

BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET COUNCIL

MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING

Thursday, 16th January, 2014

Present:- **Councillors** Simon Allen, Patrick Anketell-Jones, Rob Appleyard, Sharon Ball, Tim Ball, Colin Barrett, Cherry Beath, David Bellotti, Sarah Bevan, Mathew Blankley, Lisa Brett, John Bull, Neil Butters, Bryan Chalker, Anthony Clarke, Nicholas Coombes, Paul Crossley, Gerry Curran, Sally Davis, Douglas Deacon, David Dixon, Peter Edwards, Michael Evans, Paul Fox, Andrew Furse, Charles Gerrish, Ian Gilchrist, Francine Haerberling, Alan Hale, Katie Hall, Liz Hardman, Nathan Hartley, Steve Hedges, Eleanor Jackson, Les Kew, Dave Laming, Malcolm Lees, Marie Longstaff, David Martin, Loraine Morgan-Brinkhurst MBE, Robin Moss, Paul Myers, Bryan Organ, June Player, Vic Pritchard, Manda Rigby, Caroline Roberts, Nigel Roberts, Dine Romero, Will Sandry, Brian Simmons, Kate Simmons, Jeremy Sparks, Ben Stevens, Roger Symonds, David Veale, Martin Veal, Geoff Ward, Tim Warren, Chris Watt and Brian Webber

Apologies for absence: **Councillors** Gabriel Batt, Barry Macrae, Douglas Nicol and Liz Richardson

51 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

The Chairman drew attention to the emergency evacuation procedure as set out on the agenda.

52 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Eleanor Jackson declared an 'other' interest in item 8 – 'Children's Centres' as Secretary of Radstock Youth Partnership.

Councillor Dave Laming declared an 'other' interest in item 11 – 'River Avon Flooding' as a Phoenix Marine Boatyard operator and boatbuilder at Broadmead Lane, Keynsham, Bristol.

53 MINUTES - 14TH NOVEMBER 2013

On a motion from Councillor Peter Edwards, seconded by Councillor Eleanor Jackson, it was

RESOLVED that the minutes of 14th November 2013 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

54 ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL OR FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

The Chairman made the customary announcements regarding mobile phones, webcasting the meeting and a comfort break.

He also offered congratulations to the following residents of Bath & North East Somerset Council who had received honours in the Queen's New Year's list; -

Order of the British Empire - Commanders of the Order of the British Empire (CBE)

- **Peter Kendal Hargreaves** Co-founder, Hargreaves Lansdown. For services to Business Innovation, Financial Services & to the City of Bristol. (Chew Magna, Somerset)
- **Christopher John Mairs** Chief Scientist, Metaswitch Networks. For services to Engineering. (Bath, Somerset)

Order of the British Empire - Officers of the Order of the British Empire (OBE)

- **Hugo Rudolph Pike.** Director of Water Works Ltd For Charitable services in the UK & abroad through the Rotary Club and World Waterworks Ltd (Pensford Bristol)
- **Linda Mary Catherine, Mrs Wyon** Founder and Honorary President, Bath Child Contact Centre. For services to Children and Families. (Bath, Somerset)

Order of the British Empire - Members of the Order of the British Empire (MBE)

- **Paul Ian McDermott** Senior Executive Officer, Ministry of Defence. For services to Operational Helicopter Capability. (Bath, Somerset)
- **Ms Janet Lynn Paterson** Director of Olympic Relations, British Olympic Association. For services to Sport. (Radstock, Somerset)
- **Matthew David Whittington** Senior Executive Officer, Ministry of Defence. For services to Helicopter Operational Safety. (Somerset)

Order of the British Empire - Medallist of the Order of the British Empire (BEM)

- **Shirley June, Mrs Steel** For services to the community in Midsomer Norton, Somerset. (Midsomer Norton, Somerset)
- **Clare Victoria, Mrs Clilverd** For services to the community in Seagry, North Wiltshire and to Young People in Bath, Bristol and Great Somerford. (Chippenham, Wiltshire)

Dame Commander of the Royal Victorian Order (DCVO)

Lady Elizabeth Periam Acland Hood Gass (Lady Gass) has been awarded the DCVO in the New Year's Honours.

55 TO ANNOUNCE ANY URGENT BUSINESS AGREED BY THE CHAIRMAN

There were no items of urgent business.

56 QUESTIONS, STATEMENTS, PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

Statements were made by the following people;

