

BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET

CABINET

Wednesday, 11th January, 2012

The decisions contained within these minutes may not be implemented until the expiry of the 5 working day call-in period which will run from 13th to 19th January. These minutes are draft until confirmed as a correct record at the next meeting.

Present:

Councillor Paul Crossley	Leader of the Council
Councillor Nathan Hartley	Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Early Years, Children and Youth
Councillor David Bellotti	Cabinet Member for Community Resources
Councillor Simon Allen	Cabinet Member for Wellbeing
Councillor Tim Ball	Cabinet Member for Homes and Planning
Councillor Cherry Beath	Cabinet Member for Sustainable Development
Councillor David Dixon	Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods
Councillor Roger Symonds	Cabinet Member for Transport

122 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair was taken by Councillor Paul Crossley, Leader of the Council.

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

123 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

The Chair drew attention to the evacuation procedure as set out in the Agenda.

124 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were none

125 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST UNDER THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

Councillor Nathan Hartley declared a personal interest under Item 12, Radstock Roads TROs, because he was a Director of the Norton Radstock Regeneration Company.

126 TO ANNOUNCE ANY URGENT BUSINESS AGREED BY THE CHAIR

The Chair announced that a report was to be considered by Cabinet which had been referred to the meeting under the Council's Special Urgency (Rule 16) provisions. The report related to the provision of superfast broadband in the district. Copies of the report had been placed in the public gallery before the meeting.

127 QUESTIONS FROM PUBLIC AND COUNCILLORS

There were 7 questions from Councillors: Councillors Brian Webber (4), Charles Gerrish, Malcolm Lees, June Player.

[Copies of the questions and response, including supplementary questions and responses if any, have been placed on the Minute book as Appendix 1 and are available on the Council's website.]

128 STATEMENTS, DEPUTATIONS OR PETITIONS FROM PUBLIC OR COUNCILLORS

Councillor Eleanor Jackson made a statement [*a copy of which is attached to these minutes as Appendix 2 and on the council's website*] about Victoria Hall, Radstock. She reminded Cabinet of the long history of promises and delays and explained that the situation was now critical, given that the Hall was due for closure on 1st March and many local community groups would from that date have nowhere to meet. She appealed for the Cabinet to make a commitment not to sell the building for offices, but to instruct officers to work with the local community to find ways of retaining the Hall as a community facility; and to arrange for a temporary management committee to run the building.

The Chair referred Councillor Jackson's statement to Councillor David Bellotti, for his attention.

Councillor Andy Furse mad *an ad hoc* statement relating to Item 13 on the Agenda (Kingsmead Square Cycle Llink). He appealed to Cabinet to bear in mind the needs and safety of pedestrians in Kingsmead Square and Monmouth Street, and offered a form of words which if incorporated into the proposals would meet his concerns.

The Chair confirmed that the cabinet would bear this in mind when considering the item.

129 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS CABINET MEETING

On a motion from Councillor Paul Crossley, seconded by Councillor David Dixon, it was

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 7th December 2011 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

130 CONSIDERATION OF SINGLE MEMBER ITEMS REQUISITIONED TO CABINET

There were none.

131 CONSIDERATION OF MATTERS REFERRED BY POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY BODIES

There were none.

132 SINGLE MEMBER CABINET DECISIONS TAKEN SINCE PREVIOUS CABINET MEETING

The Cabinet agreed to note the report.

133 RADSTOCK TOWN CENTRE HIGHWAY INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

Lesley Mansell (Chair, Radstock Town Council) made a statement supporting the proposals and asking for prompt implementation. She said there was a huge

majority in favour of the infrastructure improvements. She acknowledged that there were concerns about accessible parking for disabled drivers, and asked the Cabinet to address these issues.

Councillor Eleanor Jackson made a statement [*a copy of which is attached to the Minutes as Appendix 3 and on the Council's website*] in which she thanked the Cabinet for listening to the points made in previous consultations on the issue. She appreciated the effort put into consulting with local people. She felt that the NRR scheme had been better than the original proposals made in 1981, and that the current proposals were better than the NRR scheme. She still felt that it would be best to drop the proposals altogether, which would save the Council money and would avoid the disruption which the proposals would inevitably inflict upon the town. She expressed support however for the speed limit proposals; the weight limit proposals; and the increased disabled parking being proposed. She asked for a condition to be added to the TRO – that adequate temporary parking facilities be provided during the works, so that traders would not lose business as a result of the disruption.

