can then control executive authority, but also allows the elected mayor to “*sit ‘above’ party factions*” and competently manage the narrow interests of politicians towards adopting strategic perspectives, making difficult decisions on the city’s future, as well as creating cohesiveness within the local authority. Copus (2008) notices a crucial point in relation to the advantage of the DEM that, instead of solely focusing on inwardly managing fellow councillors, the mayor can draw more attention to local problems and local communities.

On the other hand, critics have argued that the reasons for adopting directly elected mayors into English local government were inconsistent and unclear within the ‘modernisation’ agenda of New Labour, which focused on the modernisation of the political leadership of local government (Orr 2004). As Orr puts it, the mayoral model raised challenging questions, particularly considering it was seen as the answer to local government issues that were

“multifarious, and multidimensional in their causes” (Orr 2004, p.342-343). There is also consensus that the centralisation of power in the hands of one person may be less democratic and less representative of the make-up of local communities and individuals. Further, one can point to the effectiveness of the model and a decision-making process that is restricted by the enormous power and attention of the DEM, as it may overload the mayor and appeal to candidates who are more focused on self-promotion rather than rational policy-making. Another point to consider is how the shift towards the mayoral governance model has confused existing arrangements of political relationships and further questioned the role of local councillors (Copus 2008). However, one could argue that these criticisms divert attention away from more important problems. Particularly, Hambleton (2015) provides a useful insight in that, if an incompetent candidate is elected, there is little opportunity for their removal between elections or the expression of different opinions on decision-making.

However, it is crucial to emphasise the extent of the authority and power that the directly elected mayor should have. Marsh (2012) stresses that some may have inflated expectations of the role and statutory authority of the DEM. Others may rely upon the elected mayor as a panacea for a wide range of local difficulties, without fully realising that the considerable power needed to address complex local issues is still held by central government. Further, it is worth noting the crucial importance of a deep awareness of the wider national context in which the DEM is operating. Therefore, Orr (2004) raises an essential question, namely, considering the barriers to action set up by the state, how much space and power does the elected mayor have and what are they able to do? Other researchers supporting this argument point out that some important policy spheres fall outside the executive responsibilities of the mayor and are tightly controlled by central government, including development control, economic development, fiscal deficits, and in particular a national programme of spending reductions which all English councils have to comply with (Orr 2004; Thornley & West 2004; Eckersley & Timm-Arnold 2014). Hambleton (2015) reminds us that the UK central government has the inherent power to impose local taxes that are beyond the legislative power of local authorities and are likely to adversely affect their performance. Therefore, it is worth noting that an undue centralisation of power in the UK government and the limited extent of devolution offered for this model will greatly hinder and strictly control the effective actions of the DEM. Another crucial point to consider is the local political context in which English DEMs operate. Copus (2008) and Leach and Wilson (2000) strongly emphasise that the power of party politics and the political context of UK local governments could restrain mayoral leadership and limit their ability to successfully accomplish primary leadership tasks. For instance, Hambleton (2015) demonstrates how local government in the UK is strongly characterised by party political groups and long-standing party systems, which not only actively participate in electoral campaigns but also implicitly

influence the decision-making processes of local governments. These systematic and decisive factors within the UK system of governance and the nature of local government will pose difficult challenges to the relatively new model as it is fully implemented.

Arguments in favour of and against the DEM model are summarised in Table 2.

Table 2: The Pros and Cons of the directly elected mayor system (adopted from Hambleton 2015; Sweeting & Marsh 2017)

Feature of system	Arguments in favour	Argument against
Direct election of political leader by citizens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct link between the DEM and electors may reinvigorate local democracy • Raises visibility and identification of the mayor as the city leader • Attracts public interest and participation in the political process and elections, and understanding of local government • Concentrates attention outwards on local issues and local communities rather than inwards on solely managing fellow councillors • Attracts new people from outside political parties and creative individuals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on personality and personal charisma • Media-driven, and candidates' focus on self-promotion • The possibility of the electoral success of incompetent candidates
Creates individual, identifiable leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increases legitimacy and accountability of local democracy • Concentrates power and statutory authority to decide • Facilitates the clear outline of strategic visions • Encourages partnerships and coalitions as the leader of the place or city • Sits above party factions to create cohesiveness within the council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overloads individual actors, which may lead to delays or corruption in public service delivery • Little room for opposing opinion to decision-making • Tends to weaken accountability of other actors such as councillors and officers
Secure term of office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotes strategic visions • Stable leadership with four-year term to develop systematic and coherent approach to government 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indifference to electorate between elections • Can be difficult to remove an unsuitable mayor

Therefore, a considerable challenge facing central government, local government and local citizens in this relatively new political management structure is whether the political system will elect and give the right people these powers at the right time to make dramatic changes to local governance, local issues, and local councils' performance? What kind of "good" representation of local political or urban leadership would arise in this system?

2.2 Sustainable development

2.2.1 Capturing sustainable development

Since being promoted by the Brundtland Commission's Report, *Our Common Future*, to the international policy arena in 1987, the term "sustainable development" is now considered a substantive policy direction for government policy (Meadowcroft 1997; Redclift 2005; Rydin 2011). The most well-known definition of this term is presented by the Brundtland Commission as: "*sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It contains two key concepts: 1) the concept of "needs", in particular the essential needs of the world's poor, to which overriding priority should be given; and 2) the idea of limitations imposed by the state of technology and social organisation on the environment's ability to meet present and future needs*" (WCED 1987, p. 43). The report stimulated considerable debates about the integration of the environment and development (Bishop 1996, p.206), and in particular the intimate relationship between three entities – the environment, society and the economy. Furthermore, Parkin et al. (2003) and Giddings et al. (2002) helpfully show how these dimensions of sustainable development are interconnected, as the economy is strongly reliant upon both the environment and society, and vice versa.

However, many researchers have argued that it is far from clear how these sectors should be harmonised and how conflicts should be reconciled in both policy implementation and in practice (Giddings et al. 2002; Parkin et al. 2003; Dresner 2008). For instance, Giddings et al. (2002) and Hambleton (2015) point out that policies tend to prioritise education, housing, transportation, social care and especially economic growth rather than environmental protection and responsibility. Trying to define and put the term sustainable development into practice, as many have observed, is rather more problematic. As Cowell (2013, p. 2454) states, "*sustainability is not a concept that can be defined precisely and implemented in a linear system.*" One can easily see that there are more than 200 interpretations of the term (Parkin et al. 2003). Supporting Cowell's argument, Giddings et al. (2002) and Redclift (2005) emphasise that sustainable development is a contested and multifaceted concept which may be variously and differently interpreted and carried out, with much depending on people's and organisations' different perceptions and their politics, social and cultural context. For this

reason, Hambleton (2015, p.22) sharply criticises the fact that the term, to a certain extent, has gradually evolved into “a *virtually meaningless expression*”. One can claim that the ambiguity of the definition in the Brundtland report is mainly due to the report’s aim to gain widespread political acceptance of the concept (Wackernagel and Rees 1996). Notably, the three-pillar model of sustainable development appears to have serious weaknesses. Giddings et al. (2002) demonstrate this by arguing that this separation leads to the focusing on a narrow and short-term techno-scientific approach to addressing pollution, scarce resources, environmental capacity and greenhouse gas trading, which can distract attention away from the vital long-term goals of sustainable development. Another flaw of this multifaceted concept is that environmental alleviation appears to be highly beneficial to the rich world rather than low-income populations. It is also worth noting that many of the studies on the concept of sustainable development have failed to take into account the second sentence of the Brundtland Commission definition, which emphasised a serious commitment to tackling the essential needs of the world’s poor. With a few honourable exceptions, Hambleton (2015) notices that some scholars not only ignore the second sentence, but also have little awareness of poverty, injustice, and unfairness in society.

What one can take from these arguments is that sustainable development is far from precisely defined and properly implemented; instead, it seems to be largely shaped by the worldviews of people and organisations and the world that they live in. Because of this, the critical issues at the root of the concept of sustainable development concern what the main priorities of sustainable development are, and how - and in whose benefit - decisions and actions are taken.

2.2.2 Local government and sustainable development in local policies

It has long been argued that in order to promote sustainable development local, city-level action is vital. Hambleton (2013) strongly suggests that deficiency in giving environmental limits and capacity serious consideration as well as neglecting the fact that cities are part and crucially rely on natural ecosystem will accumulate unmanageable and unresolved urban issues for future generations. In order to address the urban issues towards sustainable development, the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development produced a non-binding framework for action, called Agenda 21; and the implementation of Agenda 21 at the local level is known as Local Agenda 21 (Hughes 2000). The scalar logics of Local Agenda 21 placed a particular stress on grass-roots in local activities (Cowell 2015) where it brought to the forefront a fundamental role of local governments in leading and promoting sustainable development in local communities and lifestyles (Meadowcroft 1997; Coenen 2009). As the UNCED report indicates “*If sustainable development does not start in*

the cities, it simply will not go---cities have got to lead the way" (quoted in Jeb Brugmann, p.364).

Certainly, one can point to the positions of local government as the closet institutional structures to the local communities (Coenen 2009). Furthermore, at the local level, many environmental issues tend to have direct and strong effects on the citizens. The common conclusion has drawn from a lot of research is an explicit acknowledgement in local action in stimulating sustainable development and meeting local aspirations and demands. Stewart (2014) for example indicates that these local issues concerning the economy, society and the environment require to be effectively tackled locally, especially by local government. Similarly, Marvin and Guy (1997) identify the rise of beliefs that local environmental policy initiatives will not only successfully address the contemporary problems of ecology, but also actively support the citizens in cultivating their environmental responsibilities and actions.

However, it is crucial to emphasise that the effectiveness of local level action in promoting sustainable development has been questioned. Analysts have observed that such connection between localism and environmental sustainability as the responses and outcomes of any specific social structures of governance towards ecology and nonhuman world can be varied and complicated (Fox 1989; Cowell 2015). As Cowell (2015) puts it, the power and efficacy of localised social and political making towards sustainability are shown to have been mainly depended on the wider governance structure and primary actors in a specific realm, such that localist agendas will be *"more fruitfully viewed as one set of arenas in which struggles about the reconciliation of economy and environment are played out"* (Cowell 2015, p.217). Due to the multifaceted concept of sustainable development, the question, then, is not so much how can local action deliver sustainable development but for *"what conception of sustainability are particular localism functional?"* (Cowell 2015, p.219). One can see particular instance in planning that the scope of local action somehow seems to have been readily curtailed and delimited by the national government aspirations to shape such connections which is because potential threats are posed by locally driven environmental debates contributing by the rhetoric of liberating local government from the constraints of national policies and legislations might likely obstruct favoured growth aims (Cowell & Murdoch 1999; Cowell 2015).

Accordingly, due to the new green agenda from Local Agenda 21 and sustainability movement, many local authorities have responded to promote sustainable development to their citizens and begun to incorporate sustainability performance to their local plans and policies (Bishop 1996). On the contrary, that is far from clear that whether the capacity of local government to foster sustainable development would have been improved certain models of leadership. In particular, most studies in the field of local sustainable development have solely concentrated on the role of local authorities in encouraging and calling for local actions against

environmental problems. Hence, it is also worth noting that whether and to what extent there are such clear and causal connections between model leadership of local councils and sustainable development targets remains to be considered.

2.3 The directly elected mayor practice in local sustainable development policies

As noted above, although studies concerned about the relationship between local action and sustainable development have proliferated, the literature fails to systematically and fully analyse the political management of that local action towards sustainability. With a few notable exceptions, Rydin (2011) and Hambleton (2015) observe that the role of local elected politicians and the notion of local leadership has been widely ignored in the debates on establishing and implementing policies towards sustainable development. They also notice that many scholars of sustainable development pay rapt attention to the relationships between local authorities, businesses and communities as well as public participation with a stake in decision making and local action (Rydin 2011) rather than the political management of that local actions (Hambleton 2013) in the nature of effective policy making. Yet the arena of local politicians and directly elected mayors play a legitimate role in confronting local problems acting in the public interest and deciding and implementing policies.

On the other hand, it should be noted that the one of the rationales for adopting the new kind of institution, including the directly elected mayor, stemmed from some aspirations of New Labour for urban development which consider and deliver the sustainability characteristics as “*humanised and environmentally sustainable urban growth, integrated and consistent policy and public consultation*” (Thornley & West 2004, p.96). Further, there seemed to be a clear motive of the UK Coalition government for the introduction of directly elected mayors that was seeking to draw a quick and more legitimate counter to local government strains on globalisation, urbanisation, and improvement in public services and increasing public’s demand for greater input in policy-making (Copus&Dadd 2014, Berg & Rao 2005). In particular, Swinney et al. (2011) strongly emphasised that the government firmly believes that the mayoral model will be able to stimulate economic growth at local level. In a similar vein, Barber and Pareja Eastaway (2010, p.395) have rightly emphasised a need for “*a sophisticated and proactive leadership approach*” in order to shape a sustainable development that integrates economic vitality, social just and environmental sustainability.

Notably, some may find the influence of the first directly elected mayor of the Greater London in the UK, Ken Livingstone, towards strategic policies, even though he has different authorities and power (Marsh 2012; Sweeting 2003), as a helpful and interesting example to investigate the relationship. To be precise, Livingstone showed a high-profile political

leadership and brought about substantial and beneficial changes, especially in public transport and greening scheme of spatial development and capital investment (Thornley & West 2004; Adonis & Gash 2012; Hambleton & Sweeting 2015).

Further, Acuto (2013) strongly argues an importance role of city leaders or the elected mayors for tackling global challenges, especially sustainability, more effective than heads of state and professionals. It is worth noting that various factors have considerably influenced in the performance of the directly elected mayors as whether they represent a new outstanding local political leadership and their decision-making capacity. They are the personality, capabilities and professional background of the mayor, their aspiration and ability to act as well as institutional design and resources (Greasley & Stoker 2008; Eckersley & Timm-Arnold 2014). For instance, Acuto (2013) demonstrates that mayoral capacities, which are in shaping local policy decisions in a particularly proactive and innovative way and stimulating greater regional and transnational networks among city leaders, are important driving factors. Stewart (2014) has strongly emphasised an essential need of creating a genuine local authority with real powers for community leadership to meet local demands and aspirations, to address the fragmentation of current political structures and regain local accountability. To support this view, the report of German Advisory Council on Global Change (WBGU) provides a valuable insight that in order to achieve success of urban governance, granting the cities appropriate decision-making powers, financial resources or public funds by the central and regional government is crucially needed (Kraas et al. 2016). This could also bolster the authority of urban institutions and strengthen local leadership.

We can begin to see that the extent to which the influence of the DEM has on promoting or encouraging sustainable development in local policies or there is a causal connection between them. The serious question, then, is whether the DEM model with the qualities proposed able for mayoral models of leadership help to promote sustainable development rather than solely focus on economic growth at local level.

2.4 Conclusion

The literature review has helped the researcher to gain a better understanding of the topic. The following points are concluded from this literature review. Although studies concerned about the relationship between local action and sustainable development have proliferated, much of previous studies of local sustainability emphasise local public participation rather than the political management of that local action towards sustainability, particularly strong local leadership. The question, then, whether the local politicians and directly elected mayors could play a fundamental role in addressing local issues and promote sustainable local policy.

On the other hand, the directly elected mayor model has been increasingly adopted in many countries and cities. The strong motive of the government for promoting mayoral model is transforming traditional bureaucracy, improving local leadership and strengthen local economy. Most studies in the field on what mayors can do has tended to emphasis helping economic growth and strengthen local leadership rather than stronger conception of sustainable development.

Therefore, taking into account the research gap, this study aims to investigate and evaluate the role of the directly elected mayor or the mayoral model in influencing the sustainable development of local policies, which is hoped to grasp the reality and contribute to wider knowledge about the mayor-based leadership.

3. Research Strategy, Design and Methodology

This chapter discusses the research methodology selected in order to enable the researcher to answer the research questions of this study. To be more precise, this chapter includes 6 main sections, which are research strategy, research design, research methods, data analysis, research limitations, reliability and validity and ethical considerations. It is reasonable to say that all of methodological choices made in this chapter are based on the research questions and focus of this study. The research questions of the current research are re-mentioned below:

Main research question: To what extent does the new form of city governance, the directly elected mayor, help to promote sustainable development of local policies?

- **Sub-question 1:** To what extent does a directly elected mayor seek to influence the sustainability performance of local policies?
- **Sub-question 2:** What processes or mechanisms were used by the directly elected mayor to achieve these effects?
- **Sub-question 3:** To what extent and in what directions have local policies been changed (in the direction of sustainable development) as a result?

3.1 Research Strategy

3.1.1 Research Philosophy

The term “ontology” refers to the nature of social reality, while constructionism is an ontological position which entails that social actors continually construct social phenomena (Bryman 2016). To support this argument, Potter (1996) highlights that the social world is formed around social actions and perceptions in the way that people communicate, write, and discuss the world. Based on the findings presented in the previous chapter, the role of the directly elected mayor is tightly structured within barriers to action that are set up by the state and within the UK political context (Marsh 2012). Further, it is worth noting that the effects and effectiveness of the elected mayor is clearly a complex issue demanding qualitative research and one which can be interpreted in a number of ways, as they heavily rely on social interactions; this is closely associated with constructionism. Therefore, this study employed the constructionist position in order to grasp whether or not the role of the directly elected mayor, as well as their mechanisms, may promote sustainable local policies in Bristol. Additionally, constructionism fundamentally helps the researcher to assess in which spheres the directly elected mayor has had a strong influence, and where their power has been limited. Consequently, as this research will analyse data from local policies, in-depth interviews, and participant observation, constructionism can be used as a tool that allows for the careful observation of the role of different actors in promoting the sustainability of local policies.