- Bryn Jones, Transition Larkhall, made a statement regarding the plans in the gateway project for a section of the London Road in Bath, in relation to removal of the cycle path. He referred to a petition of over 1,200 signatures which had been referred for debate at the February 18th Council meeting. In response to a question from Councillor Ben Stevens about whether Mr Jones was aware that the scheme had been amended to include the reinstatement of the cycle track, he responded that he had had a meeting with officers the day before and this had not been mentioned. The statement was referred to the Cabinet member for Transport.
- Lesley Mansell, Chair of Radstock Town Council, made a statement welcoming the reduction in cuts to the Children's Centres budget but asking Councillors to think carefully about the long-term impact of further reductions which could have a detrimental effect on schools in the Radstock area which has a high proportion of SEN children. In response to a question from Councillor Dine Romero about whether Ms Mansell was aware that the intention had always been that if more money was available, it would go into Children's Centres, Ms Mansell responded that their local service was run by volunteers and so its future was uncertain. In response to a question from Councillor John Bull about universal access for all parents, Ms Mansell responded that services should be available to all, not just those families deemed as deprived. The Chair indicated that the statement would be taken into account during the subsequent debate.
- Nettie Williams made a statement as a mother and past user of the Children's Centre service. She asked a series of questions about the future plans for the service and allocation of the £500,000. Councillor Romero thanked Ms Williams for her contribution thus far, and promised to get back to her regarding her specific queries. Councillor Tim Warren asked about the effect of the Centre on her life. Nettie Williams responded that it was more about the effect on the lives of the women she saw every week. In response to a question from Councillor Liz Hardman, Ms Williams confirmed that access should be universal. The Chair indicated that the statement would be taken into account during the subsequent debate.
- Jane Carter, Branch Secretary UNISON, made a statement opposing cuts to Children's Centre services, a copy of which has been placed on the Council's Minute book and is attached electronically to the minutes. In response to a query from Councillor Dine Romero about whether Ms Carter was aware that the proposals included plans to work with parishes and those providing specialist services, not just volunteers, Jane Carter responded that she was aware, but not of the details. In response to a query from Councillor Robin Moss about whether the uncertainty for existing staff made it difficult to recruit into positions, Ms Carter responded that they were concerned about job losses, loss of skills and the impact on children. The Chair indicated that the statement would be taken into account during the subsequent debate.

- Hugo Jenks made a statement regarding funding to the Child Contact centre in Bath and raising in particular the issue of enabling contact with absent fathers. In response to a query from Councillor Dine Romero about whether Mr Jenks was aware that contact happens in the best place, not just in these Centres, Mr Jenks responded that he was making the case for this particular Centre. In response to a query from Councillor Eleanor Jackson about how many children would be affected by cuts in funding, Mr Jenks responded that he didn't have the figures but had felt compelled to put in a good word after his own positive experience. A copy of the statement has been placed on the Council's Minute book and is attached electronically to the minutes. The Chair indicated that the statement would be taken into account during the subsequent debate.
- Helen Dudden made a statement supporting the vital work of Children's Centres for vulnerable children and highlighting cases of child deaths at the hands of their parents. In response to a query from Councillor Liz Hardman as to whether early intervention from Children's Centres might have prevented some of those deaths, Ms Dudden responded that the earlier you could get to children, the more chance there was to save them. The Chair indicated that the statement would be taken into account during the subsequent debate.
- Ailsa McKenzie made a statement stressing the need for universal access to these services for all. She drew on her own experience of accessing Children's Centre services, and her professional experience as an Assistant Head Teacher and Early Years and SENCO co-ordinator. In response to a query from Councillor Liz Hardman about whether money should be targeted to the most vulnerable, Ms McKenzie responded that it was her strong belief that any service for children and families should be inclusive, not exclusive. The Chair indicated that the statement would be taken into account during the subsequent debate.

57 PETITION FOR DEBATE - CHILDREN'S CENTRES

The Council had received a petition with sufficient signatures to trigger a debate at Council. The title of the petition reads - "B&NES Council are planning to cut almost 40% from the Children's Services budget over the next two years, forcing drastic reductions in opening hours and the range of services at Children's Centres across Bath and North East Somerset. We, the undersigned, call on B&NES to protect our Children's Centres, and not to go ahead with its planned 38% cut to Children's Services".

Vicky Drew, lead petitioner, spoke in support of the petition.

On a motion from Councillor Liz Hardman (seconded by Councillor John Bull) and then amended by Councillor Michael Evans, seconded by Councillor Geoff Ward, it was

RESOLVED (unanimously) as set out below;

This Council:

- Thanks the organisers of the petition for bringing this matter to the attention of the Council;
- Welcomes the opportunity to debate the future of Children's Centres with the proposed cuts of 38.8% to Children's Centres services;
- Notes that a commitment has been made to publish detailed information regarding the proposed model for the future delivery of Children's Centre services but regrets that this detailed information will not be available until February 2014;
- Notes that the Cabinet has stated its intention to allocate an additional £500,000 to the Early Years & Children's Centres budget, thereby reducing the planned budget cut from £2.3m to £1.8m (38.8% to 30.4%);
- Remains concerned that the scale of the proposed budget cuts will still have a significant impact on the Children's Centre services available to some communities with a significant number of vulnerable residents, such as Odd Down, Peasedown, Paulton, Midsomer Norton and Weston village, and in areas of rural isolation such as the Chew Valley;
- Is concerned that the number and locations of the 'hub' Children's Centres, as currently being considered by the Cabinet, will result in a significantly downgraded service at the proposed non-hub Children's Centre locations

This Council resolves:

1. That subject to Council approval of the 2014 -15 budget in February, the additional £500,000 proposed by the Cabinet for the Children's Centres and Early Years budget become an on-going part of the base budget and that, in the event of the hub model being implemented, the majority of this additional funding be directed at supporting and protecting as much as possible the services available in the 'non-hub' centre areas, and particular to vulnerable families recognising that final allocations are determined using a needs-led formula.
2. To ask that Cabinet reassess the currently proposed number and location of its planned 'hub' Children's Centres to ensure that, if the 'hub' model is adopted, the 'hub' centres are situated in the most suitable locations so that the maximum possible Children's Centre services can continue in all communities currently served by Children's Centres.
3. To ask that the Cabinet, as part of their forthcoming budget proposals, seeks to find further additional resources to further reduce the scale of cuts to Children's Centres and Early Years services, beyond those mentioned in (1), with particular consideration given to providing additional 'pump-priming' and start-up funding to support voluntary and other organisations in taking on a greater role in the provision of Children's Centre services.