Amanda Leon (Radstock Action Group) made a statement [*a copy of which is attached to the Minutes as Appendix 4 and on the Council's website*] in which she asked a number of questions which she said Cabinet had never answered. She therefore appealed to the Cabinet not to proceed with the scheme.

Gary Dando (Radstock Action Group) made a statement [*a copy of which is attached to the Minutes as Appendix 5 and on the Council's website*] in which he appealed to the Cabinet not to proceed with the scheme. He outlined three areas for concern which he felt must be addressed before the scheme could be reconsidered.

Cate Le Grice Mack (Chair, Norton Radstock Regeneration Company) made a statement [*a copy of which is attached to the Minutes as Appendix 6 and on the Council's website*] in which she welcomed the proposals and said that she felt they would improve air quality in the town.

George Bailey (Radstock Action Group) made a statement [*a copy of which is attached to the Minutes as Appendix 7 and on the Council's website*] in which he expressed concern about the proposals for The Street; asked Cabinet to ensure the future of a rail link in the town; and raised a number of other objections. He asked Cabinet to cancel the proposals.

Catherine Whybrow made a personal statement [*a copy of which is attached to the Minutes as Appendix 8 and on the Council's website*] welcoming the proposals which she said were essential to the town before regeneration could take place and which she felt would lead to a lively and safe town centre.

Heather Chipperfield made an *ad hoc* statement expressing support for the views of the Radstock Action Group and saying that the people of Radstock did not want the scheme to go ahead. She felt that the development and the road scheme were ill conceived.

Joanna Hilton in an *ad hoc* statement asked the Cabinet to understand the concerns about job losses and the problems faced by small businesses if their trade were to be disrupted.

Rupert Bevan in an *ad hoc* statement referred to the fears that the high street shops would be lost to Radstock. He called for a moratorium on the proposals.

Colin Curry in an *ad hoc* statement observed that the consultation had not asked the key question: "Do you want the redevelopment and traffic proposals to proceed?" The people of Radstock had answered this question because over 2000 had signed the petition calling for the scheme to be dropped. He presented a petition to Cabinet.

The Chair referred the petition to Councillor Roger Symonds for his attention.

Councillor Martin Veal in an *ad hoc* statement asked for clarity about the wording and date of the petition. The Chair asked the Democratic Services Officer to read aloud the wording, which was: "We, the undersigned, are totally opposed to the proposals to create a new road by diverting the Frome Road (A362) through the middle of Radstock". The petition contained 765 signatures and was not dated.

[Petitions containing 1326 signatures had been presented to previous Cabinets with the same wording.]

Councillor Rob Appleyard in an *ad hoc* statement expressed his concerns that the residents of his ward should be able to pass through Radstock when they needed to. He felt that the proposals did address this need. He felt that the local retailers should be delighted about the possibility of new housing, because it would bring with it a new local customer base. He welcomed the proposals, which he felt would be a starting point for longer term development.

Councillor Roger Symonds, in proposing the item, said that if approved, the proposals would signal the start of regeneration for Radstock. He thanked all the contributors to the debate and assured them that Cabinet had listened carefully to all the points made, and had in fact on a previous occasion asked for further work to be done to take on board the points being made. As a result, the proposals before Cabinet were very different from the ones originally put forward. He made a commitment to work with local retailers to minimise the parking restrictions during the works.

Councillor Paul Crossley seconded the proposals. He said that it had been a long journey to get to this point, but that the scheme being offered was one which the highway engineers believed would work. He said that officers would work hard to make temporary parking available for shoppers while the works progressed. He reminded the Cabinet that the housing options were still being considered and that the HCA funding was still available. He felt that it would set the scene for the next stages of regeneration for Radstock.

Councillor Simon Allen said that it was evident that the people of Radstock were very passionate about the future of the town. He was delighted that the scheme improved pedestrian crossings; introduced 20mph limits; and improved traffic flow. For these reasons, he felt the scheme would bring about improvements for the whole community.

Councillor Cherry Beath endorsed the previous comments. She felt that the local traders had confidence that the Council would work hard to ensure their businesses would not suffer during the works. She agreed with the comments made by Lesley Mansell about economic growth.

Councillor Nathan Hartley thanked the residents of Radstock for engaging with the consultation. He observed that the original proposals had not been drawn up to tackle the congestion suffered by the town, but that the present proposals did tackle it. He thanked Jacob Rees-Mogg MP, who had been supportive, and the local Labour Group who also supported the scheme. He referred to paragraphs 5.6 and 5.16 of the report, both of which showed that a majority of respondents had been in favour.