Epistemology refers to the nature of knowledge. This study adopts an interpretivist approach as it allows the researcher to interpret the actors involved and elements of the work. It was clear from the literature review that the concept of the directly elected mayor is a rather broad socially and politically constructed notion that can be perceived through nuanced subjective meanings and interpretations of social actions (Bryman 2016). In addition, interpretivism is constructed around the reality of knowledge through “*social constructions as such as language, consciousness, shared meanings, and instruments*” (Myers 2008, p.38). In this sense, because the main target of this study is mayor-based leadership, and in particular the directly elected mayor, social influence, there is, to some extent, some overlap between interpretivism and constructionism in the way that social values and interests contribute to sustainability planning. This can be illustrated with different interpretations of the effects and effectiveness of the DEM, as well as what sustainable development means, since various social actors are involved with and experience these social actions. In other words, the process of policy-making and decision-making towards sustainable local policies tends to be different in different contexts and socio-economic structures. The diverse interpretations of a range of city actors and organisations from the three main sectors, namely public, private and community/voluntary, are collected and analysed. Therefore, the researcher adopted interpretivism to reveal the interpretive perception of social actions - study participants, in order to establish a causal explanation and profound understanding of the mayoral model concept and its effects in terms of promoting the sustainability of local policies in a specific chosen city.

3.1.2 The Qualitative Inductive Approach

Bryman (2016) indicates that one’s research questions will direct one’s research design and data collection methods. Hence, based on the aims and the questions of this study, a qualitative inductive approach was deliberately employed for three main reasons. Firstly, the novelty of this research and the limited research that has been done on this topic are closely associated with an inductive approach that seeks to connect theory, concepts and research, emphasising the generation of theory out of investigations and data analysis. Secondly, the focus of the research and the research questions are the causal effects of complex social and political processes, rather than mechanical processes that would favour a natural scientific model and a quantitative approach. Further, the research sought to see and understand these effects from the viewpoints and interpretations of the participants in the processes, instead of from the point of view of the researcher to orient and predict the outcome of the study in quantitative research (Mellon 1990 in Westbrook, 1994) and not about numerical data. This is vital for this research as its ontological position is that of constructionism while its epistemological position is that of interpretivism. Thirdly, qualitative research includes

numerous diverse methods of data collection, including participation observation, qualitative interviews and document analysis, which emphasise the analysis and interpretation of language rather than carrying out measurement procedures on social life (Bryman 2016).

The nature of qualitative research is perpetually unstructured and flexible, giving the researcher the possibility of exploring and grasping the participants' meanings of events in the social world, as well as the concepts arising from the collection of data, which are neither precise nor definitive. Hence, this approach suits the conceptual nature of this study as an extensive investigation into the complex relationship between the DEM model of governance and sustainable local policies, in which both concepts are multifaceted and vary in different social contexts. All of these features provide considerable justification for employing a qualitative inductive approach which greatly facilitates the generation of theory and enables the researcher to vigorously respond to the research questions. Additionally, the qualitative inductive approach is also compatible with constructionist and interpretivist positions.

3.2 Research Design

3.2.1 Single Case Study Approach

This research employs a single case study approach in order to gain in-depth insight (Yin 1981) into the relationship between the mayoral form and sustainable local policies. Many analysts argue that the findings of a single case study are invalid and cannot be generalised to a wider context or to represent other cases (Yin 2003; Bryman 2016). Mitchell (1983) firmly opposes this position, arguing that the very particularity of the individual case study with specified conditions can present a clear and simple formulation of the operative principles, and can clearly illuminate and explain the unexpected theoretical connections between untoward events underlying a social process. In addition, he points out the positive advantages of the case study approach, namely that it can reveal exceptions to generalisations, and in so doing we can use the exceptions to test the generalisations, thus confirming our prior knowledge and gaining new knowledge through a logical analysis of the case study. Moreover, it is in this sense that Mitchell (1983, p.207) emphasises that "*the validity of the extrapolation depends not on the typicality or representativeness of the case but upon the cogency of the theoretical reasoning*". This confirms that the most appropriate methodology for this research is the single case study as part of a qualitative inductive research strategy that aims to generate theories out of data, given the novelty of the research approach as well as the limited literature available on the subject. That said, the single case used here does enable a degree of comparison with conditions 'before' and 'after', as explained below.

The rationales for the case study selection:

Silverman (2010) indicates that a case should be chosen based on the distinctive nature and characteristics of the case. Mitchell (1983) remarks that the researcher can seek to examine in detail an event, or a single individual or set of actors involved in a sequence of activities over a specific or extended period of time. In order to evaluate the role of this relatively new form of urban governance, the researcher needs to obtain sufficient insight into the particularities of the context and the object of the social process that the researcher believes demonstrates the formulation of theoretical principles. For this study, it is important to observe the vital features of the relationship between the mayoral form and sustainable local policies in a chosen case with consideration of the history and changes that have taken place in local governance structures. Based on the findings from previous chapter, Bristol is a unique but insightful case study for the research, for the following reasons:

- (1) the poor and unstable performance of the leader-cabinet model in the previous local administration;
- (2) the proactive influence of the directly-elected mayor performing and representing the new urban governance system;
- (3) the environmental policies and initiatives that have been introduced.

Bristol is the sixth largest city in England (Tallon & Bromley 2004) and one of the ten English cities outside London that was required to hold a referendum giving citizens the option of moving to a new form of urban governance, namely the directly elected mayor (DEM), through the Localism Act 2011 (Hambleton & Sweeting 2014; Marsh 2012). Indeed, in 2012, Bristol showed two unique features by bucking the national trend, surprising and attracting national observers and news organisations. It did this by, firstly, being the only city to strongly vote 'yes' in the 2012 referendum (Hambleton & Sweeting 2014; Marsh 2012; Stewart 2014). Marsh (2012) firmly believes that this crucial decision was a leap worth taking. For instance, he sees the outcome of the Bristol mayoral referendum in 2012 as a strong plea for civic pride, and reflecting a sense of dissatisfaction at the underachieving performance of the city. Hambleton et al. (2013) agree with Marsh in their report *The prospects for mayoral governance in Bristol* (Hambleton et al. 2013), demonstrating empirically that the performance of the leader-plus-cabinet model was seen as creating flawed and unstable local political leadership and ineffectiveness in decision-making. Marsh (2012) also notices that, before the introduction of the directly elected mayor, seven leaders were appointed in Bristol city council over ten years. Similarly, Sweeting (2013) highlights how Bristol was a highly party-politicised context and was deeply politically divisive, leading to a lack of cohesiveness within the city council. To an extent, this shows that there was a lack of stability in the local leadership, a critical issue for Bristol city council. Consequently, Bristol had for many years "punched below its weight" and was unable to fulfil its potential (Marsh 2012, p.609). The second surprise came

when an independent politician, George Ferguson, was unpredictably elected to become the first directly elected mayor of Bristol for a four-year term of 2012 – 2016. Political parties have deep roots in English local government and the fact that the Independent contestant, who is not affiliated with any political party, was chosen to lead the city drew special national attention (Hambleton 2015). Ferguson is a respected local architect and urbanist with a reputation for carrying out successful and worthwhile urban regeneration projects in the city (Hambleton & Sweeting 2014). According to research by Hambleton et al. (2013), the former elected mayor of Bristol had some formative influence in the introduction of new policies and leadership skills. Notably, he made significant differences to the way the city is governed and the perceptions of governance in Bristol. For instance, the “Make Sunday Special” scheme has gathered the attention and participation of local citizens. In addition, the mayoral governance system has attempted to introduce local policies incorporating environmental and sustainable development actions and visions such as the renewable energy programme and a residents’ parking zones scheme (Council 2013; Hambleton & Sweeting 2015).

Further, Bristol is known as a “green city” (Bailey et al. 2012) after achieving the prestigious “European Green Capital 2015” award – the first UK city to be awarded this title. One of the main criteria for obtaining this award is that the city has to carry out environmental improvements and set sustainable development targets as part of its local policies and plans (Rudden et al. 2015). In addition, Bristol is one of only four European cities to be awarded affiliation with the Rockefeller 100 resilient cities network in 2014, and was given the Guangzhou award for Urban Innovation (Hambleton & Sweeting 2015). All of these awards were granted following the city’s adoption of the new mayoral system. Nevertheless, even before the change in governance, Bristol’s local government had a long history of adopting sustainable development and environmental agendas as part of its local plans and policies and has been used as a benchmark by other local authorities. For instance, Bishop (1996) highlights how the district-wide Bristol Local Plan in 1990 brought considerable change and, to an extent, represented a move towards sustainability in planning practice.

Hence, the case of Bristol allows the researcher to explore the possibilities of the impacts of the mayoral model of governance on the sustainability performance of local policies. The challenging question is whether or not the mayor has properly incorporated the sustainable development concept into local plans, and if so, using which policies and mechanisms unavailable to the former leader-plus-cabinet model. Moreover, it enabled the researcher to explore and assess the legacy of Ferguson’s term in office, particularly whether or not his policies are still being implemented and whether or not the new DEM of Bristol, Marvin Rees, is following “the path towards sustainable development”. This means that Bristol holds an intrinsic interest as an appropriate and intriguing study area for this research to examine the role of the mayor.

3.3 Research Methods

As discussed earlier, a fundamental requirement for generating theory out of data and testing a new research approach are the dominant characteristic of qualitative inductive strategy in a detailed context based information which gives a rational justification for adopting solely qualitative methods. Furthermore, it is crucial to emphasise that a qualitative research strategy also allows for diverse research methods to be used, such as participant observations, semi-structured interviews, and the collection of documentary sources in order to investigate the research questions. The research adopted these qualitative tools at both the collecting and analysing stages. No definite distinction was made between these methods in terms of responding to specific research questions, because in some cases, there appeared to be a need for accessible and available information for the purposes of textual analysis. In turn, these methods complemented each other well for collecting and analysing data, and facilitated the firm establishment of an iterative research process. This process included scrutinising and refining back and forth between data collection and theory (Mack et al. 2005; Bryman 2016), in order to analyse the extent to which the findings support the theoretical principles or show links between different conceptual ideas.

3.3.1 Policy document analysis

The term 'policy analysis' is used by Dun (1981, p.35) to refer to "a process of multidisciplinary inquiry designed to create, critically assess, and communicate information that is useful in understanding and improving policies." The nature of the research aims and questions provides considerable justification for employing purposive document sampling. Indeed, a recognisable point of reference became the official policy documents of Bristol, such as local visions, strategies, agendas, and reports, introduced during the term of the former mayor, George Ferguson (2012 – 2016), which seriously proposed or suggested actions and activities to stimulate sustainable development. This method also enabled the research to gain a useful insight into the political context, policy processes, and governmental structure of Bristol which could improve communication with the interview participants at the interview stage of this study.

Documents were searched for through the Bristol city council website using a combination of key word searches, such as "sustainable development", "sustainable", "mayor", "leadership" and a number of other terms, as well as through browsing through lists of policy documents and following the suggestions of the interviewees' concerning policies introduced or influenced by the mayor. The relatively recent emergence of the DEM model, since 2012, and the influence of mayoral governance on local policies that might encourage sustainable

development tended to reduce the number of relevant policy documents. In total, five documents were identified. Two of them were chosen as they strongly represented the visions and priorities of Mayor Ferguson which could provide helpful insight into the mayor's perceptions and actions on sustainable development; they are "George for Mayor" (Ferguson 2012) and "*The vision of Bristol*" (Ferguson, 2013). Three other documents were also selected because they were influenced, facilitated and initiated by Mayor Ferguson and concerned sustainable development; these were "*Bristol European Green Capital 2015: Citywide Review*" (Bell, Croft, & Sear, 2015), "*Our Resilient Future: A Framework for Climate and Energy security*" (Minshull, Luke, Shiels, Phillips, & Leach, 2015) and "*Preliminary Resilience Assessment*" (Bristol City Council, 2015). As the emphasis of the research and research questions provided a clear reference for collecting samples from the documents, passages associated with the intentions and perspectives of Mayor Ferguson and that integrated the notion and characteristics of sustainable development were collected and analysed to answer the research questions.

Whilst a large sample size would have been optimal, this was complicated and frustrated by the fact that the previous mayor may not have had a visual and explicit impact on local policies, as well as the fact that some policy areas are outside the bounds of the DEM's responsibilities (Thornley & West 2004). Further, because George Ferguson's term in office had ended and the study faced restraints in terms of time and word-space, these caused numerous difficulties in searching for available and accessible policy documents that were appropriate for the research. The policy documents were used in close association with the semi-structured interview analysis in order to carefully and adequately investigate and assess the phenomenon being studied. In this way, the initial visions and priorities or intentions of DEM Ferguson in relation to sustainable development that were officially represented in policies could be thoroughly examined in practice, thus contributing to a wider discussion of the research questions. This method was mainly employed to seek an answer for the Sub-question 1.

3.3.2 Semi-structured interviews

Interview participant sampling:

Semi-structured interviews were adopted for this research because of the nature of the research, its benefits such as flexibility in addressing the research questions and in the direction of the interview conversation, and the ability to explore the broader views of the research respondents (Miles & Gilbert 2005). Thus, interviews could provide a profound understanding of the mayoral system and the current relationship between the elected mayor and the citizens of Bristol.

Therefore, semi-structured interviews were carried out with ten interviewees who were chosen purposively from a range of different city actors and organisations in order to gain insight into the effects of mayoral leadership in Bristol from different and multidisciplinary perspectives. These were individuals who played, or are playing, leading roles at management levels in the mayor's cabinet and Bristol city council, including elected officials, appointed officers, policy professionals, experts, as well as representatives from the business sector and voluntary sector who either have substantial experience and insight into local politics and the performance of Bristol's directly elected mayor, or were closely and directly involved in local policymaking during George Ferguson's term in office.

The novel focus of the research (the relationship between the directly elected mayor and sustainable local policies) necessarily entailed a careful and strategic consideration of the interview participants, as the researcher wished to speak to key individuals in Bristol who could offer valuable insight into the causal relationship between the DEM and the local policies being researched. Purposive sampling could also, in turn, resolve any doubts about the validity of the data generated by the untested study approach of the research. Moreover, this was appropriate for the research questions of the study and ensured that the researcher could obtain a wide range of individuals' perspectives (Bryman 2016). Hence, the research used two purposive sampling approaches, namely desk search and snowball sampling, in order to identify appropriate interview participants. The first method involved an internet search to identify key informants among the mayor and his cabinet (during the 2012 – 2016 term), and within Bristol city council, who actively participated in local policy decision making, as well as local experts with profound insights about the development of urban leadership, especially the DEM, and local policies, including local environmental organisations. Moreover, adopting the participant observation method, in which the researcher attended events related to the phenomenon being studied (see section 3.3.3), helped the researcher to identify and establish useful contacts with potential key informants. Nine individuals were e-mailed at this stage with an invitation to an interview.

The second method, snowball sampling, enabled the researcher to better and deliberately select compatible interviewees, broaden the scope of the study, and thus enhance the data validity. The participants selected using the desk search and at events were politely asked to circulate the interview invitation emails to additional potential participants, in order to seek individuals with knowledge or experience related to the study. Another rationale for using this technique is due to the challenge of identifying appropriate interviewees in situations where the researcher may lack sufficient insight, experience and networks with the local governance system and local residents (Silverman 2014; Bryman 2016). Accordingly, the initial participants, with their valuable local social networks and profound knowledge, were able to facilitate the researcher establishing herself within a wide network in Bristol.

Consequently, the combination of the two sampling approaches was adopted in anticipation of a low response rate, but led to an increase in the number of relevant participants contacted to thirty-one. Nevertheless, selecting relevant participants proved more problematic due to the UK's general election and metro mayor elections, as well as national budget cuts to local authorities, which contributed to the overloaded work schedules of councillors and officers of Bristol council and the sensitivity of the research topic (as some refusals of interview invitations implied). In the end, the total sample was ten interviewees, as briefly described in Table 3. Anonymity was preserved in order to protect the information and privacy of interviewees (see section 3.6).

Table 3: Interviewee Profiles

No.	Interviews	Description
1	George Ferguson	First directly elected mayor of Bristol. He is a former president of the Royal Institute of British Architects and a founding member of the British sustainable transport charity, Sustrans.
2	Councillor	Former councillor, former leader of a party group, and former cabinet member of Bristol city council.
3	Officer 1	Chief officer of Bristol city council. Works primarily in preparing plans for tackling the impacts of climate change and building social cohesion in Bristol.
4	Officer 2	Managing officer of Bristol city council. Works closely with sustainable development.
5	Planner	Senior planner at a leading planning and design consultancy in Bristol, and has worked with the West of England Local Enterprise Partnership and British Chambers of Commerce Expert Planning Group.
6	NGO 1	Project manager of a not-for-profit organisation with the main purposes of facilitating civic engagement and collaboration to enhance society, the environment and the economy in Bristol and the West of England.
7	NGO 2	Coordinator at an international environmental organisation campaigning for sustainable development in Bristol. The organisation has been looking at government policy in general and food policy, transport policy and planning policy.
8	NGO 3	Chairman of a voluntary organisation in Bristol with the main purpose of improving Bristol, especially the built environment and

		heritage. He was involved in local policies relevant to town planning, transport, and some energy policies.
9	Participant H	Environmental activist and Campaign Coordinator for Bristol First, the Party of Independent Mayor George Ferguson.
10	Participant I	Senior lecturer at Bristol University. Has conducted research on local and urban governance, political leadership, particularly the mayoral model. Has been a keen observer of Bristol politics and has been involved in a number of research projects concerning Bristol politics.

Interviews with Stakeholders:

As noted above, semi-structured interviews were employed to see the connection between the DEM and local sustainable policies based on the participants' perspective, opinions and experiences. The method allowed for a flexible and open process that drew the interviewer and each respondent into a natural two-way conversation. To fulfil the aims of this research, rich and detailed responses from the various interviewees as to the complex issues that form the main research problems were a fundamental necessity. Furthermore, Bryman (2016, p.466) highlights that this method is designed “*to maximize the reliability and validity of measurement of key concepts*”.

The research also used two sampling approaches to generate a wide and diverse group of interviewees in order to ensure purposiveness and a semblance of representativeness. In order to generate purposive sample of participants, the research attempted to identify key individuals with appropriate characteristics who are knowledgeable about the research topic and able to reflect and share comprehensive practical knowledge about the relationship between the DEM and sustainable local policies. However, it is worth noting that the accessibility of the participants and their willingness to partake in the research proved quite challenging. At the same time, in order to ensure a degree of representativeness, the interviewees were recruited from three sectors, described in the literature review (Hambleton 2013), namely the public, private and community/voluntary sectors in Bristol. There were four participants representing the public sector (one former DEM of Bristol, one former councillor and two officers), two participants representing the private sector, and four representing the community/voluntary sector (three from the community/voluntary sector and one from the academic sector).