4. To instruct officers, when publishing details of the proposed model for the future delivery of Children's Centre services to identify the ways in which the proposed service specification differs from the service currently provided;
5. In respect of 4 (above), to instruct officers specifically to identify the following:
 - a. The services provided at all Children's Centres now, and services to be provided in the future;
 - b. The number of children provided for now and number of children to be provided for in the future, including information about how it is proposed to target services;
 - c. The current number and roles of staff in each Centre, and the future number and roles of staff under the proposed model; and
 - d. The opening hours for each Children's Centre now, and opening hours under the proposed model; and
6. Agrees, when considering the budget proposal at the budget-setting meeting in February 2014, to take account of a) the contributions made at this meeting and b) the detailed information provided as a result of paragraphs 3-5 (above).

[Notes:

1. *Councillor Dine Romero had moved a motion, seconded by Councillor David Bellotti, that the Council budget amendment leading to the substantial review of services, the consultation that would be held and the intention to put the £500,000 back into the base budget and thanking residents who had signed the petition on Children's Centres and contributed to the scrutiny process, and resolving to take these views into account during consideration of the 2014/15 budget. The motion was replaced by the successful amendment.*
2. *Councillor Liz Hardman moved an amendment (first 3 bullet points and 4, 5 & 6 of the resolution above), seconded by Councillor John Bull, which was carried by way of a named vote;*

Councillors voting for (31) – Patrick Anketell-Jones, Rob Appleyard, Colin Barrett, Matthew Blankley, John Bull, Anthony Clarke, Sally Davis, Doug Deacon, Peter Edwards, Michael Evans, Charles Gerrish, Francine Haeberling, Alan Hale, Liz Hardman, Nathan Hartley, Eleanor Jackson, Les Kew, Marie Longstaff, Robin Moss, Paul Myers, Bryan Organ, June Player, Vic Pritchard, Brian Simmons, Kate Simmons, Martin Veal, David Veale, Geoff Ward, Tim Warren, Chris Watt, Brian Webber

Councillors voting against (30) – Simon Allen, Sharon Ball, Tim Ball, Cherry Beath, David Bellotti, Sarah Bevan, Lisa Brett, Neil Butters, Bryan Chalker, Nicholas Coombes, Paul Crossley, Gerry Curran, David Dixon, Paul Fox, Andy Furse, Ian Gilchrist, Katie Hall, Steve Hedges, Dave Laming, Malcolm Lees, David Martin, Loraine Morgan-Brinkhurst MBE, Mandy Rigby, Caroline Roberts, Nigel Roberts, Dine Romero, Will Sandry, Jeremy Sparks, Ben Stevens, Roger Symonds. No absentions.

3. *The successful resolution as set out above was carried on a named vote*

Councillors voting for (61) Simon Allen, Patrick Anketell-Jones, Rob Appleyard, Sharon Ball, Tim Ball, Colin Barrett, Cherry Beath, David Bellotti, Sarah Bevan, Matthew Blankley, Lisa Brett, John Bull, Neil Butters, Bryan Chalker, Anthony Clarke,

Nicholas Coombes, Paul Crossley, Gerry Curran, Sally Davis, Doug Deacon, David Dixon, Peter Edwards, Michael Evans, Paul Fox, Andy Furse, Charles Gerrish, Ian Gilchrist, Francine Haeberling, Alan Hale, Katie Hall, Liz Hardman, Nathan Hartley, Steve Hedges, Eleanor Jackson, Les Kew, Dave Laming, Malcolm Lees, Marie Longstaff, David Martin, Loraine Morgan-Brinkhurst MBE, Robin Moss, Paul Myers, Bryan Organ, June Player, Vic Pritchard, Manda Rigby, Caroline Roberts, Nigel Roberts, Dine Romero, Will Sandry, Brian Simmons, Kate Simmons, Jeremy Sparks, Ben Stevens, Roger Symonds, Martin Veal, David Veale, Geoff Ward, Tim Warren, Chris Watt, Brian Webber.

4. *At the conclusion of this debate, a ten minute recess was taken. The Council reconvened at 8.50pm.]*

58 MOTION FROM THE CONSERVATIVE GROUP - DORCHESTER STREET BUS GATE TRIAL

An officer briefing note had been circulated for this item and is available on the Minute book and attached electronically to the minutes.

The Council considered a motion from the Conservative group.