On a motion from Councillor Roger Symonds, seconded by Councillor Paul Crossley, it was

RESOLVED (unanimously)

(1) To IMPLEMENT the Radstock Regeneration and Highway Scheme;

- (2) To ABANDON the proposed Frome Road, Radstock Bus Lane Order;
- (3) To IMPLEMENT the Various Roads, Radstock One Way and Prohibition of Right Turn Order after it has been modified by the REMOVAL of Frome Road from Schedule 1 and Church Street from Schedule 2;
- (4) To IMPLEMENT the Alteration to Pedestrian Crossing - Wells Road (A367) Order; and
- (5) To IMPLEMENT the Various Roads, Radstock Authorised Parking Places Order as advertised.

134 (RULE 16) IMPROVING ACCESS TO SUPERFAST BROADBAND IN BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET: THE BROADBAND DELIVERY UK OPPORTUNITY

The Chair explained that the item had been brought to Cabinet under the Council's provision for Special Urgency (Rule 16). He drew attention to the report, which had been placed into the public gallery before the meeting [*copies of which are attached to these Minutes and are on the Council's website*].

Councillor Eleanor Jackson made an *ad hoc* statement emphasising the needs of small business for efficient, reliable broadband. She urged the Cabinet to adopt the proposals in the report.

Councillor Martin Veal in an *ad hoc* statement expressed his disappointment that Cabinet had not been able to consult on the proposals because of the urgency. He felt that the delay in adopting a scheme had caused confusion, and that it was essential that the Council should proceed with the plans.

Councillor Neil Butters in an *ad hoc* statement acknowledged that the Council had to look at all options, and observed that the option being proposed was half the price of the previous, rejected option. His constituents experienced dreadful broadband speeds, so a decision to proceed would be very welcome. He urged Cabinet to join the scheme, so that the economic benefits of superfast broadband could be shared by all.

Councillor Peter Anketell-Jones, in an *ad hoc* statement, said that he had been amazed to discover that in some areas 50% of people work from home and therefore rely on good communications technology. Adopting the proposed scheme would enable small businesses to take on bigger contracts.

Councillor Cherry Beath, in proposing the item, drew attention to paragraph 1.1 of the report, which explained the reasons for urgency. She thanked the officers who had put so much effort into preparing the report in such a short timescale, and who had negotiated the excellent arrangements with the "Connecting Devon and Somerset" project. She reminded Cabinet that they had always been committed to obtaining the best coverage, speeds and value for money. The previously rejected scheme had not delivered that, but the new proposals would deliver all three. In terms of cost, it would be £475K over 3 years, as opposed to more than £1M for the previous proposals. She referred to paragraph 5.5 of the report, which showed that the Council's investment would trigger further funding of £2.249M.

Councillor Paul Crossley seconded the proposal. He observed that the proposals made by the previous administration would have left parts of the area without coverage, despite the much larger cost; but the new proposals would offer 100% coverage at the greatly reduced cost to the Council. He thanked officers for the hard work they had done to negotiate the agreement.

Councillor David Bellotti said that he had previously raised the issue that 85% coverage for a cost of more than £1M was not good value. He now welcomed a scheme which would provide 100% coverage for £425K and felt that residents of rural areas would welcome this as a much better scheme.

On a motion from Councillor cherry Beath, seconded by Councillor Paul Crossley, it was

RESOLVED (unanimously)

(1) To AGREE, subject to the normal Council capital expenditure decision making process, to enter into an agreement with Somerset County Council, Devon County Council, North Somerset District Council and Plymouth and Torbay Councils to undertake a joint bid for Broadband Delivery UK funding to provide at least 2 Mbps to 100% of premises and superfast broadband of at least 20 Mbps to 85% by 2015;

As a result of which the Cabinet agrees:

(a) To COMMIT to BDUK to undertake the works;

(b) To AGREE to underwrite the BDUK allocation of £690,000;

(c) To AGREE to meet the terms and conditions of the 'Connecting Devon and Somerset' programme;

(d) To AUTHORISE capital expenditure of £475,000 and a potential call on capital contingency funds of a further £215,000 in accordance with (b) above;

(e) To AGREE to use £179,000 of available ERDF funding to contribute to business support activities as part of the overall BDUK programme;

(f) To DELEGATE authority to sign the programme agreement to the Strategic Director of Development and Major Projects in consultation with the Executive Member for Sustainable Development;

(g) To COMMIT appropriate support from existing resources to meet the 'Connecting Devon and Somerset' project timetable.