The small sample size of the research allowed the researcher to devote more time and to become closely involved with the respondents in each individual interview, as well as to obtain extensive empirical data from the interviews (Bryman 2016). In addition, the researcher

found that this number of interviewees was likely to enable the achievement of data saturation, in which the researcher could fairly judge that the research had a sufficient number of interviews to display “*a realisable sense of thematic exhaustion and variability within data set*” (Guest et al. 2006, p.65) and offer convincing solutions within the narrow scope, and spatial and temporal limitations of the research, particularly the short timescale for a comprehensive analysis. This was alleviated by the in-depth interviews that gathered fine-grained data and a careful desk-based analysis to explore the main themes that run through the DEM and sustainable development policies’ debates, as discussed in the literature review.

The researcher prepared an interview guide with nine overarching questions in order to enable the researcher to logically and flexibly structure the interviews, and follow and give new direction to the discussions in order to generate and extract the valuable and constructive ideas of the participants (see Appendices 1). The participants mainly found the research topic interesting and some of them were willing to allow more time for the interviews. All of the interviews were audio-recorded with the participants’ approval. The researcher transcribed the sections of the interviews that they carefully considered were most useful and relevant for the data analysis. Moreover, the researcher was attentive to the responses and perspectives of the participants – their answers rather than the way they responded to the questions, which provides a justifiable reason to only transcribe sections rather than the entire interviews - the exact wording of the interviewees’ responses were deemed less relevant to the scope of this research.

3.4 Data Analysis

There is no doubt that there are a number of popular methods in terms of analysing the qualitative data, particularly the data collected through the interviews. However, considering that thematic analysis method was employed as a key method in the current research in order to analyse the data collected during the interviews as well as the documents regarding the policies of Bristol’s sustainable development selected. This is due to the fact that that, according to Braun and Clarke (2006), thematic analysis approach allows the researchers to effectively describes and organises their data in detail. This method has utilised in order to identify, analyse and report patterns which have been referred to as themes based on the data collected. To be more specific, based on this method, the researcher could establish themes or patterns, select which are of suitable and report them as the findings of the research (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Another reason supported for the use of the thematic approach should be mentioned here is that this method is suitable for the researchers like the current researcher who does not have a lot of experience regarding the qualitative research, especially analysing the qualitative data (Braun and Clarke, 2006). In line with the current

research, the thematic analysis approach used in order to analyse the data collected during the interviews and more importantly answer the questions of the current research effectively and reasonably.

A process of analysing the qualitative data, especially data collected from the interviews as well from the documents should consist of several steps, such as classification, comparison as well as the combination of the original documents to come to the findings and the implications of the research. To be more precise, at the beginning of the data analysis process as well as based on the thematic analysis approach, themes and thoughts were collated after each interview. This means that the data collected during each interview was gathered and explained. After that, the researcher produced a report for the purpose of summarising and explaining the data collected during the interviews. More importantly, the current researcher then transcribed and organised the data. During this step, the researcher coded the data as well as codes was established based on the transcripts of the interviews. In fact, the current researcher read the transcripts carefully and identify words which are shown many times in the transcripts and after that outlined these common words during each interview. It is reasonable to say that the current researcher gathered and organised these codes into the themes or patterns that are constant during the whole of the interviews carried out. The following step is that a new name is created for each new category of themes. This means that the current researcher linked the data collected by the interviews to the research questions of the research. During the final step, the researcher comes to important conclusions based on the findings of the qualitative research.

3.5 Research limitations, reliability and validity

The research was restricted by the amount of time granted, the resources available and the maximum word limit for the study. This somewhat confined the sample sizes of both the interview participants and the policy document selection.

Whilst carrying out the data collection process, the semi-structured interview method appeared to reveal several major limitations that the researcher needs to consider. The first and main limitation is that the UK local government context in which the research took place is, as noted above (section 2.1.2), overwhelmingly dominated by powerful political parties. In fact, over 90 per cent of councillors are members of political parties (Copus 2008). Clearly, belonging to a political party seems to deeply influence the behaviour, actions, and political representative role of the councillors as well as their perceptions of political ideas, the mayoral leadership system, and sustainable development. Since the topic of the research seemed to have a political element, this may have reduced the respondents' willingness to participate in

the research and challenged the validity and reliability of the responses of the interview participants, especially those that are councillors and officers of Bristol council. Secondly, because the questions were open-ended, the interviews could be time-consuming and it may be hard to generalise the answers due to some irrelevant responses. Another difficulty is that this method crucially depends on the interview skills of the researcher (Bryman 2016). Concerning data validity, the two-fold sampling approaches allowed the researcher to access key informants with valuable insights and considerable passion for the mayoral model and sustainable development policies from a wide range of perspectives and from different sectors. Further, rich descriptions were adopted to illustrate the detailed and contextual uniqueness of the social settings (discussed in section 3.2.1), which strongly influenced the participants' behaviour and understanding. Besides, the researcher also carried out some pilot interviews to test the interview guide, have a sense of timing, and to get some practical experience. These provisions were considered to lessen the issues and to uphold data validity and reliability to an extent.

On the other hand, the policy document analysis method proved slightly problematic because of two main drawbacks: (1) credibility and representativeness, and (2) access to policy documents. Firstly, the representativeness and credibility of the official documents could be considered as both advantages and disadvantages of these materials. Since the policy documents are quite unique and authentic, as well as being official or quasi-official products of the Bristol council, they are also likely to represent issues and outcomes or to imply a course of action in a particular way. The implicit and particular focus of the documents could reveal the biases of the Bristol council, especially mayor George Ferguson, further questioning their credibility. Lastly, searching for appropriate policy documents proved challenging due to time constraints and restricted access to relevant local policies through the Bristol council website. The high level of selectivity in choosing appropriate policy documents and the further use of recommendations from the interview participants are thought to somewhat mitigate these limitations. Moreover, the researcher carefully examined the biases of these documents by comparing them to the reality, as well as by seeing these biases through the eyes of the participants, in order to gain a realistic and comprehensive picture of the social phenomenon being studied.

3.6 Ethical considerations

Ethical considerations are a vital element of social research that the researcher must pay serious attention to (Bryman 2016). Two areas of ethical concerns have been identified, namely the participants' informed consent and the neutral attitude of the researcher.

Firstly, the researcher provided an informed consent form to the interviewees, which included adequate information about the study, including the purpose of the research and how their contributions would be used. They could then decide whether or not to take part in the study (Bryman 2016). Furthermore, the privacy and information of interviewees should be protected. To be more precise, the interviews involved participants from the government, NGOs, and local communities in Bristol; thus, confidentiality must be maintained by anonymising their responses to avoid causing them any harm. The identity of the first DEM, George Ferguson, was disclosed as the only exception in this study, because of his role as the first DEM of Bristol. The researcher was aware of the ethical concerns relating to this decision, and so she sought his agreement to attribute his words directly to him and sent him a transcript of his interview so that he could affirm the information he had provided. An Ethical Approval Form was filled in by the researcher and was approved by the School Research Ethics Committee.

Secondly, the researcher should be neutral and conduct the case study analysis in a “moral vacuum” (Bryman 2016, p.141). Due to the topic of the research, focusing on the DEM and sustainable development policies, the researcher made an effort to pay equal attention to the values of the various governance actors, NGOs, and different political parties. Due to the publically available nature of the policy documents, the research did not experience ethical issues in relation to their analysis and publications.

4. Findings and Discussion

This chapter will present the collected data and offer discussion on the existing literature. Although the later section will discuss the answers and summarise key findings for each research question, set out in the introduction, individually which logically deduced from themes of this chapter, the presented findings were managed to organise around these questions. Section 4.1 investigates the findings which answer the first question in relation to sustainable development definitions among the interviewees and how it informs local policies and explores whether the DEM may outline the visions and priorities on local policies in relation to sustainable development. From this section 4.2 identifies not only processes or mechanisms of the DEM, but also internal and external factors that helped the DEM in promoting sustainable policies at the local scale. Section 4.3 attempts to assess areas in which the DEM has progressed policies towards sustainable development and also where progress has been limited. Lastly, section 4.4 synthesises and discusses cross-cutting themes emerged from the data findings and analysis.

A diverse array of themes emerged from the data collection and analysis process which appeared challenging to be entirely analysed in this research. Instead, the researcher sought to examine a number of salient themes which have been strongly drawn upon the corpus of data presented policy documents and interviews and identified through thematic analysis which was deemed most associated with the focus of this research.

Where possible, this chapter concentrates on the divergences between the findings obtained from interviews and policy document and the debates in the literature review and discusses their significance to the study in order to further contribute to the understanding of mayoral models in the wider field.

4.1 The DEM and sustainable development visions and priorities in local policies

4.1.1 Defining Sustainable development

This section examines the concept of sustainable development from the worldviews of interviewees, especially the DEM – George Ferguson, and how it integrates into local policies in a practical context of Bristol. By doing so, the aim is to thoroughly explore the whether the DEM may or may not outline visions or priorities in regard to applying sustainable development term in local policies.

As discussed in section 2.2.1, lengthy debate on the definition and implementation of sustainable development term as it tends to be perceived as a contested and multifaceted concept which is differently interpreted by the people's outlooks, **indicates** a promising first step in exploring participants' views and the selected policy documents. Conventionally, whilst

“sustainable development” seems to be in a continual state of flux of various interpretation, it intends to represent the inter-relationships between economy, environment and society, yet lacks general agreement on how these characteristics should be balanced and harmonised with each other in policy implementation (Giddings et al. 2002; Parkin et al. 2003; Dresner 2008). In order to do so, this section seeks to grasp a general understanding of participants of sustainable development concept which was implicit in the interviews. Table 4 illustrates how the participants interpreted the term sustainable development.

Table 4: Definitions of sustainable development concept amongst Interviewees

Interviewee	Response	Define by
George Ferguson	<p>“The essential thing about sustainable or ‘green’ development is that it is not just about low energy and plentiful greenery, it is about good community, good access it is about walkability, and a good mix of uses which helps walkability. If you have living, working, playing and education and health altogether, then you have a proper community that is more sustainable, and more resilient to outside stresses and shocks.”</p> <p>“So economic sustainability to me is creating a strong circular economy. Environmental sustainability is about creating efficient places that are designed to minimise the need for energy and transport, while the third leg is social sustainability, which is in many ways the biggest challenge that Bristol has... When you have a rich city, and Bristol is a relatively rich city, if you are poor in that rich city, you are relatively poorer than in most Northern cities principally because housing rent and purchase is out of the reach of many...”</p> <p>“To me, it is a vital part of a sustainable development that we have a good social mix and that we seek to eradicate poverty and malnourishment. So I put all these issues under the sustainability...umbrella.”</p>	<p>Environment (green development, environmental sustainability) – economy (economic sustainability) – Society (social sustainability, social resilience, social mix)</p>
Officer 1	<p>“Because I used to be a sustainability advisor... one thing with the resilient is that... you need a strong social cohesion, you need a fairer society, social justice. And it is not all about the environment, it is not all about the economy, it is also about people and their connections.”</p>	<p>Society (social cohesion, social justice) – environment - economy</p>

NGO 1	“Sustainability was quite a broad definition... sustainable didn't necessarily mean it had to do with saving carbon... It could do with community development, wellbeing, mental health, health.”	Environment (saving carbon) – Society (community development)
Academia	“And what I mean in terms of sustainable development is broadly talking about being about society and equality and fairness and that sort of notions of sustainability rather than sort of green environmental sustainability.”	Society – Equality – Fairness – Green Environmental sustainability

Although definitions are based on their own perspectives and yet the term was still broadly defined, it is clear that the interviewees assume a shared understanding of sustainable development term as it was characterised in terms of its three-pillar model - environment, economy and society rather than solely focuses on environment or environment and economy, which confirms the wide interpretation of the term adopted in the literature (Giddings et al. 2002; Parkin et al. 2003). Apart from this, the definition offered by NGO1 was in relation to environmental sustainability and social sustainability only or the definition provided by Academia was referred to society and equality and environmental sustainability without economic sustainability. Moreover, George Ferguson and Officer and Academia also defined the term in relation to the social mix, poverty, equality and fairer society which seems to be in line with the argument of Hambleton (2015) concerning the poverty and unfairness of society. However, the interviewees did not prove any further explanations on how these entities of sustainable development integrate and reconcile the conflicts with each other.

4.1.2 Sustainable development informs local policies in Bristol

Having established that sustainable development is about the close connection between economy, environment and society as well as social justice and equality providing a direction, the next phase was to assess how this broad term informs itself in local policies and the visions and priorities of the DEM.

When asked from the interviewee's viewpoints how sustainable development inform local policies in Bristol, some participants started to briefly describe the main issues of Bristol in relation to sustainable development. Environmental activist expressed her concerns towards “traffic problems” and “pollution problems” of Bristol. Similarly, Academia also shared

his views that “there is a huge problem to do with Bristol sustainability as a city” and he exemplified transport issues (slow moving traffic and poor transport system), air quality, housing stocks (which are poorly maintained, old windows and uninsulated) and animal agriculture.

On the other hand, most of the respondents shared a positive view that sustainable development does inform Bristol policies. However, the extent to which it translates into policies appears to be varied slightly which could be explained for some possible reasons such as personal experiences or personal concerns. Whilst some participants noticed that Bristol policies around sustainable development are very good and quite strong and councillors, officers and Bristolian are very passionate about sustainability, another highlighted the green and environmental policies of Bristol as Bristol always makes good progress in environmental aspects in compare to other UK cities. In the context of the later statement, sustainable development policy is perceived as environmental and green policy only.

In contrast, there was some scepticism about whether the sustainable development concept informs Bristol policies as NGO 1 expressed:

“I’m sure Bristol city council knows about the sustainable development goals... But I haven’t seen... any policy or governance that says we’re doing this because of the sustainable development goals. However, the more general sense of sustainable development which is growing in a sustainable way, I think it does inform local policy.”

NGO 1

Or sustainable development concept has been laid down by national legislation as Planner indicated

“Generally, local plans are trying to implement national guidance. To some extent, what happened locally are dictated by how much pressure there is national to implement sustainability agenda – how it high or low. Truthfully, there is not much pressure at the moment from national agenda.”

Planner

These strengths and weakness of Bristol were also indicated in “A vision for Bristol” document as

*“... whilst we pride ourselves on being a green and pleasant place with a high quality of life, on average a resident of our wealthiest neighbourhood will live nearly ten years longer than someone living in the least well-off part of the city
...due to a historic underinvestment in public transport and uniquely challenging hills and waterways, the city’s streets become long thin car parks twice a day, contributing to poor air quality and losing our economy hundreds of millions of pounds.
... the difference between average earnings and average house prices is bigger here than nearly anywhere outside the South East of England, pushing the cost of living up to impossible heights for people in the city just starting out in life.” (Ferguson, 2013, p.4)*

With such an array of perspectives, we could assume that Bristol appears to have policies around sustainable development, especially green policies, and yet it remains to be confronting some serious sustainable issues. These salient facts of Bristol is important to set the scene and allow the researcher to have the general and realistic picture of sustainable development in Bristol as well as analyse the visions and actions of the DEM against these dilemmas.

4.1.3 The visions and priorities of the first DEM of Bristol towards promoting sustainable development in local policies

As Giddings et al. (2002) put, ways in which observers grasp the concept of sustainable development may reveal their perspectives affected what they perceive as priorities and inform their decisions on what policies and actions should be introduced and implemented. Given that the definition of sustainable development of George Ferguson seems to inform his visions and priorities for Bristol during his term 2012 – 2016. Here, in fitting with Giddings et al. (2002), we see strong links between his interpretation and his visions, priorities and actions as indicated in selected documents “George for Mayor” which was George campaign pledge when he was standing for DEM election in 2012, “A vision for Bristol” policy document of Bristol, “Bristol European Green Capital 2015: Citywide Review”, “Our Resilient Future: A Framework for Climate and Energy Security” and “Preliminary Resilience Assessment”, as illustrated in Table 5.

Table 5: “Sustainable development” concept informs visions, priorities and actions of the DEM George Ferguson in policy documents

Policy document	“Sustainable development” concept informs visions, priorities and actions of the DEM George Ferguson
“George for Mayor” (Ferguson 2012)	<p>“My vision. a greener city that promotes and improves the health and wellbeing of all its citizens.” (Ferguson 2012, p.2)</p> <p>“My vision. a democratic city, governed for everyone, freed of party politics.”</p> <p>“My vision. a city with artistic, sporting and neighbourhood facilities that meet your needs and attract others to visit.” (Ferguson 2012, p.3)</p>
A vision for Bristol	<p>“As we prepare to take on the mantle of European Green Capital in 2015, my mission is to make sure the world sees a Bristol where every citizen is participating in our city’s success; and not a Bristol held back by the price of inequality. The city must not succeed only for the benefit of the few, at the expense of the many.”</p> <p>“Tackling inequality in our city isn’t purely a social cause; it’s also about economic growth. As well as experiencing far greater levels of ill-health, public disorder, and other social challenges, evidence from around the world is becoming clearer that where societies experience a wide gap between the richest and poorest, levels of economic productivity – investment, jobs, growth - will suffer.”</p> <p>“2015 will be Bristol’s year, and what really excites me (George Ferguson) now as I look to the years ahead is the opportunity to channel so much energy, so much enthusiasm, so much belief, behind our shared vision to justify our position as England’s greenest, most innovative and most vibrant city.” (Ferguson, 2013, p.5)</p> <p>“This vision is based on six priorities organised by the three core themes of People, Place and Prosperity [such as People: Healthy and caring Bristol, Keep Bristol working and Learning; Place: Keep Bristol Moving, Building successful places; Prosperity: Global Green Capital, Vibrant Bristol). Only by supporting every citizen to reach their potential and by creating successful places in which to live, work and play, can Bristol maintain its position and growing reputation as the most liveable city in the UK, and be truly prosperous in a global economy.” (Ferguson, 2013, p.9)</p>
Bristol European Green	<p>“I was determined we involve much more people, including our children, in helping to make Bristol a happier, healthier city for all.” (Bell et al. 2015, p.7)</p>

Capital 2015: Citywide Review	“As I (George Ferguson) said at the COP21 climate talks in Paris, we have the lowest per capita carbon emissions of all large UK cities, and, following on our success as European Green Capital, we are now stepping up our ambitions, committing to becoming a carbon neutral city by 2050.” (Bell et al. 2015, p.76)
Our Resilient Future: A Framework for Climate and Energy Security	“I (George Ferguson) am proud that Bristol is both helping to secure a global climate agreement and leading the UK in reducing carbon emissions and our reliance on imported fossil fuels, and doing this in ways that make our city a better place to live by simultaneously achieving more and better jobs, active travel options, improved health outcomes and recognises that the poorest and most vulnerable in Bristol as well as globally will be most affected by climate change.” “Making Bristol a low carbon city will improve our environment, will improve our citizen’s quality of life, it makes sound economic sense and will create thousands of new jobs. I look forward to realising these opportunities.” (Minshull et al. 2015, p.i)
Preliminary Resilience Assessment	“Joining the 100RC Network will consolidate the city’s ambition to be a world leader in resilient and sustainable city development.” (Bristol City Council 2015, p.7)

All these quotes from five documents does not make it explicit what the term “sustainable development” stand for, however, they seem to demonstrate different characteristics of the term as discussed in literature review including greener city and carbon neutral city (refer as environmental entity); health and wellbeing, happier and healthier city for all (refer as social entity); and economic sense and economic productivity (refer as economic entity). Moreover, the visions and concerns for tackling inequality and poverty of Bristol of the DEM Ferguson echo with Robin Hambleton’s statement (Hambleton 2015).