On a motion from Councillor Anthony Clarke, seconded by Councillor Brian Webber, it was

RESOLVED that

This Council:

- Notes that the Council has announced that it is due to implement an experimental bus lane running eastbound on Dorchester Street from the 20th January which will be operational seven days a week from 10am to 6pm each day for a period of up to 18 months, with a view to this experimental order becoming permanent.
- Notes the concerns of residents over the Dorchester Street bus gate and the likely impact of displaced traffic on nearby roads.
- Notes that the Council's traffic assessment suggests that up to 160 vehicles an hour could be displaced onto the A36 Pulteney Road at peak times, with up to 130 displaced onto North Parade.
- Is concerned by the lack of clearly defined objectives in relation to the Dorchester Street bus gate by which the success of the trial can be judged, as well as the lack of clarity over what monitoring of traffic movements and journey times will take place during the trial period.
- Is concerned that the Dorchester Street bus gate trial is not being implemented as part of a wider traffic management strategy and prior to the publication of the draft Transport Strategy by Mott Macdonald.

- Is concerned that the Dorchester Street bus gate trial is taking place at the same time as a number of other traffic projects are due to take place, including the three month closure by the Highways Agency of the A36 as well as the Rossiter Road/Widcombe Parade works.

Therefore Council resolves:

1. To request the Cabinet instruct Officers to limit the trial period for the Dorchester Street bus lane to a maximum of six months, with the trial to be paused during the period of the Rossiter Road/Widcombe Parade road works if this work commences before the end of the trial period.
2. To request that Cabinet publish a set of measurable objectives against which the success or otherwise of the Dorchester Street bus lane trial can be judged.
3. To request that Cabinet instruct Officers to undertake detailed monitoring of the impact of the Dorchester Street bus lane on nearby roads during the trial period, including the amount of displaced traffic, pollution levels and journey times on nearby roads.
4. To request that at the end of the trial period the Cabinet report back to Full Council the findings of the experimental bus lane, including its impact on displaced traffic and its success or otherwise when measured against the objectives mentioned in (2) above, before deciding whether to make the bus lane permanent.

[Notes

1. *An amendment moved by Councillor Caroline Roberts, seconded by Councillor Paul Crossley, which noted various points rather than expressing concern and proposed that the criteria for judging success and the detailed monitoring of impact be published and for consideration of restrictions being removed when major works would be taking place on alternative routes was lost with 27 Councillors voting in favour and 33 Councillors voting against.*
2. *The original motion was carried with 33 Councillors voting in favour, 23 Councillors voting against and 4 Councillors abstaining.]*

59 MOTION FROM THE CONSERVATIVE GROUP - A36 TEMPORARY CLOSURE AND HGV DISPLACEMENT

An officer briefing note had been circulated for this item and is available on the Minute book and attached electronically to the minutes.

The Council considered a motion from the Conservative group.

On a motion from Councillor Martin Veal, seconded by Councillor Alan Hale, it was

RESOLVED that

This Council:

- Notes that the Highways Agency has announced plans to close the A36 between Hantone Hill in Bathampton and the centre of Brassknocker Hill in the Spring due to essential maintenance work for a period of up to three months.
- Notes that the Council was unsuccessful in its recent attempt to implement a weight restriction on the A36 due to objections from Wiltshire and Somerset Councils, as a result of concerns over the displacement of HGV traffic.
- Maintains its ambition to find ways of reducing the number of HGVs travelling into and through Bath.
- Notes that the Council is continuing its dialogue with Wiltshire Council over cross-boundary traffic issues, including HGVs travelling through Bath.

Council resolves:

1. To request that Cabinet instruct Officers to work with Wiltshire and Somerset Councils to closely monitor the impact of the planned A36 closure on the displacement of traffic, with particular attention paid to the alternative routes used by HGVs during the closure period, with a view to building an evidence base to support the Council's position in relation to the need to reduce HGV numbers within Bath.
2. To request that Cabinet instruct Officers to monitor the impact on visitors numbers within the city and its attractions, as well as the revenue implications to parking and heritage services during the closure period.

[Notes

1. *The above resolution contains wording (as underlined) proposed by Councillor Caroline Roberts and accepted by the mover and seconder of the motion.*
2. *The above motion was carried unanimously.*

60 MOTION FROM THE RIVER CHAMPION, CLLR DAVE LAMING - B&NES SURFACE WATER AND RIVER FLOODING

An officer briefing note had been circulated for this item and is available on the Minute book and attached electronically to the minutes.

James Hurley made a statement regarding severe flooding across B&NES and the opportunities that arose to address the challenges it brought up. In response to a question from Councillor June Player about Mr Hurley's reference to the path Wessex Water are taking, Mr Hurley responded that Wessex Water have led a management group and are working on a collaborative approach with a move towards eco system solutions which use the environment to be more resistant. A copy of the statement has been placed on the Council's Minute book and is attached electronically to the minutes. The Chair indicated that the statement would be taken into account during the subsequent debate.

Councillor Dave Laming opened the debate and moved his motion, which was seconded by Councillor Nigel Roberts.