135 PROPOSED KINGSMEAD SQUARE CYCLE LINK, BATH

Councillor Tim Warren made an *ad hoc* statement in which he thanked Councillor Roger Symonds for his support for cycling; but saying nevertheless that he felt the proposals being considered would be dangerous, and a waste of money. He felt that cyclists should dismount to give way to the large numbers of pedestrians on the square.

Councillor Roger Symonds thanked Councillor Andy Furse for the statement he had made earlier in the meeting. He promised to take on board the suggested amendments to the proposals. He stressed that he saw no reason why the square should not become a shared space. The Council put pedestrians and cyclists at the top of their priorities, but in Kingsmead Square and Monmouth Street motors currently had priority.

In the light of Councillor Furse's suggestion, he moved a different proposal from the one shown in the report. The effect of the new proposal would be to safeguard pedestrians as they crossed the square.

Councillor David Bellotti was delighted that the proposals would reduce car usage in the vicinity of the square. He was however concerned that young children might still be at risk from speeding cyclists, so he was very pleased to support the "clearly defined pedestrian route". He seconded the proposals.

Councillor Roger Symonds observed that the raised table was for future consideration but that the clearly defined pedestrian route would greatly enhance the safety aspects of the scheme.

On a motion from Councillor Roger Symonds, seconded by Councillor David Bellotti, it was

RESOLVED (unanimously)

(1) To AGREE that the footway between Monmouth Street and Kingsmead Square is converted to a cycle track, together with a clearly defined pedestrian route across Monmouth Street and future consideration to include a raised table.

136 LAND AT WESTON RECREATION GROUND, WESTON, BATH

Councillor Malcolm Lees made an *ad hoc* statement in which he welcomed the redevelopment of the rec. He asked for a robust condition to be placed on the agreement to oblige Lovell Partnerships to make good and reseed after the work was completed.

Councillor David Bellotti, in proposing the item, said that the Council had made great efforts to consult with local people about the plans. He assured Councillor Lees that he would ensure the land was made good after the works were completed.

Councillor David Dixon seconded the proposal.

On a motion from Councillor David Bellotti, seconded by Councillor David Dixon, it was

RESOLVED (unanimously)

(1) To GRANT to Lovell Partnerships Ltd a licence to allow them to use the land identified in the Plan as a site compound for approximately 6 months.

137 BATH & NORTH EAST SOMERSET LOCAL SAFEGUARDING ADULTS BOARD ANNUAL REPORT APRIL 2010 - MARCH 2011

Councillor Simon Allen, in proposing the item, explained that the report before Cabinet had previously been signed off in November by the Local Safeguarding Adults Board. He asked Cabinet to approve the report.

Councillor Tim Ball seconded the proposal, observing that his ward contained the largest number of vulnerable adults in the authority's area. He welcomed the hard work being done to protect vulnerable people.

On a motion from Councillor Simon Allen, seconded by Councillor Tim Ball, it was

RESOLVED (unanimously)

(1) To APPROVE the report.

138 PROPOSED ARRANGEMENTS FOR DELIVERING HEALTHWATCH IN BATH AND NE SOMERSET 2012 - 2015

Councillor Simon Allen, in proposing the item, said that it was essential that users had a say in shaping the health services they received. The Council was acting in the role of pathfinder, and he was proposing that the existing LINK contract be extended to the end of June 2012; and that a new HealthWatch contract to replace it would be awarded to start from July 2012.

Councillor David Dixon seconded the proposal.

On a motion from Councillor Simon Allen, seconded by Councillor David Dixon, it was

RESOLVED (unanimously)

(1) To NOTE the Council's legal obligation as stated in the Local Government and Public Involvement in health Act 2007 to promote a smooth transition from LINK to HealthWatch;

(2) To EXTEND the contract of Scout Enterprises Ltd until 30 June 2012, on their current terms and conditions;

(3) To AGREE the procurement of a HealthWatch provider from 1 July 2012, who will act as LINK Host organisation from 1 July 2012 – 30 September 2012; and

(4) To DELEGATE to the Divisional Director (Policy and Partnerships) the authority to award the contract.