Throughout the courses of interview of George Ferguson, he tended to strongly emphasise his focuses on sustainable development policies, especially environmental policy and health policy which aimed to address equality, succinctly conveyed through the quote below:

“Equality is a massive social and health issue in a relatively wealthy city, and I believe that health and environment initiatives are the most practical way to start to tackle the life quality and expectancy differences across the city.”

George Ferguson

Examining the interviews with other participants, there were many ideas widely acknowledged the visions of Mayor Ferguson in relation to sustainable development concept. Examples of respondents noticing that the George Ferguson administration was quite keen on sustainable and environmental development (Councillor), Ferguson was focused on sustainability, especially the carbon-saving part of it (NGO 1), Ferguson believed in sustainable development and it was very important in his policy making (Environmental Activist), and he was also interested in greenest type of issues (Academia). Nevertheless, with regards to these particular observations, one can notice that Ferguson tended to give much more weight to environmental policy as well as green policy. Then, we could assume that there was a gap between Ferguson's visions and the reality of how he utilised and implemented the sustainable development concept in his policy making. Officer 1 explicitly expressed criticisms at this gap as:

“When you called it green it all becomes about the environment. If you say sustainability and then you say green so like Green Capital, really all the Green Capitals were focused on energy saving and kind of nature and a lot of the environmental stuff... And it did not do many works around social sustainability so he kind of lost that direction.”

Officer 1

Therefore, it is clear that the DEM Ferguson had manifested, visions and actions in closely associated with sustainable development to address local issues. Particularly, these sustainable visions were similar to sustainable development concept advocated in the literature. Yet again the harmonious balance between different identities of sustainable development seemed to be ignored in the interviews and there is an assumption of some identities being prioritised than other in policy making.

4.2 The processes or mechanisms of the DEM to bring about sustainable development effects in local policies

By taking into account the findings from above section, the next question is which processes or mechanisms were employed by the DEM to bring about sustainable effects in local policies. Whilst finding the answer, the researcher also sought to assess in which factors that helped the DEM to exert his influence towards sustainable policies.

While talking about the processes or mechanisms of the DEM, George Ferguson indicated that he adopted (1) a ““carrot and stick” approach which aimed to encourage walking, cycling and using public transport and to discourage people from driving; (2) “lead by example” approach in which he made a pledge and tried to set an example of himself – a city mayor without a car; (3) an “entrepreneurial” approach to deal with austerity measures imposed by central government; (4) forming a “rainbow cabinet” where he appointed four councillors from four different political parties, including Green, Labour, Liberal Democrats and Conservatives, in the leadership of the city; and lastly (5) making and introducing policies by standing on particular agenda and his manifesto and visions.

These processes and mechanisms adopted by the DEM received acknowledgement among respondents. For instance, participants highlighted that Ferguson had a legal mandate and discussed within his cabinet to make decisions (Environmental Activist) and he modelled good behaviours towards encouraging cycling as well as his passionate about Bristol (Officer 1). Interestingly, others also noticed that George created a brand for himself, the mayor with red trousers, and became a brand for Bristol as he is recognised locally, nationally and internationally. However, a note of caution about the processes, mechanisms and decision-making needs to be stressed. Especially, from the point of views of Councillor which reflected a simple ‘mandate’ view of power and influence, she claimed that the DEM just employed normal policy processes as

“he put them in the vision and just said this is what I want to do. Because he worked with the relevant cabinet members to bring them about...Well, he’s the mayor so everyone has to listen to him.”

Councillor

Supported this statement, the Academia, who did research on the mayoral governance in Bristol, remarked that *“it was all very centralised so in terms of the process making decisions and the mechanisms making decisions basically was him.”* Further, he also noticed that:

“the policy-making style of the DEM Ferguson was individualised...he was setting up an advisory cabinet where people advised and he made decisions and sometimes, he made different decisions to what cabinet members advising on.”

Academia

This opinion of Academia and Councillor provide evidence for the researcher to agree with other scholars' arguments concerning the meaning of the local government (Copus 2013); the role of the local councillors (Copus 2008); and centralisation of power in the hand of one person (Hambleton & Sweeting 2015). In turn, this could not only encounter particular difficulty in opposing different opinions against the mayor's ideas but also somewhat weaken the accountability of councillors and officers at the local level (Sweeting & Marsh 2017).

While talking about processes or mechanisms of the DEM, the respondents expressed different viewpoints to the internal and external factors that helped the DEM to achieve these influences. After careful analysis of transcribed interviews, there were two internal factors (personal charisma and leadership skills; and being Independent) and two external factors (previous administration policies and background of Bristol; and national support) identified.

4.2.1 Internal factors that helped the DEM to bring about these effects

Leadership skills and Personal charisma

Most of the respondents were unanimous that the DEM definitely had leadership skills and personal charisma to govern the city and address local issues, indicating a preference for the role of city leaders demonstrated by the book of Robin Hambleton (2015), which strongly indicates the policies skills, professional knowledge and emotional commitment of the city leaders. Some participants described the DEM was an interesting combination of professional and local knowledge, architecture and entrepreneur ability and strong local networks. Additionally, two participants remarked that George drew on his international experience and initiatives from other cities and brought the ideas back to Bristol. Other pointed out that he had real personal passions for Bristol, especially for built environment of the city, and he was able to share his passions, charm the Bristolian and inspire them to act. The example of promoting understanding and awareness of sustainable development to local residents was vividly demonstrated by the interviewees:

“...he did promote it externally to residents, I think that s where was he (George Ferguson) is most valuable. Because he was popular with some people and I think those people took more problem environmental lead resulted in him. He was infused about and he talked it enthusiastically about environmental. I think some people listen and he makes different there, which is whole points of the mayor.”

Officer 2

“During the Green Capital (2015), there was a system of neighbourhood grants for promoting environmental awareness. And loads of community organisations got grants for different types of projects.”

Councillor

“So there was a huge demand of awareness raised... Bristol has done much to raise awareness about climate change, global issues, pollution, and in a port city, the sea becomes a very important theme.”

George Ferguson

Moreover, it has already been highlighted that the courageous, inspirational and creativity skills of political leadership are important in stimulating local interests and promoting livability and equity identities of the cities (Stern 2010; Hambleton 2015). These skills of city leaders had been observed and acknowledged by the participants in the case of the DEM of Bristol. For instance, whilst the Environmental activist exemplified that the DEM was brave and decisive to make decisions even though he encountered considerable public resistance to his policies, Officer 1 noticed that Mayor Ferguson was champion at bringing in together academia and city developers to put forward innovative solutions. George also honestly admitted that:

“...you have to open people eyes to what is possible and you sometimes have to drive change through as it needs to be experienced before you can achieve an informed decision as what is best. This requires confidence, experience, and maybe courage, to drive things through against the fear of change.”

George Ferguson

Being an Independent

As mentioned in section 3.2.1, George Ferguson was an Independent who was not being backing of any political party. Some participants assume a shared understanding of the importance of “being an Independent” supporting the DEM to make decisions. Some participants suggested that being Independent mayor helped George not only create a more a neutral space and build a cross-party consensus and agreement among the councillors, but also form a rainbow coalition of the people from different political parties to support and promote his agenda and policies. In addition, one participant claimed that in the election 2012, Bristolians seemed to be weary of politicians and they were ready for an Independent, therefore, George got elected as the first DEM of Bristol. It could then be argued that they believed he would not play the party game and be told what to do by the parties, as participants noticed:

“I think that (being Independent) helped because he did not get involved in political arguments and actually what we are seeing now he was not being told what to do by the Labour party. He was free, was autonomous and just say: this is the position I take.”

“...because he was Independent, he would work with anyone and he said that: Oh, I would work with anyone.”

Officer 1

“He is not particularly a politician. So he was not really out to do all the political things about gaining supports and making alliances and that kind of things.”

Academia

These empirical findings supported the statement of Eckersley and Timm-Arnold (2014, p.347) and Sweeting (2013), who justifiably claim that the mayoral governance will enable the elected mayor to manage the narrow-minded politicians towards setting up working partnership and making challenging decisions. Further, Hambleton and Sweeting (2014) offer a helpful insight that the DEMs could redefine their followers and their target audience rather than seek to back from other elected actors. It is worth noting that the DEMs have the legal mandate which enables him to make challenging decisions that he may otherwise not (Hambleton and Sweeting 2014). This argument was strongly emphasised during the interview with Ferguson as he indicated that:

“To me, it is a good illustration of the beneficial power of directly elected mayoral leadership, especially independent leadership, as the parties are always too nervous about the next election and proceed far too slowly. I had the luxury of not having to listen

to a party who would be much more worried about the politics and the next election than about doing the right thing. This is common to all democracies, which nevertheless remain the best form of government!

George Ferguson

Therefore, we could reasonably assume that there is a link between the DEM and instrumentality in which the DEM was able to do things by being less apolitical.

4.2.2 External factors that helped the DEM to bring about these effects

Previous administration policies and Background of Bristol

From the respondents above, it is clear that the interviews share a strong view that Bristol is a green and relatively sustainable city as the Bristol policies on sustainable development, in particular environment, are quite good. Moreover, there were many ideas highlighted that the previous administration of Bristol, governed by the Liberal Democrats, was quite keen on environmental and sustainable development. For example, George's predecessor initially encouraged the idea of applying for the European Green Capital award and provided additional funding for cycling infrastructure. Participants noticed that the background of Bristol and the policies of previous authority laid a sound foundation for the environmental and sustainable policies of the DEM as well as for potential gain in social acceptability to reach decisions in terms of environmental and sustainable issues of the city. Notably, the mayor also affirmed that environmental policy has been a major driver in Bristol policies and, then, he probably just made a considerable effort to push forward the policies in the direction that Bristol was already going.

National support

Whilst few respondents recognised the support of the national government and national policy for the DEM to carry out sustainable policy as it appeared to received limited amount of backing from the government, participants shared a general consensus on the influence of central government, particularly the national budget cut, as an overarching barrier to the actions of the DEM, which the researcher elaborated in section 4.3.2.

The Mayor Ferguson admitted that the legal mechanisms and financial mechanism, which was provided by central government, enabled him to introduce transport policies, which were highly unpopular among drivers;

“Then, using the law (legal mechanisms) that you do have on your side, like introducing 20 miles/hour limits across the city, taking advantage of government funding to do so.

Also using financial mechanisms like the resident parking scheme, investing some 10 million pounds and using the income from paid parking to pay that off and to invest in environmental transport schemes such as Park & Ride. One has to be inventive because there is little money to spare, requiring an entrepreneurial approach.”

George Ferguson

One participant highlighted one of the underlying reason for government support is somewhat because the Act 2011 was a flagship policy of the Coalition government, and the government makes an attempt to guarantee the beneficial outcomes of the new executive arrangement for cities adopting it. This has echoes with the claim of Hambleton and Sweeting (2015) which indicates the daunting prospect of the mayoral model offered by the central government.

4.2.3 Policies, Strategies and Actions have been influenced by the DEM towards encouraging sustainable development

When interviewees were asked to give an example of local policies and actions that have been introduced and influenced by the mayor towards promoting sustainable development, the list of relevant policies and actions identified are presented in Table 6 and briefly introduced their purposes.

Table 6: Local policies and actions that have been introduced and influenced by the mayor towards promoting sustainable development

Subject	Policy/ Action	Description
City resilience	Resilient Strategy	a very overarching high-level document which is looking forwards 50 years to 2065 in order to create some future scenarios and a roadmap for change. Bristol was successful in bidding to join the 100 Resilient Cities initiative in February 2015 which is funded by the Rockefeller Foundation to facilitate cities becoming more resilient. (Bristol City Council 2015, p.3 & 5)
Energy policy	Energy company	Bristol set up their own energy company , the principle reason for it in the short term is to help sell energy at a reasonable price, but also it can generate and commission energy in the long run.
	Bristol Co-op	Bristol Council is also supportive of Bristol Co-op , which is a cooperative organisation that has set up on some council land some solar panels to generate energy.

	Energy work (actions)	Bristol council encourages more school getting PV, more district heating coming forward, some of these happening before George, but he supported all of it.
	Council houses and the housing stock	Bristol council has also done a huge amount of work on council houses and the housing stock and it's got some grants called ELENA, which is to do with insulating all the council houses and ensuring that they're much more energy efficient. All the tower blocks have been insulated as well to improve their energy efficiency.
Housing stock		Building the first new council houses for a generation. Bristol got some passive houses and council houses with very high energy efficiency standard and environmental standard.
Transport policy	MetroBus	The Metrobus would be delivered in 2017 which is the first major infrastructure to put an express bus from the north to the south of Bristol with the primary aim of encouraging more people to use public transport in order to reduce carbon emission and improve air quality and the environment.
	Resident's Parking Schemes (RPS)	A disincentive to use cars and reduce commuter parking which has been introduced in the more central areas.
	20 miles per hours speed limits	This policy is an incentive to reduce road casualty, it should encourage walking and cycling and more sustainable travel.
	Electric vehicles	A lot of electric vehicles was invested at that time as well in that 5 years.
Environment	"Our resilient future: A Framework for Climate and Energy Security"	Carbon neutral by 2050 policy was informed by the pledge which Mayor Ferguson made in the PARIS COP21 upon ratification by all four parties on the City Council. The key aim of this policy is tackling climate change.
	Waste collection	Bristol set up a waste company that really wants to drive up recycling level. <u>Waste policy</u> : towards a zero-waste city was introduced and the DEM was very welcoming of this.

	Nature	<p><u>“One Tree Per Child” scheme:</u> This scheme encourages every school child to plant a tree. There are 39,000 trees planted. George also made a pledge to protect and invest in green spaces and wildlife.</p> <p>Working in partnership with the Avon Wildlife Trust, Bristol council planned to make the city into a nature reserve, which also connects with the city’s schools.</p>
European Green Capital 2015 Award		<p>Bristol became the UK’s first European Green Capital (EGC). It took three attempts for Bristol to win the award. At the third attempt, Mayor Ferguson went to Brussel with the bidding team and presented the plan for future of Bristol to the European Union.</p> <p>Bristol had to meet a lot of different criteria in terms of environmental issue, sustainability issue such as climate change, transport, water, nature and so on.</p> <p>The establishment of Bristol Green Capital Partnership organisation was a crucial step to raise awareness in the city of green policy and organise many events and exhibitions with an attempt to make people think about what a green city is.</p>
	“Make Sunday Special” Scheme	<p>“Make Sunday Special” was an initiative of Mayor George Ferguson which was about opening streets and spaces for activity in the one day of the week and in particular more about community.</p>
Education	Mayor’s Award for Healthy School	<p>Mayor Ferguson introduced a competitive process in the primary schools with the Mayor’s Award for Healthy Schools, encouraging children to get interested in what they eat, in growing things and having chickens in school playgrounds. George emphasised that it is great to encourage a hands-on approach to education and health.</p>
Planning	Temple Quarter Enterprise Zone	<p>Bristol council made huge progress in acquiring key development sites and buildings around the station in the Enterprise Zone, including the site for the new Arena. Mayor Ferguson managed a lot of progress on Bristol Arena.</p>

Many participants noticed that the DEM tended to focus on some main subjects such as resilient, energy and transport. In particular transport policy was made repeated reference

to the essential policy and seen as the key priority of the Mayor during the course of interviews. George admitted that his biggest strides were taken in terms of transport policy and he also feels proud of his Healthy School initiative. Both policies were about improving public health as he believes that:

“...health and environment initiatives are the most practical way to start to tackle the life quality and expectancy differences across the city.”

George Ferguson

4.3 Local policies promoting sustainable development in practice under the influence of the DEM

4.3.1 The policies and areas have been facilitated progress towards promoting sustainable development

When participants were asked whether or not the DEM has a positive influence on local sustainable policies, the majority of respondents commonly regarded his impact as positive. Whilst some participants highlighted that there have been quite a lot of positive policies in the last five years, particularly in terms of transport policy and energy policy, another pointed out the DEM had actively and widely promoted Bristol as a green city as well as introduced and greatly welcomed initiatives. The three most illustrative examples are presented below:

“We has a lot cycling before George, so George carry on and we have more cycling under George, so we built cycle tracks, we open more cycle tracks and we educate people about cycling. Cycling continues double, so it keeps doubling every year.”

Officer 2

“Obviously there was more support for Green Party, more and more Green Party councillors getting elected during his time in office which demonstrates support for his sustainable policies and environmental issues.”