It was **RESOLVED**

This Council:-

- Notes and recognises the seriousness of flooding throughout the District.
- Recognises that people look to this Council to take action to minimise the risk from flood waters and debris in accordance with the Flood Water Management Act 2010.
- Recognises that homes and businesses have been damaged and in some instances destroyed due to these flood waters and debris.
- Notes that on Christmas Eve, the City of Bath came very close to a serious flooding incident and other areas of the District have also been subjected to very serious flooding. This is becoming more frequent.

Council therefore resolves:

1. To recognise that there is an established command structure which takes control when a flood emergency is imminent or occurs as set out in the Bath and North East Somerset Major Incident Plan and to propose that a multi-agency response group is established to oversee the implementation of the plan.
2. To instruct Officers to establish a Flood Board in accordance with the legislation to ensure partnership working, raise awareness of flood risk, promote resilience and undertake the necessary work required by the Flood Water Management Act 2010.
3. To develop a community resilience strategy and ensure that members and partner organisations are aware of the flood plans which are in place. To make sure that the strategy and plans are future proofed and aligned with existing and planned regeneration, flood defence and flood conveyance measures.
4. To ensure that the flood plans become a vital component of the Bath and North East Somerset River Strategy and can support Bath and North East Somerset Council in its role as Lead Local Flood Authority.
5. Under the leadership and guidance of the Council's Strategic Director for Place to urgently form a Round Table Working Group from the top level decision makers of the Canal & River Trust, the Environment Agency, Wessex Water, The River Regeneration Trust, and Senior Officers from this Council to discuss the river on a wider basis including flooding issues and proposed flood mitigation projects and other aspects such as usage.

6. To send a letter, signed by the Leader and the Chief Executive, to the Secretary of State for the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) requesting that they urgently commit to implement all aspects of flood defence in the light of recent flooding events, and to express strong concern at any proposal to remove funding for Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS).

[Notes

1. *This motion was carried with 45 Councillors voting for, 0 Councillors voting against and 12 Councillors abstaining.]*

61 QUESTIONS, STATEMENTS, PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

One question had been submitted by Councillor Roger Symonds. Three questions had been submitted by Councillor Brian Webber. Responses were circulated, placed on the Minute book and have been linked to the electronic record.

The meeting ended at 10.15 pm

Chair(person)

Date Confirmed and Signed

Prepared by Democratic Services

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My name is Jane Carter and I am the Branch Secretary for the B&NES Unison Branch.

Our Branch Executive committee are opposed to the cuts to the Children's Centre services for a number of reasons.

We are concerned about the loss of skilled employees from the Children's Centres. There are currently just over 127 Paid posts in Children's Centres. We don't know the detail yet but we anticipate that the cuts will see around half of those lose their jobs –around 60 posts.

These 60 paid posts can't be replaced by volunteers. The Councils own policy is very clear:

"Volunteers will only be used to provide additional or extended services to the community, to support the work of paid staff and not replace them"¹

Our Branch certainly recognises that volunteers have a crucial role in the success of Children's Centres and we value highly their work, alongside the paid, skilled, trained and qualified employees. The importance of a recognisable person and consistent approach in offering support and services to children cannot be underestimated.

Another reason why our Branch are opposing these cuts is that we understand the importance of the work that is carried out by the Children's Centres. We are fearful of the massive costs that will be built up for the authority in the future if you cut this really important service which can help tackle problems as early as possible.

The purpose of Children's Centres is to improve outcomes for young children with a particular focus on the most disadvantaged. We would be concerned about the most disadvantaged being reached if the skilled and qualified employees aren't there.

We welcome the finding of an extra £500,000 into the Early Years budget however we remain concerned that this still means massive cuts to the service for some of the most vulnerable in our community.

¹ Page 3, Bullet Point 2 under 2. Principles of the Document 'Volunteers at Bath and North East Somerset Guidelines for Managers and Staff

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**Speech given at Bath & North East Somerset Council
Regarding withdrawal of funding for the Child Contact Centre**

16th January 2014

Hugo Jenks, Bathampton, Bath.

hugo.jenks@gmail.com

Child Contact Centre

I wish to raise the matter of funding for the Child Contact Centre in Bath – the cut to its grant.

Child Contact Centres are so vitally important. To allow the absent parent, usually the father, to have time with his child. I know this from first hand experience as my own marriage failed. The Contact Centre where I then lived was brilliant, well organised and the volunteer staff helpful and understanding. I have much to thank them for. All too many children do lose contact with their father, and this is harmful both for the children and for him. It is well researched that children without their father in their life do less well, have a higher risk of criminal activity and drug taking, for girls a higher risk of teenage pregnancy.

How can the BANES Council not find the relatively modest sum of £8,500 per annum to support such an important service? This is a small amount of money in the context of overall Council expenditure.

Congratulations to Linda Wyon for being awarded an OBE. She founded the Bath Child Contact Centre in 1991. Her Majesty recognises the importance of this work, the Council should do too.

The Council is dominated by the Liberal Democrats Party. A slogan of the Liberal Democrats during the last General Election included: 'a fair chance for every child'. Do they really have no concept of how important the Child Contact Centre is?