Councillor

“So getting Bristol involves with the Rockefeller Foundation for example, getting Bristol involves the Global Parliament of Mayors. Park Street in Bristol, which is a slope what he did was he put a water slide down it on a part of Make Sunday Special scheme. You got water slide going all the way down to Park Street which got Bristol was talked about. There were reports from the Guardians, the BBC, they were reporting on Bristol so he did put Bristol on

the map and making it a higher profile place. Which he would say help Bristol image, help tourism, and attract creative people to the city... and more kind of intangible.”

Academia

However, this was the attitude of the Academia who gave careful consideration to this question as he indicated:

“I suppose I would not put it in terms of either it has been positive or negative, what I think it was built on a sort of previous trends in Bristol but I suppose it did not have a positive influence as it might otherwise have done.”

Academia

On the other hand, whilst most participants seemed positive about the changes in sustainable local policies brought about by Mayor Ferguson, some participants shared an acknowledgement that the DEM would have made more progress in promoting and delivering sustainable local policies. For instance, some interviewees pointed out that there is minimal change in practice (NGO 3) and the actual extent of George’s advocacy of sustainable development could feed through into decision-making on the ground remains unanswered (Planner). Two interviewees provided two illuminating instances of these statements, illustrated through quotes below:

“So the Green Capital was a bit of opportunity missed really. I do not know whether it would have made a massive change anyway but I think it Bristol did not make the best use of that opportunity in order to build on its reputation.”

Academia

“My view is that where we get weaker is actually implementing the policies. I think we have a lot of good policies around car parking and housing development and recycling and so on. But we do not follow them through. We do not always kind of say: this is not complied with the policies, we do not have the enforcement and compliance... An example is 20 mph speed limits in the city...it is a powerful thing. It should reduce road casualty, it should encourage walking and cycling and more sustainable travel, better air quality and so on. But the problem is when we put all the sign up, we are not enforcing it. Nobody actually drives it 20 mph and then the current mayor does not like it.”

Officer 1

These findings led to the conclusion that there is a shared assumption that the directly elected mayor did advocate and promote sustainable development and was able to make a noticeable difference to sustainable policies at local level. Yet, both examples alongside other arguments

clearly underline that the practical implementation of sustainable development proved more problematic. The underlying reasons for these problems will be further discussed in the next subsections.

4.3.2 The policies and areas have been holding back or limited progresses towards promoting sustainable development

On the basis of findings discussed in the previous subsection, then, the question was asked: where progresses have been limited towards promoting sustainable development? After careful analysis transcribed interviews, there were five major difficult areas identified such as housing, planning, democracy, transport and the poor. All of them are presented alongside relevant quotes (Table 7). For this question, respondents also talked about the power, mechanisms and visions of the DEM and where progresses has been slowed down or hindered, but they strongly emphasised a number of limiting factors constraining the influence of the DEM in terms of the national government and commitment, visions and priorities of the DEM. In order to shine some light on these cross-cutting themes, the next subsection makes an effort to analysis and discuss them thoroughly.

Table 7: Five major areas where progresses of the DEM have been limited towards promoting sustainable development identified by interview participants

Interviewee	Quote	Difficult area
Councillor	“Obviously he did lots of stuff on housing, but not enough, because housing is a bit of crisis. So he could have done a lot more on housing.”	Housing
NGO 3	“I’m not sure George had a big impact on planning. The thing with elected mayor, they don’t have planning powers.”	Planning
NGO 1	“So George Ferguson essentially was criticised for not being very democratic, but it meant he pushed through stuff to do with buses, the new metro link bus, all the traffic stuff.”	Democracy
Academia	“I think there is a limited amount of he can do on the transport agenda. Because he had to cooperate with other authorities. So he cannot just build a fast route between Bristol and Bath depends on Bath that he cannot build something out.”	Transport
NGO 1	“I think Bristol has always had it, but it has increased in its level of pride as a city, and it’s such a nice place to be in. But... it’s for the middle classes. There haven’t been many	The poor and working classes

	improvements for the working classes, so the inequality has just gotten worse.”	
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4.4 Discussions on Cross-cutting Themes

This component of the research discusses a number of decisive factors greatly affected the DEM to bring about any changes in sustainability performance in local policies. A combination of emergent themes helps investigate the likely effects of the DEM on sustainable policies carefully identified throughout the research interviews, and then they are elaborated here.

National government

The overall idea of the potential of the DEM to promote sustainable local policies was closely associated with the national government in terms of the national policy, national budget cut and political management and the power of the mayoral model. Firstly, some participants were unanimous in indicating that what happens locally dictated by how much pressure there is national to implement sustainability agenda. Additionally, another justifiably claimed that because of the economic crisis in 2007 – 2008, politicians nationally and locally were willing to make a compromise to deliver economic growth even if mind compromising sustainability objectives in short term. Therefore, we could assume that the economic growth seemed to be prioritised over sustainable development. Secondly, the national budget cut has usually been considered as an overarching challenge alongside the constitutional vagueness, including granted power. Whilst some respondents clearly indicated that since the austerity measures started, it has been very difficult to effectively monitor and prioritise sustainability, particularly in implementation, another rightly stressed that it has proved very challenging to exercise effective leadership. Thirdly, the study finds adequate evidence which is consistent with the statement of Colin Copus who is right to say that the government has never been willing to grant the DEMs and their council real political powers (Copus 2013). Additionally, Marsh (2012) demonstrates this by arguing there was the constitutional vagueness as for whether the government would grant the DEM additional power. The highly centralised nature of the UK government has usually been emphasised as a considerable difficulty which ameliorates the effects of the DEMs to promote sustainable policies and to deliver policies in general. For example, whilst the Environmental activist firmly believed that the British system is the most centralised power than anywhere in the world, the Academia pointed out the limited amount of power of local authorities which did not enable the DEM to shape and deliver local policies. For example, many participants admitted that the mayor does have legal power over planning, housing and transport policy which could be considered as the limiting factor hinder the

potential of the DEM. This is in line with other scholar findings in this regard (Thornley & West 2004; Eckersley & Timm-Arnold 2014). Notably, the two most illustrative example is presented below:

“The fact that maybe George did not see that much sustainable development deliver is probably the criticism of the system as a whole rather than it is the criticism of a man.”

Planner

“I don’t think national governments listen enough to the cities. We are one of the most centrally governed countries in the world. I believe our cities and city regions should be able to be more autonomous and also to have a much greater input into national policies. I think we would have much sounder national policies if government listen to the cities and city leadership.”

George Ferguson

Priorities and visions of the directly elected mayor

The second idea of the influence of the DEM on advocating sustainable development in local policies was linked to the priorities or visions of the DEM. The Officer 2 provided a wider perspective into local policy-making which are regularly informed by politicians. Drawing on the interview data, we could assume that the priorities or visions of politicians will drive local policies and the mayoral model could enable this process more easily which is demonstrated for the virtue of being DEM in the literature (Hambleton & Sweeting 2014). Nevertheless, it is worth noting that whether the local policies being informed by sustainable development or housing or economic growth strongly relies on the interests and priorities of politicians and the DEM. For instance, respondents noticed the mayor’s priorities and offered useful insight into the connection between the DEM and sustainable development in which policy on sustainable development is portrayed as an optional activity and appropriate solely for the DEM who has particular interest in it;

“If we look for 50 years, 2050, we have serial of different mayors. We could easily have mayor one day who said I just want to focus on the economy; I do not want to focus on social environmental. And that is they are politicians, they have rights to do that, they are elected, that the people Bristol decide. It is hard to image, but you know they say: no, they don’t want to work on environmental stuff, we just want economy, and they can

do that. And they could even change the process that everything to be considered in the cabinet as well. It is not statutory...”

Officer 2

“If sustainable development is on the agenda of the person get elected then I think it gets easier to implement. If for example they are not interested in sustainable development and they want to block sustainable development and they do not want any of these sort of environmental regulations... if they want to stop all of that I think that makes it easy as well. So I do not think it is necessary for leadership and sustainable development. But I think it does make it is easier for individual priorities to be coming through.”

Academia

Both examples demonstrate the commitment and priority of single individual, particularly the interest of the mayor. Chiefly, it is worth notice that reliance on committed mayor to deliver his agenda and policies has proved problematic having the new mayor as Harriet Bulkeley (2003) demonstrated in her study. When interviewees were asked whether the policies under the previous mayor George Ferguson still in place, many participants pointed out that the new mayor of Bristol, Marvin Rees, has slightly different priorities and does not prioritise sustainable development in the same way that George did. Mayor Rees has much more emphasis on social inequality and inclusion which is somehow the underlying reason he has decided to review 20 miles per hour and resident parking zone, which are unpopular. The most illuminating instance for this finding is presented below:

“His housing policy has been reversed, so he was into building environmentally sustainable housing and that’s been scrapped as it’s too expensive. The priority at the moment is affordable housing. And it’s almost impossible to build really sustainable housing that’s also affordable.”

NGO 1

On the other hand, some participants assume a shared acknowledgement that the mayors may pay more attention to areas in which they are good at and interested in and they look for where opportunities are. As Officer 1 highlighted that

Researcher: So why the mayor could not have much influence in housing?

Officer 1: If I am honest, I do not know really. I do not understand why. People have said just because he did not put his energy into it apart he did not understand the housing sector? So he was really interested in major development like the Arena or Bristol Temple Mead, he was

really interested in transport. I think with any mayor you will get their strengths. They play to their strengths, they focus on the things they understand and they are interested in. And my sort of guessing is that in terms of housing, he did not think perhaps radically enough about it and did not bring any new thinking to it.

5. Conclusions

This, the final chapter of this thesis, is structured as follows. Firstly, a summary of the answers to the four research questions that were established at the beginning of the study is presented. Then the key contributions of this thesis to the investigated area are critically assessed and integrated with the existing literature. Then a number of recommendations for further research as well as for practice are provided.

5.1 Key findings in relation to Research questions

5.1.1 To what extent does a directly elected mayor seek to influence the sustainability performance of local policies?

The literature review discussed an ambiguity of the definition of sustainable development which is widely promoted by the Brundtland Commission's Report. Yet, it is far from clear that the term can be precisely defined and effectively implemented on the ground (Cowell 2013). However, a clear finding from Table 4 is that some participants seem to have a common understanding of sustainable development shaped by the close integration between three entities – the environment, society and the economy. Moreover, respondents also focused on equity, inclusion and fairer distribution of society which is aligned with the argument of Robin Hambleton (2015), which rightly emphasises the essential needs of the world's poor.

This finding is essential as it could reveal the underlying worldviews affected what they concern what the main priorities of sustainable development are, and how - and in whose benefit - decisions and actions are taken (Giddings et al. 2002), particular the understanding of sustainable development of Mayor Ferguson. Based on the findings of this research, it is reasonable to draw a conclusion that the mayor had manifested, visions and actions in closely associated with sustainable development concept to address local issues. However, this research indicated that some identities are more important than making policy. Therefore, this unfolds the gap between the definition of Mayor Ferguson and his policy implementation in reality which seemed to make a weak interpretation of sustainability.

5.1.2 What processes or mechanisms were used by the directly elected mayor to achieve these effects?

The researcher draws on policy document analysis and interview data to note that the DEM has adopted different approaches and utilised a number of mechanisms to widely advocate sustainable development. In terms of approaches, Ferguson adopted a ““carrot and stick”, “lead by example” approach, “entrepreneurial” approach. Further, in terms of mechanisms, he employed two main mechanisms such as legal mechanisms and financial mechanism, which were provided by central government.

There are two internal factors and two external factors identified that contributed substantially to Ferguson's great achievement in sustainable local policies. It is highly suggested that in order to control the city as well as deal with the local issues, the DEM properly has to gain leadership skills and personal charisma. To be more specific, the role of city governors, as Robin Hambleton (2015) highlighted, may be the policies skills, professional knowledge and emotional commitment. These findings of this research, therefore, are in line with the statement of Eckersley and Timm-Arnold (2014, p.347) and Sweeting (2013). In fact, these researchers pointed out that the elected mayor may control the narrow-minded politicians in terms of setting up working partnership and making challenging decisions based on the mayoral governance. It should be very clear by now that there is a link between the DEM and instrumentality in which the DEM was able to do things by being less apolitical. The empirical findings of this research also revealed that there is a strong view shared by the interviewees, which is that Bristol is a green and relatively sustainable city as the Bristol policies on sustainable. More importantly, because the environmental policy is one of the crucial drivers of Bristol policies, it facilitates the DEM to make a noticeable effort in relation to the policies that are in line with what was happening with Bristol. Further, this study found that the mayor has used his position of power and executive authority to create a more neutral space and built cross-party consensus in order to make difficult decisions and promote his visions and agenda, particularly sustainable development visions. This finding presented thus echoes other scholars' views of the advantages of mayoral model (Sweeting 2013; Eckersley & Timm-Arnold 2014)

Several policies, schemes and actions have been introduced and enthusiastically welcomed by the DEM, indicating a preference for the mayoral power to change things demonstrated by the study of Hambleton and Sweeting (2014). In particular, it is clear that Mayor Ferguson gave considerable emphasis on transport policy which was seen as his key priority of the Mayor. George admitted that his biggest strides were taken in terms of transport policy and he also feels proud of his Healthy School initiative.

As mentioned above, the most successful policy that George implemented was the transport policy, as well as the Healthy School initiative, is his proud.

5.1.3 To what extent and in what directions have local policies been changed (in the direction of sustainability) as a result?

We can draw on the data findings and analysis to note that the directly elected mayor model was deemed to possibly promote the sustainable local policies in terms of improving the low performance of local government and virtue of the directly elected mayor with a popular mandate. By the way of contrast, there is no doubt that all of the interviewees of this research

revealed a positive point of view regarding the changes in the sustainable local policies established by Mayor Ferguson. More importantly, several interviewees mentioned that the DEM should focus on promoting and delivering sustainable local policies. It should be clear by now that practical implementation of sustainable development proved more problematic.

It has been highly highlighted that processes in relation to promoting sustainable development have been limited because of the five major difficult areas, particularly, housing, planning, democracy, transport and the poor. This is due to the fact that highly centralised nature of the UK government has usually been emphasised as a considerable difficulty which ameliorates the effects of the DEMs to promote sustainable policies and to deliver policies in general. This finding of the research is consistent with the findings of other researchers such as Thornley & West (2004) and Eckersley & Timm-Arnold (2014).

Another assumption should be made here is that the local policies are influenced by the priorities or visions of politicians as well as this process, which is demonstrated for the virtue of being DEM in literature, is implemented more easily (Hambleton & Sweeting 2014). Furthermore, it needs to be recognised that whether the local policies being informed by sustainable development or housing or economic growth strongly relies on the interests and priorities of politicians and the DEM. On the other hand, some participants assume a shared acknowledgement that the mayors may pay more attention to areas in which they are good at and interested in and they look for where opportunities are.

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Appendices

Appendix A. Template for interviews

CARDIFF SCHOOL OF PLANNING AND GEOGRAPHY **Ethical Approval Form** **Student Projects (Undergraduate & Taught Masters)**

This form must be completed and submitted to Evelyn Osborne email: OsborneE1@cardiff.ac.uk / Tel Ext: 76131 / Room 2.54 Glamorgan Building).

*In the case of dissertations it is the responsibility of the student to submit the form, duly signed by their supervisor, and secure ethical approval **prior to any fieldwork commencing**.*

A copy of the signed form should be included by all students with their final dissertation.

Title of Project:

THE ROLE OF MAYOR-BASED LEADERSHIP IN PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE LOCAL POLICIES: A CASE OF BRISTOL, THE UNITED KINGDOM

Name of Student(s):

Le Tuong Vi Phan

Name of Supervisor/Module Leader:

Professor Richard Cowell

Degree Programme and Level:

Taught Master European Spatial Planning and Environmental Policy (MSc PLANET Europe)

Date: 15.04.2017

Recruitment Procedures:		Yes	No	N/A
1	Does your project include children under 16 years of age?		x	
2	Have you read the Child Protection Procedures below?	x		
3	Does your project include people with learning or communication difficulties?		x	
4	Does your project include people in custody?		x	

5	Is your project likely to include people involved in illegal activities?		x	
6	Does your project involve people belonging to a vulnerable group, other than those listed above?		x	
7	Does your project include people who are, or are likely to become your clients or clients of the department in which you work?		x	
8	Does your project include people for whom English / Welsh is not their first language?		x	

*** CardiffUniversity's Child Protection Procedures:**

<http://www.cardiff.ac.uk/govrn/cocom/resources/2010%20November%20Safeguarding%20Children%20&%20VA's.doc>

If you have answered 'yes' to any of the above questions your supervisor will need to explain how you will deal with these ethical issues.

Data Protection:		Yes	No	N/A
9	Will you tell participants that their participation is voluntary?	x		
10	Will you obtain written consent for participation? If "No" please explain how you will be getting informed consent.	x		
11	If the research is observational, will you ask participants for their consent to being observed?			x
12	Will you tell participants that they may withdraw from the research at any time and for any reasons?	x		
13	Will you give potential participants a significant period of time to consider participation?	x		

If you have answered 'no' to any of the above questions your supervisor will need to explain how you will deal with these ethical issues.

Possible Harm to Participants:		Yes	No	N/A
14	Is there any realistic risk of any participants experiencing either physical or psychological distress or discomfort?		x	
15	Is there any realistic risk of any participants experiencing a detriment to their interests as a result of participation?		x	

If you have answered 'yes' to any of the above questions your supervisor will need to explain how you will deal with these ethical issues.

Data Protection:		Yes	No	N/A
16	Will any non-anonymised and/or personalised data be generated and/or stored?	x		
17	Will you have access to documents containing sensitive ¹ data about living individuals?		x	
	If "Yes" will you gain the consent of the individuals concerned?			

If there are any other potential ethical issues that you think the Committee should consider please explain them to your supervisor. It is your obligation to bring to the attention of the Committee any ethical issues not covered on this form.

Health and Safety:	Yes
Does the research meet the requirements of the University's Health & Safety policies? http://www.cf.ac.uk/osheu/index.html	x

Prevent Duty:		Yes	No	N/A
20	Has due regard been given to the "Prevent Duty" in particular to prevent anyone being drawn into terrorism https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/445916/Prevent_Duty_Guidance_For_Higher_Education_England_Wales_.pdf http://www.cardiff.ac.uk/public-information/policies-and-procedures/freedom-of-speech	x		

¹Sensitive data are *inter alia* data that relates to racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious beliefs, trade union membership, physical or mental health, sexual life, actual and alleged offences.