Children are our future, it is our duty to pass on to them a decent and caring society, and the opportunities to permit them to thrive. Please do not cut the grant to the Contact Centre.

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Motion to the Council
Re Dorchester Street Bus Gate Trial

Officer Briefing Notes

Cabinet may not prefer to commit to specific dates for a suspension or evaluation of the trial. This will enable Cabinet and Officers to retain the freedom to take actions in the best interest of the public. For example, some unplanned major road works such as a collapsed sewer repair on an alternative road may require the temporary suspension of the restriction.

The physical works to sign and construct the restriction are due to begin on 13th January with some overnight work.

The scheme is being introduced with the following objectives:

- a) improving the environment in particular for pedestrians and cyclists in Dorchester Street;
- b) improving bus service reliability in Dorchester Street and in the vicinity of the bus and rail station interchange; and
- c) reducing the amount of extraneous car traffic circulating in this city centre location.

The scheme is being introduced prior to the completion of an overall Transport Strategy for Bath. The objectives of the scheme however align entirely with the objectives of the current Joint Local Transport Plan 2011 to 2016 and the objectives for the emerging Bath Transportation Strategy.

It also complies Composite Version Core Strategy(2013) objective 'B2 1h' (page 35) of making the central area "a place to, and in which people increasingly travel by walking, cycling or by using public transport"

The trial will run for approximately 6 months but will be stopped prior to commencement of the implementation of the Rossiter Road improvement scheme which is programmed for July 2014.

The scheme will be monitored by:

- a) measuring traffic volumes;
- b) assessing journey time changes through the STRAT-e-GIS journey time database. This database contains information gained by following a sample of vehicles travelling throughout the network and is a reliable basis for assessing journey time changes by time period;
- c) assessing changes in monthly average mean Nitrogen Dioxide levels through existing diffusion tube sites located around the affected network; and
- d) measuring the number of buses able to depart from the bus station during the peak hour (as monitoring shows that current conditions limit the number of departures possible).

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Motion to the Council
Re A36 temporary closure and HGV movements

Officer Briefing Notes

Officers have discussed alternative routes to Bannerdown Road with Wiltshire's officers but currently it remains the most suitable route for traffic to Colerne.

Officers from both Councils are continuing to work together to reduce the impact of HGV traffic.

Other works on the programme, such as Rossiter Road and flood mitigation works to enable the Bath Quays development, repairs to North Parade etc. will all have an impact on traffic heading into the city from the A36. Works to repair Cleveland Bridge are also planned for 2014 and will need to be programmed carefully.

Councils share 'street works' information as part of the Highways and Utilities Committee Meetings (HAUC) and as a result the impact of the closure of the A36 will be considered when approving any works.

All utility companies, such as Gas and Water are informed (in advance) of the works and are required to take these into consideration when planning their own works. This minimises delays on the alternative traffic routes.

The Council will take a proactive approach to this closure and routing of HGVs by communicating traffic information and updates will minimise the risk of reputational damage. Completing the roll-out of permanent VMS signs would enable the Council to provide traffic information for motorists but the proposed position for the VMS sign that would be of particular benefit during this closure has yet to be agreed.

Monitoring

The Council has an extensive set of automatic traffic counters (ATC) in place at the following locations:

- a) A362 at Writhlington
- b) A367 at Fosse Way
- c) B3110 at Midford Road
- d) A36 at Warminster Road
- e) A37 at Farrington Gurney

The Highways Agency also has an ATC counter further south on the A36.

These counters are all "classifiers" which means that they can differentiate between different vehicle classifications including HGVs. Changes in HGV flows will therefore be monitored.

Both Wiltshire and Somerset Councils have been contacted with a request to work closely on monitoring the effect of the closure. Wiltshire has an extensive set of classifier ATCs in place at the following locations:

- a) A350 on the Semington diversion
- b) A363 between Bradford on Avon and Trowbridge
- c) A363 at Harley Wick between Bradford on Avon and Batheaston
- d) A350 at Chalford south of Westbury
- e) B3105 south east of Staverton

Further discussions with Wiltshire and Somerset Councils are expected to identify whether any further monitoring sites are required.

The above should ensure that both the current traffic patterns and those occurring during the closure will be monitored and enable a comprehensive report to be prepared.

We will also monitor the impact of the closure on road accident statistics and the A4 Air Quality Zone as part of the evaluation. This may provide useful information to support future negotiations with DFT and neighbouring Councils.

Heritage Services have confirmed that it will be possible to do some monitoring to establish the impact of the A36 closure as a lot of the coach borne business comes via Stonehenge. Most of the carriers are aware of the closure and the need to find alternative routes.

Motion - River Avon Flooding

Officer Briefing Notes

The Council has statutory duties under the FWMA and has recently (in December 2013) appointed a Flood Risk Manager who is reviewing the legislative requirements and, alongside other officers, developing a work plan to be agreed with the Cabinet Member.

Officers have developed a good working arrangement with the Environment Agency and will be establishing a Flood Board to oversee this area of work. This is a public forum and the first meeting is likely to take place in March 14.

Following a meeting with the Council's River Champion, officers are now planning to meet and work with a number of potential partners including the River Regeneration Trust.

Recognising the limits on the budget, officers will seek external funding opportunities through the EA and other partner organisations. Cabinet has already shown a commitment to this area of work and, subject to the budget process, intends to make an additional capital investment of £200K in 2014/15 to enhance flood protection/mitigation in Chew Valley.

River Dwellers have now received formal recognition from the Council.

The Council has developed multi agency response arrangements and has a Major Incident Response Plan. Although further development of this is planned, the current service has received praise from the emergency services for the professionalism and skill with which recent flood responses have been managed by the Council.

The Council's Drainage Team will continue to work closely with fellow officers to ensure that the regeneration agenda receives appropriate technical support to mitigate flood risk.

The implementation of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) was scheduled for April 2014. The government has not yet confirmed this however and there has been some recent media coverage, primarily about who will meet the costs. The authority awaits further guidance from the government.

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Submission by James Hurley to Council on 16th January 2014

Chair, Council and Councillors:

My name is James Hurley. I am an independent sustainability consultant, a scientist and a trustee of The River Regeneration Trust which is a B&NES initiative. I have previously worked in Antarctica for the British Antarctic Survey, the Building Research Establishment in London and Hyder Consulting in UK and the Middle East. I wrote the initial Sustainability Strategy for the Olympic Park in London, provided sustainability guidance to Crossrail and developed design advice for Falcon City of Wonders in Dubai. I have represented Central Government on the international stage and am widely published.

The severe flooding in Bath, Keynsham and across B&NES this festive season was the third in two years. Nationally this has been a disaster that has cost UK plc billions of pounds and devastated lives, livelihoods and businesses. For some, it has been the final straw and they have ceased trading which will have major impact on families. This is the personal as well as business dilemma; consider the loss of revenue to Bath alone from the recent flooding?

The severe flooding in Bath, Keynsham and across B&NES is not just a local phenomenon; it is a global response to climate change that is real, which will get worse and will have greater impact now and in the future. It is also a catchment phenomenon; B&NES has a responsibility and a duty of care to play its part in flood risk, prevention, defence and conveyance as much as bordering councils in the Bristol Avon Catchment with over 15,000 properties at risk.

The severe flooding in Bath, Keynsham and across B&NES is an opportunity as well as a threat. We have to protect the World Heritage status of Bath and the revenue that it brings. As the Lead Local Flood Authority, B&NES has to lead other responsible authorities in the management of local flood risk whilst having consideration for other areas. BaNES has to implement their local flood risk management strategy, report on flooding incidents, maintain an asset register, be the SuDS Approved Body and issue consents for works in water courses. B&NES has access to great engineers, hydrologists and ecologists including internationally recognised organisations like Black & Veatch, Atkins, Hyder and AECOM. B&NES has at its disposal a significant number of detailed proposals, strategies, plans and solutions, but are they sufficiently comprehensive or innovative?

This flood risk opportunity in B&NES requires a framework solution and the urgent establishment of a Working Group at the highest level that includes the key authorities and stakeholders, major landholders and property managers. This Working Group will bring forward a coordinated approach to flood risk, prevention, defence and conveyance. Yes there are engineering challenges, but I would say insufficient thought or revenue potential has been considered from ecosystem solutions that integrate leisure and jobs. This would include green jobs, constructed wetlands, marinas, riverside homes, water parks and learning centres.

Although the severe flooding in Bath, Keynsham and across B&NES has been devastating and an array of previous studies has shown what the cost would be for defence and conveyance, we need to maximise the economic, social and environmental value and benefits of water and flood assets. We need to understand what others have done and how that can be applied in B&NES; for example, constructed wetlands that give us flood and drought compensation, riverside homes and houseboats as they do in the Netherlands, water parks for sports and visitor spend, learning centres that teach our schools and universities the value of water and wildlife, manufacturing of homes, houseboats and walkways for these waterside parks and wetlands. This is the Circular Economy. In this way, B&NES will combat climate change and associated flooding whilst constructing income-generating activities to pay off capital costs and maintain assets. This is exactly the path that Wessex Water is promoting, itself scrutinised by Ofwat as a pathfinder for UK water companies.

Chair, Council and Councillors I would say this. Climate Change is our Georgian challenge. We need a Brunel mind-set that speculates to accumulate. You have the capacity and capability at your fingertips through your framework consultants and a willing populous. Together, B&NES and a Working Group of key Stakeholders can make this happen and deliver a worthy solution to preserve a world heritage asset and act as a pathfinder for Bath and UK plc alike. This will be our River Strategy.

Thank you.

Ofwat: The Water Services Regulation Authority) is the economic regulator of the water and sewerage sectors in England and Wales

SuDS: Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems

Councillor Questions for Council 14th November 2013

(NOTE: The following question and response will be published on the Council's website as soon as possible after the meeting and linked to the published draft minutes of this meeting.)

1. Question from Councillor Roger Symonds

The bookshop tasked with promoting and selling books at the forthcoming Lit Fest is Waterstones/WH Smith, a national bookseller. This is a change from the previous bookshop, Mr Bs. Mr Bs is a local bookshop run by local people and fulfils the the Council's new procurement policy, so why was the Festivals Trust allowed to bring in a National Bookseller, which does not seem to fall within the Procurement Policy.