Any changes to the nature of the project that result in the project being significantly different to that originally approved by the committee must be communicated to the Ethics Committee immediately.

Supervisor's declaration

1/ As the supervisor, I confirm that any ethical issues arising from this student project were discussed in advance with participating students (please indicate how here)

2/ As the supervisor for this student project, I confirm that I believe that all research ethical issues have been dealt with in accordance with University policy and the research ethics guidelines of the relevant professional organisation.

Date: 24.04.2017

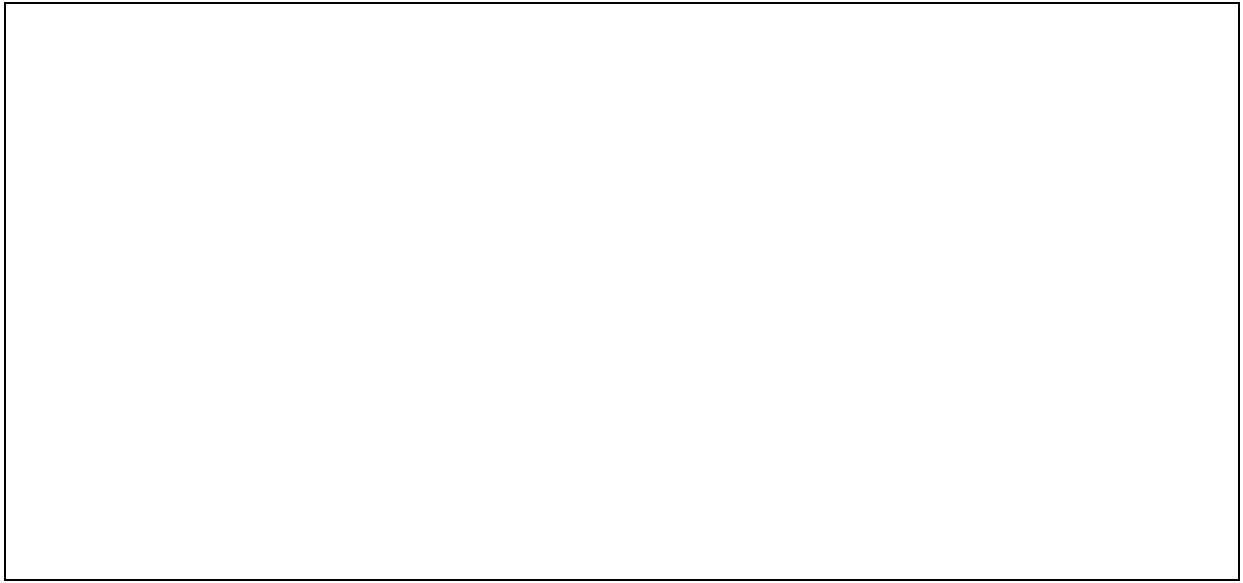
Name: Richard Cowell Signature:



If any of the shaded boxes have been ticked the supervisor/module leader must explain below how the potential ethical issue will be handled:

Although most of the data will be stored in a non-anonymised form. However, this is not realistic for the former elected mayor, as they will just be too readily identified.

The identity of the first DEM, George Ferguson, was disclosed as the only one exception of this study because of his role as the first DEM of Bristol. The researcher was aware of ethical concerns for him, hence, she sought to get his agreement to attribute his words directly to him as sent him the transcript of the interview to affirm the obtained information.



Appendix B. Template for interviews

Can you just briefly outline your position in this organisation/ council, how long you have been doing it?

What local policies making have you experienced of or have known about?

1. How, in your view does sustainable development inform local policies in Bristol ?

2. Do you think there have been any (major) changes or differences in (recent) local policies in Bristol towards encouraging more sustainable development in this 5 years?
 - Why ?/ Why not ?

3. What do you think the influence of the directly elected mayor in Bristol, Mr. Ferguson, is having creating local policies that encourage sustainable development ?
 - Positive influences ? / Negative influences ?
 - More sustainable? /
 - Promoting understanding/ awareness of sustainable development to local citizens? /
 - Integrating local residents to policymaking? Local activities?
 - Creating a people-friendly eco-city?

 - Can you give any examples of local policies that has been influenced by the mayor ?

4. What processes or mechanisms were used by the directly elected mayor to bring about these effects ?
 - Qualities of leader ? Aptitudes ? or Personal charisma ?/ Local knowledge ? /
 - Do you think the mayor more powerful or have more authority ?

5. Are there other factors that helped the mayor to make progress here ?
 - The prompts could be national policy, available resources and public pressure ?

6. 'Are there areas where the mayor has made little progress ?'
 - Why is that do you think ? (External factors facilitate or hinder the directly elected mayor actions ? - Such as national budget/ austerity or centralised power ? national policies ?)

7. Compared to the previous structure in Bristol City Council, do you think the new mayoral model has made any differences in promoting sustainable development of local policies ?
 - Is it more effective or not ?
 - Why ?/ Why not ?

8. How long lasting has the policies under the previous mayor George Ferguson been e.g. Are these policies still in place and are they being implemented ?

9. Have there been any changes to these policies since Mayor's term ended ?
 - Why the policy is still implemented that ? / Why not ? Are there any revision to the previous policies ?
 - Can you explain why in your opinion these changes have occurred ?

Appendix B. Sample interviews

Interview 1

- ❖ **Researcher:** (R)
- ❖ **Interviewee:** George Ferguson (GF). Position: The First Directly Elected Mayor of Bristol

Preliminaries

- Receive participants consent prior to interview
- Ensure that interview is arranged at a time and place that is convenient for the participant
- Thank the participant for lending up their free time and agreeing to participate
- Ensure that the participant does not have any issues with being recorded during the interview, explaining that this makes the study more reliable in terms of noting what has been said
- Clarify that all responses are to be used for the purpose of this study only and will remain anonymous as well as confidential
- Explain that the participant can refrain from answering any question and can withdraw from their participation at any time
- Introduce and describe the research project ensuring as little bias as possible

R: Can you just briefly outline your position in this organisation/ council, how long you have been doing it?

GF: First directly elected mayor of Bristol 2012 – 2016. The DEM model is really interesting because it is still an experiment in the UK. I was the first Independent DEM of the major cities in the UK. Although London technically had an Independent DEM, Ken Livingstone, he was really Labour Party.

R: What local policies making have you experienced of?

GF: I have had a lot of experience. I came to the university in Bristol in 1965. When I was at the university I was aware that Bristol had some terrible planning policies, really bad. It was all about highways and road planning, planning for the car. Very early on, I was campaigning to stop some of the major highway building that was planned to encircle the inner city. That made me particularly to think about city planning. So as an architect, I have spent all my life thinking about 'place-making' and 'community' rather than just about making buildings.

GF: I was asked to stand as a city councillor in the 70s (1973-1979). We were the first Liberal councillors – I was one of three (prior to Liberal Democrats) and as such was relatively free. Bristol had been ruled alternately by the Labour and Conservative parties for at least 50 years so it was like being an Independent. I concentrated on environment and planning for children because I have always felt that if you make a place that's good for children, you make a place that is good for everybody. That has been a constant theme of my professional and political life. If you make good places to play and safe streets, you make good places for everybody.

GF: I resigned from the Council after 6 years, as planned, because I wanted to concentrate on my new architectural practice. Since then I have always been campaigning, alongside being an architect, producing different ideas for the city. Partly as a result of that, I was elected President of the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) where I brought a particular emphasis on urbanism. This led to the formation of the Academy of Urbanism to influence policies on city and town planning. So the Academy of Urbanism that I started within the RIBA, by bringing in a leading urbanist, started within the Institute before we took it out as a separate Academy. We wrote the manifesto that I believe is so essential for making good places and learning from history. So I have spent all the last 20 years or so developing urban policies.

GF: In 2012, the UK government decided it would hold a referendum in all our major cities as for whether to replace the party leader system with an elected mayor. I saw this as a great opportunity to make progress in Bristol which had been held back by political wrangling over many years, so I decided to stand as an independent. I was elected in November 2012, which came as a big surprise to me and many others because it is really difficult in this country for an Independent to achieve major political office against the might of the major parties. While independence was a strong message I was also elected on my record of environmental and community action. I had the good fortune of the timing of our shortlisting as European Green Capital and saw that as a major opportunity and as an excuse to drive through what I knew was necessary for the city. It is clear that you cannot wait for consent to enact major change or we shall never make progress – this has always been the dilemma of democracy. So I feel democracy is very much an iterative process – you have to open people eyes to what is possible and you sometimes have to drive change through as it needs to be experienced before you can achieve an informed decision as what is best. This requires confidence, experience, and maybe courage, to drive things through against the fear of change.

R: What do you mean about consent?

GF: I am particularly talking about transport policy that interferes with the indiscriminate use of the car, especially for commuting. This requires a reduction of the amount of commuter parking by the introduction of a widespread resident's parking scheme. This was really

unpopular in many people's minds until they experienced its implementation. Then people said: 'Oh, it's not too bad and it actually makes life easier and safer for our children! It is a major step towards creating healthy neighbourhoods and encouraging walking, cycling and the use of public transport.

GF: To me, it is a good illustration of the beneficial power of directly elected mayoral leadership, especially independent leadership, as the parties are always too nervous about the next election and proceed far too slowly. I had the luxury of not having to listen to a party who would be much more worried about the politics and the next election than about doing the right thing. This is common to all democracies, which nevertheless remain the best form of government!

R: If you don't worry about the next election

GF: Although I wanted a second term to deliver what I had started, I didn't worry about the next election. To me, there is no point in doing a job if you do not do the right thing. There is absolutely no point in doing a job simply in order to win the next election. I prefer to have 4 years making proper progress than 8 years of compromise and delay.

R: From what I study, Ken Livingstone for example, he tried to do something that he could see the results in his term

GF: That's true – Ken had courage, although he is not everybody's choice or a cup of tea. Because of this, he was one of the first people I went to see. I met Ken over a cup of coffee by Westminster Bridge to talk with him about getting that balance right and how to drive through change when people judge change out of fear rather than hope. People are bound to resist change, especially over the use of motor-car, and yet the biggest invasion of our civilised spaces in our city has been by the motor-car. It has destroyed so much in terms of community and health. You would certainly not invent city like we have allowed them to happen.

R: The UK is car-oriented

GF: I was involved with the birth of Sustrans which is the sustainable transport organisation that has so successfully promoted cycling throughout the country. Bristol has been really good at promoting cycling but it has resulted in an unfortunate ongoing war between cyclists and drivers, and pedestrians to a certain extent. I do not have a car anymore – a result of a pledge I made during our year as European Green Capital – and I have discovered that even at the age of 70 and even in the rain I prefer to get around on a bike and foot. Bristol is a very

walkable city. I want a city that is proud of its air quality. That is the real driver and was an important part of our submission for European Green Capital. There is still a long way to go – especially in the more deprived areas close to the M32 and major arterial roads.

Question 1: How in your view does sustainable development inform local policies in Bristol?

GF: For me, it informs all policy – as it is about health and community – and it will continue to inform local policies in Bristol. Bristol people are very aware of sustainability issues and all the more so now. We have a very strong civil society partnership of environmental and other organisations and the Green Capital Partnership is not just about green capital – it is about bringing together about 800 organisations that are driven by environmental change. This includes our two universities who are taking it all very seriously together with many large and small organisations, including community groups and energy co-operative. I believe that environmental policies have been the major driver for change in Bristol.

R: So before you were elected as the mayor of Bristol, did the SD inform the local policies?

GF: It did so before and I probably just gave it a bigger push. But I think it has been a major driver for the past decade at least when we started a journey towards European Green Capital, and you could even trace it back 40 years when many of us who find ourselves in a position of influence were starting transport and other initiatives. It has also been boosted by the organisations that we are a member of. So when I heard about the Rockefeller Foundation initiative for 100 Resilient Cities, I arranged to meet the President to bid for Bristol to be one of the first of the 100 resilient cities. We are also a member of ICLEI (Local Governments for Sustainability) – it is the international organisation that deals with environmental policies for cities and local governments across the world. We are also a member of Eurocities and Energy-cities. All these organisations help point us in the right direction.

GF: We took a major role in the PARIS COP21 which fortuitously took place during our year as Green Capital Bristol and I returned with a pledge for Bristol to achieve carbon zero by 2050, a pledge that was ratified by all 4 parties on the City Council. We partnered with the city of PARIS in hosting the cities Pavilion at COP21 – giving Bristol great profile. So I think Bristol has been hugely influenced by environmental policies and that in our turn we have also been a very visible influence on the world, something that is not always appreciated in Bristol!

GF: Of course, many people do not get involved and some are cynical about all this – it is very much a Bristol reaction, and yet I still get invitations all over the world to speak about urban environmental policies.

GF: I think what we are really good at is Independence. Bristol is a relatively independent city, we probably have a higher proportion of independent traders than most, and we have our own currency, the Bristol Pound – all in the interest of encouraging a circular economy and a healthy relationship between food producers, traders and the consumers. So food becomes a very major factor. And food also contributes to public space policies with the encouragement of markets, which was high on my agenda. We started that by challenging the city council who had a very controlling attitude to street markets. I said that you need to expand the existing markets, and encourage more markets to help to animate city space and give an opportunity to small entrepreneurs. So city space is not just a physical matter. It also needs management and choreography.

R: So it is like “Make Sunday Special”?

GF: Yes, Make Sunday Special was a great way of opening people’s eyes to what is possible in the street. If you OPEN the street to people it can become transformational. I have a thing about language. We tend to be very negative the language of change: we talk about CLOSED streets because we are closing them to cars. I talk about opening streets because we are opening them to people. The use of language is important if you are going to persuade people, you need positive rather than negative words and emphasis.

So Make Sunday Special is about opening streets and spaces for activity in the one day of the week we can do things differently, and maybe turning some of those temporary closures into something more permanent. I was frustrated by not being able to free the medieval heart of the city of cars as I believe every historic European city should.

Question 2: Do you think there have been any (major) changes or differences in (recent) local policies in Bristol towards encouraging more sustainable development in this 5 years?

GF: I had a chance to encourage it, but I was pushing in a direction that Bristol was already going. The difficulty lies with national legislation and a planning system that is generalised and weak. It too often allows substandard development because cities don’t have as much control as I believe they need in order to make a step change in sustainable development. The essential thing about sustainable or ‘green’ development is that it is not just about low energy and plentiful greenery, it is about good community, good access it is about walkability, and a good mix of uses which helps walkability. If you have lived, working, playing and education and health together, then you have proper community that is more sustainable, and more resilient to outside stresses and shocks

GF: 'Resilience' is a term I like because it provides a great challenge for a city, especially in the field of climate change. We cannot go back - we cannot reverse the change that has already happened to our climate. Of course, with the right policies we can slow the speed and reduce the level of change, but also we have to build resilience to the stresses and strains that will come through more extreme weather conditions. This is both a practical and moral matter to my mind.

GF: So economic sustainability to me is creating a strong circular economy. Environmental sustainability is about creating efficient places that are designed to minimise the need for energy and transport, while the third leg is social sustainability, which is in many ways the biggest challenge that Bristol has, and why our contribution to 100 Resilient cities leads to social resilience. When you have a rich city, and Bristol is a relatively rich city, if you are poor in that rich city, you are relatively poorer than in most Northern cities principally because housing rent and purchase is out of the reach of many, it is considerably more expensive here than it is in, say Cardiff or Newport. As a result, we now have people buying or renting housing in Newport to work in Bristol. So that becomes a particular challenge when cities are not in control of policy or funding and central government is restricting the amount of money we can invest in social housing and not allowing us to work like any other property owner or developer in using the value of our own estate of 27,000 council homes as collateral. What makes matters worse is that when we do build Council Houses – which I was keen to do and delivered the first in the city for 30 years or so – the Government insists that they become available under the Right to Buy scheme which in effect steals that new housing from the people of Bristol. To me, it is a vital part of a sustainable development that we have a good social mix and that we seek to eradicate poverty and malnourishment. So I put all these issues under the sustainability/resilience umbrella.

R: It seems to me that your priority is about environmental aspect rather than social aspect?

GF: Yes – in spite of what I say I do believe in leading on environmental sustainability, but actually these issues are indivisible in terms of health for instance, which is the greatest leveller. I mean the poorest people are eating bad food because we have a pretty bad food policy. Most local farmers are selling to the supermarket and indirectly to fast food establishments. It is not encouraging healthy eating, resulting in what has been an epidemic of child obesity. The harshest difference between rich and the poor is life expectancy and life quality, so if we have cleaner air which is an environmental issue – we are going to particularly help the poorest people who tend to live in the area with the lowest air quality because they are living near the big roads. So I cannot in truth divide the two but I feel very strongly that dealing/ or leading with the environment can have a big impact on social welfare and that it is more within our control as a city than the big economic issues that are principally national. If

you think of the environment as health and healthy spaces and places, you should eventually help everybody. Public health is a vitally important part of the provision of good public place.

R: I think public health is a really big issue in the UK in general.

GF: I think we, quite wrongly, concentrate on illness rather than wellness, and it is happening in this general election. The funding arguments are all about the national health services which are not about health. The NHS is curing illness. I believe we should have a long-term plan to invest up to a third of what we invest in the NHS into well-being, into public health, into healthy living in order to improve the quality of lives and reduce the growing problems of old age. I feel very strongly about that. But we have this, almost sacred, an organisation called the National Health Service (NHS) which has become a religion in this country, which seems to prevent the fundamental issue of how we reduce the need for people to go into a hospital for much greater investment in Public Health. We need to increase health through clean air, good food and natural exercise and reduce the incidents of drugs and alcohol addiction.

R: It is quite interesting to see actually like that people start to react to the things happen to them rather than, yeah, like climate change as well until it happens in front of their face? They don't really have a long-term vision?

GF: Absolutely, it is like the slowly boiling frog not noticing the water getting hotter – it does not end well.

Question 3: Can you give any examples of local policies that you had initiated or influence or had introduced?

GF: Well, I think probably the toughest one has been on taming the use of the car. People saw me as being anti-car. Well, I am anti the stupid use of the car, not anti-car per se. The motor car has been a great liberator for many families with the particular health benefit of being able to access the countryside. However, we are living in the 'Age of Stupid' in terms of the indiscriminate use of the car in this country, with dire consequences for planning and health of our cities. We have to take a "carrot and stick" approach. Encouraging walking, encouraging cycling, encouraging the use of public transport, and greater investment in public transport, while discouraging people from driving into work, with 80% of commuter cars being driver only. It is mad. So I think my biggest strides were taken in terms of transport policy, including the widespread introduction of residents parking schemes to reduce commuter parking, 20mph speed limits and investment in cycling infrastructure, all of which I see as being about the health of the city.

GF: One of the other areas I feel really proud of was the Healthy Schools initiative. I always said that adults resist change while children embrace change. So I introduced a competitive process in the primary schools with the Mayor's Award for Healthy Schools, encouraging children to get interested in what they eat, in growing things and having chickens in school playgrounds - things like that. It is great to encourage a hands-on approach to education and health. Also dealing with social aspects such as bullying which is also about wellbeing and mental health. I think healthy school is where we start. Kids love it. I also started One Tree per Child to get every primary school child to plant a tree – while learning about the environment, food etc. I am proud that it is now becoming an international movement.

GF: We are the greenest major English city in terms of the proportion of green space. Working in partnership with the Avon Wildlife Trust we plan to make the city into a nature reserve, which also connects with the city's schools. So you can see the direction I was pushing in. Equality is a massive social and health issue in a relatively wealthy city, and I believe that health and environment initiatives are the most practical way to start to tackle the life quality and expectancy differences across the city. We also need huge investment in new council housing, proper social housing in a relatively unaffordable city, something I strongly believe in. We made a good start, building the first new council houses for a generation. There is much more to do on that front but government policy does not encourage us with restrictions on borrowing against our own estate and the loss of good council housing through the Right to Buy scheme.

R: Are they your priorities?

GF: Yes, I was not giving up winning a second term, but I did realise that was creating a challenge for myself. Nevertheless, the main reason I lost was not about all of this. The main reason I lost is about party politics. I had raised the matter of annual elections in Bristol holding the city back and encouraged a change to all out Council and Mayoral elections every 4 years. That meant there were about 300 council candidates, of which there were 70 Labour council candidates, all knocking on doors right across the city – all of the course campaigning against me! So it was a matter of scale and a limit to how much a single Independent can resist the might and spending power of a national party. So whatever I had done I would have had difficulty being elected a second time.

Question 4: What processes or mechanisms did you use to bring about these effects?

GF: There is a grey area in terms of the powers you have as mayor, however, I just chose to push to the limit and, as far as I could, to lead by example, such as selling my car – a pledge I made during our year as European Green Capital. I had a zero-emission electric Smart Car but I decided I could manage perfectly well without a car. A City Mayor without a car or parking

space but just a cycle parking space at City Hall. That sent out very a small but strong signal, which surprisingly went across the world!

GF Then, using the law that you do have on your side, like introducing 20 miles/hour limits across the city, taking advantage of government funding to do so. Also using financial mechanisms like the resident parking scheme, investing some 10 million pounds and using the income from paid parking to pay that off and to invest in environmental transport schemes such as Park & Ride. One has to be inventive because there is little money to spare, requiring an entrepreneurial approach.

R: It also because you were an architect? Did it help?

GF: My life as an architect and entrepreneur helped enormously. I thought of it as a project. As an architect, I did projects: I built the buildings, both social and commercial and made public places. Putting up a single building can take at least 4 years from concept to completion, so I recognised I had to move fast in order to have any hope of completing anything worthwhile. So being an architect was extremely helpful especially in terms of making the most of our own estate and buying and selling property strategically.

R: And how about entrepreneur? Are you a business man?

GF: Yes, I was taking an entrepreneurial approach to things and taking some calculated risks, but principally learning and borrowing initiatives from other cities. When I was the RIBA president, I was promoting British architecture throughout the world and learning from some of the best cities in the world. I thought it was really important to raise the profile of Bristol across the world. People do not invest in a place they don't know of. This was not always appreciated within Bristol but I regarded as crucial to our standing and success as a city. I think we can truly claim to be a small world city now, ranking high amongst the most environmental and inspirational.

Question 5: Are there other factors that helped you to make progress here? The prompts could be national policy, available resources and public pressure?

GF: I think the biggest factor is the strength of civil society organisations in Bristol. We have a very active section of the population, and this undoubtedly helped us win the European Green Capital award for 2015, which was a huge help in terms of making beneficial changes. Also, my experience of many other cities across the world helped, learning from the experience of others and bringing that experience to Bristol. There is nothing like observing the successes

and failures of others. I am a strong believer in doing so rather than trying to reinvent the wheel. Stealing good ideas!

R: Stealing is also depending on about how you adapt it?

GF: Absolutely, it is vital to discriminate and to adapt to the place. I would say that we like to be a bit different in Bristol – maybe a bit hippy! We have a very strong street art culture for instance. We are a little bit edgy as a city, in our culture, music and art, and that is good I think.

Vi: Bristol has a background as a green city with sustainable development policies?

GF: Yeah, we have.

R: So the background also help you to bring forward?

GF: A lot of people, especially poorer people, were not necessarily going to see the relevance of what I was doing and maybe regard green policies as middle-class issues. However, it is clear to me that everybody in the city is the beneficiary. In terms of the support for green policies, you undoubtedly get stronger support in the richer more comfortable parts of the city. We may even get a Green MP in Bristol, but it will be in the richer Bristol West area of the city if we do.

R: It is for everyone? I mean like encourage people to have awareness and understanding of sustainable development?

GF: Yeah, very much so. That is why I think the schools are so important and of course the universities. The students play a major role and there were nearly 100 000 hours of volunteering from the two universities during the Green Capital for instance. So there was a huge demand of awareness raised. And using things like art projects to raise awareness. There was, for instance, a fantastic whale sculpture that helped raise awareness about plastic and the ocean. Bristol has done much to raise awareness about climate change, global issues, pollution, and in a port city, the sea becomes a very important theme.

Question 6: Are there areas where you/ the mayor has made a little progress?

GF: Yes there is very limited power in many areas – I have mentioned the building of social housing which we should be much faster at – and I was frustrated not being able to provide enough of an interim solution between hostel and home. The other area of policy, which moved far too slowly, is clean air. In all honesty, if we value lives, especially those of our children, we should be taking private cars right out of the centre of the city, with the possible exception of

electric and zero emission vehicles. This includes buses and taxis, but I did not have the power to do so.

R: So the national policy about mayor model not really?

GF: I do not think it works well enough. A very limited number of cities opted to adopt the elected mayor system. Of course, we now have the metro mayors and I was energetic in ensuring that the Bristol metropolitan area was amongst the first. I led negotiation on the near £1Billion deal with the Treasury and DCLG (Department for Communities and Local Government) for what is currently known as 'The West of England', leaving out North Somerset which rather stupidly opted out of the process. However, I think it is the major step in the right direction.

GF: I started things that need a lot more pushing towards realisation. We made huge progress in acquiring key development sites and buildings around the station in the Enterprise Zone. I did so because planning powers are pretty feeble, so the strongest way in achieving good development is through land ownership, including the site for the new Arena. I feel particularly frustrated seeing the Arena is still not happening. The longer its delayed the more it will cost, and we will get our money back but only if we proceed. This seems to be lost on the new regime.

GF: We sold one of the key Enterprise Zone sites that we had acquired to the University of Bristol to develop a new business campus. We bought a large 1970's office building for the city's administration in order to dispose of a rag bag of buildings across the city and consolidate the main administration in just two buildings including City Hall.

R: So the area you feel you have less progress is planning, mostly about planning?

GF: Yes, planning is a pretty feeble tool and one over which the mayor has no role in terms of development control. Even for transport planning, we are at the mercy of the Department of Transport for planning and funding. All you have is the power of persuasion, soft power, not hard power. Ownership gives hard power!

Question 7: Compared to the previous committee structure or leader and cabinet structure in Bristol City Council, do you think the new mayoral model has made any differences in promoting sustainable development of local policies / can make any differences? Is it more effective or not? So, you have more power than the previous structure but you do not have?

GF: Yes, in spite of the reservations there is certainly more power than held in the party leader model. Some people have problems with even the limited power being concentrated in the hands of a single elected mayor, seeing it as less democratic. I have a bigger problem with the political process holding back progress and feel that we need a more efficient decision-making structure, which the elected mayor model promises to provide.

R: political parties? Also, influence? Rainbow cabinet. Whether they helped you or to come up with ideas?

GF: My rainbow cabinet was really good. Everybody got on very well. 5 of us: one green, one labour, one conservative, one Lib Dem and one Independent. And we all became good friends and worked for Bristol's best interest, in spite of political differences. I think that is a really good model, while I have a real problem with a larger cabinet dominated by one party when it becomes all about the party. I'm afraid we are back to that now with a couple of token members from 2 of the 3 other groups.

R: So are they supporting you to make decisions or come up with the decisions? Or policies?

GF: The policies are driven by the mayor. I made policies by standing on a particular agenda, my manifesto and pushing that through. The officers were generally good in recognising that I had been elected on that agenda and helped drive through my principal policies.

R: whether like the national budget cut affected a lot?

GF: Of course, the severe budget cuts were challenging but there is a danger in hiding behind the cuts instead of grasping the nettle and getting on with it. You just need to be more inventive. And sometimes we were more entrepreneurial in spending to save in order to cope with the budget cut over say a three-year period. People too often focus on what we have and lose sight of other opportunities. For instance, we have public toilets around the city and they cost about £600,000 pounds a year to maintain them, even though there are only around 20 of them apart from in the public parks.

GF: Why spend so much on so few when they are not very nice anyway? Instead, we could do so much better at half the cost to encourage 100's of better maintained accessible private sector toilets in such places as cafes and pubs and clubs, giving much wider choice across the city. This is the sort of imagination we need to be combined with the guts to experiment.

GF: So I was looking at those sort of changes not just to save money but to increase choice. The same sort of thinking applies to our public libraries which are threatened by cuts but can be subsidised by incorporating such things as cafés, bookshops, job clubs and information

hubs, bringing in other income. We need to be nimble with such things rather than bogged down in political dogma.

R: And how about national policy?

GF: I don't think national governments listen enough to the cities. We are one of the most centrally governed countries in the world. I believe our cities and city regions should be able to be more autonomous and also to have a much greater input into national policies. I think we would have much sounder national policies if government listen to the cities and city leadership.

Interview 2

- ❖ **Researcher:** R
- ❖ **Interviewee:** OFFICER 1

Preliminaries

- Receive participants consent prior to interview
- Ensure that interview is arranged at a time and place that is convenient for the participant
- Thank the participant for lending up their free time and agreeing to participate
- Ensure that the participant does not have any issues with being recorded during the interview, explaining that this makes the study more reliable in terms of noting what has been said
- Clarify that all responses are to be used for the purpose of this study only and will remain anonymous as well as confidential
- Explain that the participant can refrain from answering any question and can withdraw from their participation at any time
- Introduce and describe the research project ensuring as little bias as possible

R: Can you just briefly outline your position in this organisation/ council, how long you have been doing it?

OFFICER 1: I am the Strategic Resilient officer which is in the last two years has been funded externally by the 100 Resilient City programme – Rockefeller programme. So that meant although I am position in the council, I am actually the resources for the whole city. So I am not a councillor employee. This year from April onwards, I am part funded by the 100 Resilient cities and part funded by the council. So it changes slightly because my original contract was within 2 years. I sit within the policy and strategy team. Previously, I was in what was called Bristol Future which is quite an interesting department under George Ferguson. But that team got to change, got moved around. There has been a lot of structure changes in the council.

R: Before, you were in the Bristol Future Department and now in Resilient Department or?

OFFICER 1: there is not a department for Resilient and there one of the problems with Resilient because it cuts across everything and the council is very and very kind of compartmentalised so I sit in Policy and Strategy which is part of the Management Resources Department, I think at the moment.

R: So you are a councillor?

OFFICER 1: No. I am an officer.

R: What local policies making have you experienced of?

OFFICER 1: Well I suppose, producing the Resilient Strategy, I have to get the strategy taking through the cabinet. So have to get, it went through the scrutiny with the councillors and then the mayor had to approve it. So that is the political process. I would not say that the Resilient Strategy is a very overarching high-level document and what it tries to do is influence policies further down the line so, for example, some of the actions in it, I think changing the voting age for young people. Which is at the moment is 18 one of the suggestion is we should lower it to 16. So that would require a change in policy and I suppose I am now advocating or try to implement those changes but I am not in the position to write policies myself. I am trying to change the policy.

R: So it is more like guidance?

OFFICER 1: Yeah, so more like trying to make the case and build the evidence-based to change things. And the other things we got is a more of a future scanning so we create some future scenarios which help us to look forwards 50 years. And the idea is you can then test the policy with that to say if we pursue this policy on what for benefits on education where would that take us in 50 years time. So it tries to get people to think more long-term, I suppose.

R: I think it is really important to have a long-term vision. (4:08)

OFFICER 1: Absolutely, and I think the problem is changing mayor is you get changing policies and then you do not get that long-term vision, you do not get the continuity. So you know one minute you are doing this and the next minute...

Question 1: How in your view does sustainable development inform local policies in Bristol?

OFFICER 1: I think Bristol policies around sustainable development are very good and quite strong. I think there are a lot of people in the council and, of course, in the wider city that is very passionate about sustainability. We got the Green Capital Partnership and we won Green Capital 2015 so on the surface, there is a strong commitment to it. My view is that where we get weaker is actually implementing the policies. But I think we have a lot of good policies around car parking and housing development and recycling and so on. But we do not follow them through. We do not always kind of say: this does not comply with the policies, we do not

have the enforcement and compliance. And I think part of that is the problem with the budget cut. We do not have stuff on the ground that can go and check up on whether this planning consent with follow through or done differently. And I think the other thing is we are really fearful as a city of not being economically successful so we tend to say, on the big development when we got a big money and power, we tend to say: yes yes, come and do it. And we are a bit weak at enforcing. At spatial planning level, if you local come and said: "Oh we want to build 50 houses here or maybe 100 houses but we cannot afford to do any of the low-cost housing." We will just kind and go: All right then!

R: I am not quite got what you mean.

OFFICER 1: Okay. So we have strong policies on affordable housing but the reality is when the developers coming, have a proposal, and say. It becomes a negotiation, it is not black and white. The developers say: "Oh, we cannot do that. That is too expensive or that makes the cost-benefit too low. We tend to be weak at the negotiation stage where we do not get what we actually want, what our policies say. So we do not see it right the way through to building stage.

Another example is 20 mph, speed limits in the city which I was involved in previously. As a policy intervention, it is a powerful thing. It should reduce road casualty, it should encourage walking and cycling and more sustainable travel, better air quality and so on. But the problem is when we put all the sign-up, we are not enforcing it. Nobody actually drives it 20 mph and then the current mayor does not like it. Because the public does not like it. So the mayor will take it away.

So I think with the mayoral model, one of the risks is it becomes the popularity vote rather than really kind of high policy vote.

R: So you mean about 20 mph is powerful and it supposed to decrease road casualty?

OFFICER 1: Often children get injured in the streets outside of their home and the cars are driving more slowly they do not get injured. If they are driving faster then you can get killed. So it makes a big different with that. We do have a lot of policies and the other one is around RPZ, charging people to park in their streets which George Ferguson introduced. It is very unpopular, very very unpopular. People were really angry, they drove the tank down. But he said now I am going to do it. Because it is the right thing for the city. And I personally believe he was right. Now, when Mayor Rees came in he said I know the public does not like this policy and I will review it. So there is a risk he will undo that policy. Because the part of the

problem with sustainable development is we are not always willing to pay the cost so whether it is cheaper travel or driving. And people have gotten used to being that sort of free to do what they want and not pay the real cost of environmental impacts. And Mayors do not really make people pay for it either.

Question 2: Do you think there have been any (major) changes or differences in (recent) local policies in Bristol towards encouraging more sustainable development in this 5 years?

OFFICER 1: Yeah, I think there has been a lot of changes so the transport one I mentioned, 20 mph, RPZ, more cycling and promotion. There are other things are like: we set up our own **energy company** which was partly to help poor people as to make energy more affordable and also to make our own public buildings are more efficient. So we have done a lot of work in the last 5 years on improving energy. So, for example, this building, the City Hall, we did retrofit on City Hall to make it more energy efficient. We put solar panels on a lot of public buildings as well. So I think around energy and transport, we have been quite strong.

OFFICER 1: Waste collection also, we bought back into the council. So we set up a waste company that really wants to drive up recycling level. But with that one, we were struggling because national legislation prevents us. So often a problem with the city level is we do not always have the power to make changes that we want. So we would like to charge people for their waste. Like they are doing in Germany, if you throw away food then you should be paid, you should not throw that away. But we cannot do that so all we can do is encourage and try behaviour change which is very difficult and expensive for us to do. So I think often, we are reaching the limits of what we can do without becoming more focus on enforcement or legislations.

R: What do you mean about the national legislations not really allow the local councils to bring forwards?

OFFICER 1: So yeah, I am sorry. I do not know the details but I am sure you can find it out. But I understand that for waste collection services some of that is paid for by central government and we are not able, there are a lot of laws at local government around of what you can and cannot make money on. And so we cannot make money on charging people for waste so something we cannot do even we wanted to. So that is an example of what I called national legislations that stop us doing something that would be useful to do.

Question 3: What do you think the influence of the directly elected mayor in Bristol, Mr Ferguson, is having to create local policies that encourage sustainable development?

OFFICER 1: I think George Ferguson because he is an architect. He understands development at local level. So in some ways, he was acting as a champion or a role model and also he, himself cycles everywhere. You know he does not drive, he models that behaviour.

And I think he encourages sustainable businesses and he was a good champion for sustainable businesses. In terms of what he really changed, I think the mayor model here is not as powerful as people think it is. So I think he did not always change things that he wanted to. But he definitely tried.