Can the Cabinet member clarify whether the Procurement Policy applies to "arms length" companies funded mainly by the Council, such as the Festivals trust and BTP. If not does the cabinet member agree with me that it should? If so what does he propose to do about this?

Answer from Cabinet Member for Sustainable Development

The Council's new Procurement Strategy was agreed by Cabinet in March 2013 and was formally launched at a "Meet the Buyer" event in October 2013.

As part of the framework a Social Value Policy and Toolkit has been developed which supports the principals of the "Think Local" policy throughout the supply chain. This will allow us to influence the behaviours of organisation that we fund or partner. This will be introduced as we re - commission services or by mutual agreement with partners.

In response to Cllr Symonds question regarding the change of booksellers at the Literature Festival the Council's current funding agreement requires the Bath Festival:-

"To ensure that it pays a fair market price for all goods and services which it purchases, and that Board members and staff declare any conflict of interest when selecting a supplier for the Organisation"

Clearly we would encourage partner organisations to "Think Local" however in this case it relates to a sponsorship opportunity, not a purchase of services. The process was conducted in the same manner as a tender process and was approved by the Trusts Board. This requires the Trust to take other factors into account to ensure the sustainability and success of the festival.

In return for supplying bookselling services to the Literature Festival, the supplier gets their name and logo prominently on the Literature Festival publications and on the website and physical presence at the events.

It is important to recognise in relation to the above points that Waterstones have a local high street presence with a shop in Bath City centre and consequently employ local people.

2. Question from Councillor Brian Webber

Within what period of time does the Council's code of practice expect written enquiries from members of the public to receive a reply or, if a full reply is not practicable in that timescale, a holding reply indicating how the enquiry is being progressed?

Does the same timescale apply to written enquiries from members of the Council addressed to individual officers?

Answer from the Leader of the Council

The current published standard for an acknowledgement by letter is 5 working days and a full response to a complaint within 15 working days. However, these measures have been in existence for a long time and are not consistently measured across the Council. They are now being reviewed along with response times for all forms of customer communications as part of a One Council Customer Service Excellence approach.

The Protocol on Councillor/Officer Relations within the Council's Constitution (approved by the Council on 12 September 2002 and updated following consultation with Group Leaders in November 2012) contains the following section at part 3.1 (d); 'Councillors can expect from officers [...] - Timely response to enquiries and complaints – as a minimum standard, the Council's targets for public enquiries of acknowledgement within 5 working days and substantive reply within 20 days will apply.

3. Question from Councillor Brian Webber

The requirement that a mid-year Treasury Management Monitoring Report be submitted to full Council stems, I understand, from the CIPFA Treasury Management in the Public Services Code of Practice (November 2011 edition), which the Council is required by regulations under the Local Government Act 2003 to follow or at least to have regard to. Please could the relevant extracts from the Code and the regulations be placed for perusal in the office of the Members' Secretary? Would it be in order for the Council to delegate the consideration of the mid-year Treasury Management Report to either the Corporate Audit Committee or the Resources Policy Development and Scrutiny Committee, who would have more time to devote to the task?

Answer from Cabinet Member for Community Resources

I would be happy to arrange for a copy of the code to be made available to members.

The Council is required by law (capital finance regulations 2003) to have regard to the CIPFA Code. Our treasury advisers Arlingclose, have indicated that they believe the phrase "have regard to" is understood to mean fully comply with, unless you have a good reason not to, where the good reason is something that was not foreseen by the Code.

One of the Code's recommendations is that the full Council will receive regular reports on treasury management including as a minimum a mid-year review.

The idea behind the mid-year report came from the CLG select committee into Iceland banks, where MPs were concerned that members would set a strategy in February and not get an out-turn report on that strategy for 18 months. Treasury management is one activity of the Council that can accidentally cost millions, so it is felt appropriate for Council to give this due attention.

Should the Council decide it did not wish to receive a mid-year treasury management report then the Council's Section 151 Officer would need to note partial non-compliance in the Council's prudential indicators. The Section 151 Officer would also need to refer to personal professional obligations under the CIPFA standard of professional practice on treasury management.

4. Question from Councillor Brian Webber

In urban streets bordered by trees, much leaf and sludge has accumulated in the gutter and/or at the inside edge of the footway. Which team is responsible for clearing these accumulations, because they seem too much for the manual broom-and-handcart litter sweeper, while mechanical clearance is often rendered impractical by the presence of parked cars?

Accepting that the recent exceptional weather must have made clearance more difficult, is clearance proceeding more slowly this year? Has there been any reduction in the time and manpower devoted to this service?

Answer from Cabinet Member for Caroline Roberts

Autumn is a challenging time for the cleansing teams and has been even more challenging this year because the absence of heavy frosts early in the season and the exceptional weather conditions meant that leaf fall continued into December. This has meant the leaf drop has generally been slower (over a longer period of time) and has therefore taken longer to clear. On top of the late season, staff have prioritised work connected with recent flooding and storm events and this has placed pressure on the service. There has been no reduction in manpower or time devoted to this service.

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