R: So do you think it is a positive influence or negative influence in his influence on sustainable local policies?

OFFICER 1: For me, very positive. I think it is very positive. And he also did a lot of works to promote Bristol as a green city and initiatives. And I think a lot of his, he went to China and he is very well-known around the world. So at the Copenhagen Climate Summit people want to talk to him. And I think that gives people a sense of optimism, possible to change things. So I think he lets it very positive campaign for the city.

R: So you mean like he promotes Bristol as a green city and it also like encourages people to think Bristol as a green city?

OFFICER 1: Exactly, yeah. It is almost about marketing or branding: Oh, Bristol is so green. I still get people when I go abroad: Oh George Ferguson, red trousers, great guy!

R: Oh, that is interesting!

OFFICER 1: So he became the brand for Bristol for recognising around.

So sometimes I think Bristol is more famous for being green than it really is. The reality when you especially the traffic and that makes you think: Really? It is not as green as we wanted to be yet. A lot more works have to be done. The traffic is terrible. But partly because of the building the metro bus which was another initiative that George promoted. So in the long-term again, things will get better.

R: so he does a lot in promoting understanding and awareness of sustainable development to local people through different policies and different events?

OFFICER 1: Yeah, I think so he did things like closing the road on Sunday, Make Sunday Special was his idea. I think he was a good person to make people celebrating rather than

moaning about things. So you know, they closed the big roads and they had bands playing and stalls set up and children can come and cycle. It was a really great atmosphere. And I think it made people realised what a city can be like if you take cars away which is a big challenge. So he did the things like he built water-slide down. He encouraged radical things to happen in the city and for people to dream about what is possible.

R: So whether he was integrating local residents to local policies or he encouraged people to participate in local policies?

OFFICER 1: Yeah, I think what is an interesting thing is the people in Bristol were very divided over whether they like his policies or not. So people like me, a passionate about sustainability. I live close to the centre and I do not own a car. I think what he did was great. But every person like me that is not the person that hated him. Because they said: Oh he is trying to stop me driving and he is trying to tell me how to live. And he is an arrogant idiot. So he made a lot of people angry and I think that I used to live in London and I think really good leaders are willing to make themselves unpopular for policies that have a public good. So in London, like the Congestion Charge, a lot of people hated it, when Ken Livingstone introduced it. But actually, once it was in place, most people say it is good. That people do not like changes, do they? When the leaders are going to change things, there will be a lot of people that are angry or scared. And I think George did, you know like particular the RPZ, a lot of people were really angry, they will be like: "Why should I pay to park outside my house? It is not fair." Actually, it is just a small charge. And it has helped where I live, it improved the street and you do not have a lot of people drive up and down. But yeah, so a lot of people did not like what he did and that is why he did not get the second term, I think.

R: So in your opinions like leaders change things that maybe a few innovative ideas?

OFFICER 1: Yeah, I think he did. I think he brought definitely some new ideas and supported things that might be unpopular. But he also failed in some big areas so people would say he did not do enough around housing for the poor. You cannot do everything, I do not think when you are the leaders.

R: Can you give any examples of local policies that have been influenced by the mayor? I think you mentioned about 20 mph and it also was introduced by him.

OFFICER 1: Yeah, 20 mph and the Resident Parking Scheme and closing the street (Make Sunday Special). I think the Energy company and the Waste company.

R: Metro bus?

OFFICER 1: That was already planned before he became mayor but he had to make it. He could have stopped it basically but he made it happen. Oh, the Arena. I do not know whether the Arena will be a good example because I am not sure it will make it sustainable. But a lot of work of to change the land development around the Bristol Temple Mead. He had a lot of visions for things. The Temple Gate what they called and the Enterprise Zone.

R: And how is the Bristol Green Capital?

OFFICER 1: Yeah, that again we already wanted it, I think before he became mayor. But he was a definitely good champion, a good leader for that.

R: So he encouraged that to happen?

OFFICER 1: Yeah, very much so. And he went to the big events and represented Bristol.

Question 4: What processes or mechanisms were used by the directly elected mayor, George Ferguson to bring about these effects?

R: I do not know really. So one of the things were interesting about George was not from a political party and he is Independent so he set up what he called a rainbow cabinet. He had a cabinet from all the different parties. And I think one of the things he was good at doing was building a cross-party consensus. So Bristol historically had been very difficult political situations because it never had one party in control. So it had been a lot of arguing and fighting and the Lib Dem say this and the Labour say that. It was very hard to get things approved. So I think one of the good things having an Independent mayor was he created a more of a neutral space. So I think he took things through the cabinet and got everyone to agree. The other things he did was he set up a number of partnership boards so he likes working partnership with different organisations which I think it is a good way of getting actions. And he would then be the chair so he would take decisions. He changed the structure of where decisions were made. So that effectively, he could have more influence and make decisions around housing and transport and things like that. And he worked quite intensive with the Chief Executive of the council at the time, Nicola Yates. So they definitely set up the structure where they can make decisions more quickly and not get stuck.

R: so it made decisions quicker?

OFFICER 1: more quickly. And I think he was good at bringing in funding. And I think partly from being Green Capital so the fact that he was trusted and well-respected meant that he was able to bring more investments, attractive investments for the city as well. So some private sector's initiative perhaps likes the Arena.

R: You mentioned about he was good at creating partnership boards with entrepreneurs with business or?

OFFICER 1: Yeah, so things like with the partnership with the University, for example, I am not so sure there were under George actually, so we got some partnership with the University of Bristol around the Open data network so some high-tech solutions and thing like the Engine Shed which is an innovation hub. And I think George was a good champion at bringing in together academia and city developers to kind of come up with more innovative solutions.

R: So he was a good champion at bringing people together to work together?

OFFICER 1: Yeah. Yeah.

R: Qualities of Leader? Aptitudes? or Personal charisma? Local knowledge? So do you think because he has qualities of a leader or his skills or maybe because of his personal charisma as an architect?

OFFICER 1: Well, I think it is an interesting mixture. He is really well-connected because he has been living in Bristol for a long time, he has a lot of friends. So that is one thing people did not like. Cronyism means where you just work with your friends or like my friends here. So that is often the way it works in England. (the old boy network). So he is basic quite a rich successful man so a lot of people looked at him just like the rich posh. But actually, he was good like that because he has friends have money and he knew how to make things happen. So his personal influences definitely. And I think his expertise as an architect so he understands the city and built environment. And I think real personal passions, he really put his energy, his whole person into it to make things work. So he was an interesting combination.

R: So he also has been in Bristol for a while so he has like local knowledge which might help him?

OFFICER 1: I think he went to university here and lives he since he was 20 years old or something. So he has been here for forty years and he very engaged in... he used to be an activist in Bristol. And he did things around getting the dock redevelop and getting Bristol cycle paths. He has always been active in Bristol. So you could say he is very personally invested in the place.

R: Do you think the mayor more powerful or have more authority? So do you think he had power or authority to bring about these effects?

OFFICER 1: I think he did. Yeah, I think so. I think it was interesting because he was the first elected mayor when there was a debate about do we want an elected mayor, a lot of people, including the Green Party were very against it. They did not like it and they said it is just another cost, it is just more expensive wasting public money and it will not have any additional power. I was really unsure because I like the idea of having a mayor because I have seen it works in London but then everyone was very negative about it. Then we got George who is Independent. And I think he used his position very well even though he did not always have power, he had influences. Sometimes you do not have direct power to make things happen but you can pursue people and like I said about true partnerships. So I think he did use that role very well. But there is something that he did not have power over, for example, the buses which were the real frustration for him and that again goes to national legislations, deregulation of bus services. We cannot do anything about that at the moment. So I think where he could influence he did and somewhere he just did not have power, and railway as well.

R: So it is transport that he did have much effect?

OFFICER 1: Transport particularly. And then I guessed some land ownership, some lands in private ownership he cannot do anything, he cannot change that quickly.

R: You mentioned before that he actually did not have much power as people think about it?

OFFICER 1: I think it is true that he did not. He cannot change the planning system or it was not at the policy level. but he changed things at more implementation level.

R: So at implementation level that he could do or could not do?

OFFICER 1: Yeah, he could do. He could do more at a practical level if he likes.

Question 5: Are there other factors that helped the mayor to make progress here even he was too individual? like the national policy, available resources and public pressure?

OFFICER 1: Yeah, I think he has good public backing when it was the Green Capital year there were a lot of positive. The public supports, particularly around the Green Capital. I said about him not being a politician, I think that helped because he did not get involved in political

arguments and actually what we are seeing now he was not being told what to do by the Labour party. He was free, was autonomous just say: this is the position I take. So I think he has a lot of a, in that way he was quite free and Independent. I think money was already difficult. And that is worse now obviously.

Question 6: If the interviewee responds to questions above by talking about an area in which they feel the mayor made a lot of impacts, you could just ask them ‘Are there areas where the mayor has made a little progress ?’ like you mentioned about transport or land ownership.

OFFICER 1: And probably housing. I think housing is also affected by national policy a lot. But people are saying he could have done more but he did not do enough for housing. Same with education and skills. I do not think he did change very much around that. Because a lot that is from central and centrally decided as well.

R: So why the mayor could not have much influence in housing?

OFFICER 1: If I am honest, I do not know really. I do not understand why. People have said just because he did not put his energy into it apart he did not understand the housing sector? So he was really interested in major development like the Arena or Bristol Temple Mead, he was really interested in transport. I think with any mayor you will get their strengths. They play to their strengths, they focus on the things they understand and they are interested in. And my sort of guessing is that in terms of housing, he did not think perhaps radically enough about it and did not bring any new thinking to it.

R: What were George Ferguson priorities when he was in his office?

OFFICER 1: I think it was real. He was into energy. They did set up an Energy company, increasing energy efficiency. He was very interested in transport but he really ended up focusing mainly on walking and cycling and slowing the speed down which was not very popular.

So I think he had a particular in terms of building social engagement or social cohesion. His view was and he talked about it quite a lot was that he made the city fun, he brings playfulness to the city and made it a fun place to be. And he did a lot of that. And he did help to make the city an easy place to live. He is interested in children, young people as well.

R: So it is more like the liveable city?

OFFICER 1: Liveable exactly.

And he did things like one tree per child and he came up with this. Every child can plant a tree to create a legacy. So he likes those sort of quite symbolic things that people could get involved in.

R: Come back to the area that he had a little progress, you mentioned about national budget cut and national policy that does not let him do much?

OFFICER 1: Yes, exactly. In some areas, particular housing and planning and transport, he did not have that power and of course, the other thing, which is happening today, Bristol City is a very small place. And we have to always work with our neighbouring authorities and that has not always been easy. So with the combined Mayor coming in, they will have more decision-making out of regional level which goes across the boundaries. And of course, when you are doing transport and housing, you need to look across your boundaries not just in the city. Because the housing that we need will not be in the city. It will be in South Gloucestershire or North Somerset.

R: I think the metro mayor is an interesting concept. I am not so sure how the metro mayor can work with the city mayor.

OFFICER 1: I think it will be very interesting to see, my guess is that we will have a Conservatives metro mayor and we have a Labour mayor here. And they will not work together at all. That is the worst scenario. Again, if George was the mayor here because he was Independent, he would work with anyone and he said that: Oh, I would work with anyone. Whereas Marvin would be like: Oh, I cannot work with. He will try, obviously he will try to. But there will be major political tensions if we get addition metro mayor.

R: So you also think that maybe political parties or political conflicts might also limit the influence of the mayor Ferguson? (39:40)

OFFICER 1: I think it really does, massively. I am a bit cynical about politics so. I think it stops people doing things rather than helping.

R: So do you think Ferguson was being affected by that, political conflicts even he brought the rainbow cabinet?

ST: Did he get affected? I think so. I think there was something that became difficult because I think often I do not know why but often the Lib Dem seemed to oppose him. And it became political for no real reasons.

R: So do you think his cabinet supported him or political parties supported him in his decisions because he was Independent?

OFFICER 1: I think they did. I think Daniella was his Deputy Mayor, I think, she is Green Party. And then Mark Bradshaw was a Labour, a transport person. I think George gave them the mandate to do things and they were happy to work together. I think generally, that seems to work very well.

R: Before the mayoral model, was it the committee structure or Leader and cabinet structure in Bristol City Council?

OFFICER 1: Before the mayoral model, I am not sure because I was only started with the mayoral model as well. I think it was always a cabinet though and there was a leader of a council and I think they would have a cabinet which would be made up according to the voting of the majority. I think that was the problem that often it was Lib Dem and Labour and they did not have the majority so in the cabinet they have 50 and 50 and they would not agree on anything. The thing that has changed now is Green Party got stronger and that happened under George. Although George did not represent the Green Party, I think most people would say his policies were very much supporting the Green Party. So I think now, in the current situation, there are more Green councillors anyway which is good for sustainable development.

Question 7: Compared to the previous (committee) structure in Bristol City Council, do you think the new mayoral model has made any differences in promoting sustainable development of local policies?

OFFICER 1: I supposed it is difficult for me to compare because I did not know. But I can speak as someone who lives in Bristol for a long time. And I felt, which might not be true, but I felt that when George and the new model came in that things change more quickly. I felt there is more progress made and more initiatives were introduced under him. I think previously, I moved in Bristol 2003-2004, and I just felt like the city was a bit stuck, nothing was happening, nothing new was happening, nothing was being built. They were not doing anything for cyclists. So it was just not really good.

R: So you think like the things have changed more quickly and made more progress?

OFFICER 1: I think so. But I mean it is sort of observational rather than factual.

R: So changes in the more sustainable way or?

OFFICER 1: Yeah, I think because George had a focus on sustainability definitely.

R: So do you think the term of the mayor, the mayoral model changes term every four years. So do you think that is one of the factors that might constrain the vision or the implementation?

OFFICER 1: Well, four-year is quite short when you try to make changes happen. And personally, I am disappointed that George did not get another four-year. Because I think he would have made more and it is always like you can accelerate in the second term. And actually, what happened was everything changed, you need to start again. And that is the nature of politics, it is always cynical. I do not think you could argue for a longer term because it will be like having a despot or dictator. But it is for me, as a technical person or officer, a real frustration because a huge amount of time is wasted when you changed administration. Probably it is a year of my work had to change because of changing the mayor.

Question 8: How long lasting has the policies under the previous mayor George Ferguson been e.g. Are these policies still in place and are they being implemented or being removed?

ST: So far, I do not think any has been removed but there are, at the moment, currently there are under threat, some of them. For example, 20 mph that is at risk. For me, that would be a backwards step. And similarly with the parking. So I think there are risks in terms of changing the policies. Because you cannot make anything fit in the stone.

R: And Make Sunday Special has been removed?

OFFICER 1: Yeah, it stops. I think George put some funding into that and there is no money for it now. And that is part of the problem, not just the policy. Obviously, we got less money to spend and things like that are not priorities if it is between giving children school lunch or something more practical.

R: So how about Bristol Green Capital, it is a policy or agenda, it is still going on?

OFFICER 1: It is still going on and actually that happened after George that they created a new operating model as well. So they are getting funding from different partnerships.

R: So do you think like why 20 mph or RPZ will be reviewed, whether it is because they are not popular?

OFFICER 1: I think it is about Marvin Rees represents a different sector of the population who tend to cycle less, drive more, be more aspirational around owning a car. And this is the problem when you are a politician you represent your people and all these people are saying we do not like this or do not like that so he is under pressure to review it.

And our jobs as officers so kind of keep focus on the evidence so for 20 mph, we will be working hard to find out there is any evidence which is a positive intervention, has it reduced accidents, is it improving air quality, are there more people walking and cycling and things like that.

R: So Marvin represents his people so he is under pressure that he will review those policies because he wants to make people or it is like publicity things or supports? So it is like he was elected by people so?

OFFICER 1: Exactly. So with both of these policies in his manifesto, he said he will review them. He did not say he will scrap them but he was sort of opened the doors. And people obviously were voting for him: yeah, you need to get rid of these policies. So he did not stand on the platform say I will scrap 20 mph or I will scrap RPZ, but I think he was more than hinting it, the fact that he is willing to change them and people did. I think a lot of people said that George Ferguson lost simply around the parking, RPZ, which is ridiculous. That was so unpopular that people would not vote for him. It was just a small issue but made people really hate him.

R: But sometimes he also becomes popular like everyone knows him?

OFFICER 1: Yeah, exactly.

R: So he is like public image of the city so like visibility?

OFFICER 1: Yeah, exactly.

R: So Marvin he has different priorities?

OFFICER 1: He is much more about racing and taking poverty and getting rid of desperation in Bristol. He wants to lift, Bristol is an affluent city, he wants to share the wealth more fairly, which is a very important aim. Be more equitable.

R: So you mean like he wants to take poverty and sharing the wealth more fairly and anything else?

OFFICER 1: And skills and jobs for young people. Because what is happening is a lot of a young people, particularly from Black minority background. They do not get good grades in the school and then they do not get good jobs and they just sort of fall out of the system. A bit of a cycle desperation. He, Marvin, wants to see those children that are failing in the system being helped which is very important for making the city more successful overall. So that is sort of social policies. He is not so interested in built environment and energy and transport and stuffs like that. His real passion is social policy to improve people' opportunities. So it is almost like the complete black and white of George. Because George was very being an architect, he was very interested in building and transport and physical environment. And when you talked to him about social cohesion, community cohesion or social, he would say: Yeah, it is difficult, isn't it? I do not really know what we can do about that.

R: Yeah, actually a part of sustainable development not just about the environment but also about society as well.

OFFICER 1: Exactly. That is actually with my resilient work. Because I used to be a sustainability advisor but I was always interested in the people and society and one thing with the resilient is that I brought in the argument that for the city to be resilient, you need a strong social cohesion, you need a fairer society, social justice. And it is not all about the environment, it is not all about the economic, it is also about people and their connections.

R: Yeah, because like the term for sustainable development is quite broad and people change to use resilient more.

OFFICER 1: One thing, I think, in terms of the movement, George was a part of this. When you called it green it all becomes about the environment. If you say sustainability and then you say green so like Green Capital, really all the Green Capitals were focused on energy saving and kind of nature and a lot of the environmental stuff. And it did not do many works around social sustainability so he kind of lost that direction.