139 PERFORMANCE REWARD GRANT - MAIN FUND

Councillor Paul Crossley moved the recommendations. He explained that the reward money which had become available because the Council and its partners had successfully delivered the Local Area Agreement would, after evaluation, be allocated to projects with community support. The Local Strategic Partnership Board was due to make its recommendations in April.

Councillor Nathan Hartley seconded the proposal and said that he had been delighted to win this reward funding from government. He emphasised that this money was to be allocated at the local community level.

On a motion from Councillor Paul Crossley, seconded by Councillor Nathan Hartley, it was

RESOLVED (unanimously)

(1) To ENDORSE the recommendations of the Local Strategic Partnership Board in relation to next steps for the Performance Reward Grant Main Fund;

(2) To ASK for a further report and recommendations at its April meeting relating to funding for specific projects and to establish monitoring arrangements;

(3) To NOTE the progress made on other elements of the Community Enablement Fund; and

(4) To ASK for a further report at its February meeting relating to the element of the Fund designed to help disadvantaged communities, regeneration and localism projects.

140 ANNUAL REPORT ON THE COUNCIL'S DUTIES IN RESPECT OF PRIVATE FOSTERING ARRANGEMENTS

Councillor Nathan Hartley explained that for children under-16 (u-18 if disabled), local authorities did not register private carers, but did still have a responsibility for safeguarding the young people. He drew attention to paragraph 5.12 of the report, which showed that the Council offered support to privately fostered children and their carers. He recommended the proposals to Cabinet.

Councillor David Dixon seconded the proposal.

Councillor Tim Ball expressed his support. He was alarmed to hear that there were only 10 known foster families in the authority, when he was aware of many others in his own ward, some of whom do not contact the authority because they are afraid the children will be removed from the home. He felt that foster parents should be encouraged and supported, and that Member training should be provided on the issue.

On a motion from Councillor Nathan Hartley, seconded by Councillor David Dixon, it was

RESOLVED (unanimously)

- (1) To NOTE the report;
- (2) To AGREE the evaluation of the outcomes of the work in relation to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of privately fostered children;
- (3) To ASK the Divisional Director (Safeguarding Social Care and Family Service) to present an annual report to the Local Safeguarding Children's Board on how it safeguards and promotes the welfare of privately fostered children, including how it cooperates with other agencies.

141 POSITIVE ACTIVITIES FOR LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN

Councillor Liz Hardman, on behalf of the Labour Group, made an *ad hoc* statement expressing support for the proposal to allocate £10K to the Personal, Health and Social Education project.

Councillor Nathan Hartley thanked Councillor Hardman for her support. He said that at a time when many authorities were slashing their youth funding, this Council was able to increase funding for all strands of youth support. He explained the proposals in detail and moved the recommendations.

Councillor David Dixon seconded the proposal. He had been delighted to see so many organisations get support. He felt that there was a need to attract more applicants from outside the city of Bath.

On a motion from Councillor Nathan Hartley, seconded by Councillor David Dixon, it was

RESOLVED (unanimously)

- (1) To ALLOCATE £2,000 to support swimming, and the remaining funding to be used to support the two projects identified below;
- (2) To ALLOCATE £10,000 to support the Looked after Children PSHE Project; and
- (3) To ALLOCATE £13,000 to support the Youth Enablement Grant process in February 2012.

The meeting ended at 8.35 pm

Chair _____

Date Confirmed and Signed _____

Prepared by Democratic Services

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CABINET MEETING 11th Jan 2012

The following Statements and Questions had been registered by the time of publication.

REGISTERED SPEAKERS

There were 10 notices of intention to make a statement at the meeting. Where the intention is to speak about an item on the Agenda, the speaker will be offered the option to speak near the beginning of the meeting or just before the Agenda item.

Statements about issues NOT on the Agenda

- Cllr Eleanor Jackson
Re: Victoria Hall

Re: Agenda Item 12 (Radstock Roads)

- Lesley Mansell (Chair, Radstock Town Council)
- Cllr Eleanor Jackson
- ~~Robin Moss (Radstock resident)~~ (Registered but unable to attend)
- Amanda Leon (Radstock Action Group)
- Gary Dando (Radstock Action Group)
- Cate Le Grice Mack (Chair, Norton Radstock Regeneration Company)
- ~~Steve Bendle (Director, NRR Company)~~ (Registered but unable to attend)
- George Bailey (Radstock Action Group)
- Catherine Whybrow (personal capacity)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS - COUNCILLORS

M 01	Question from:	Councillor Brian Webber
There appears to be an increasing use of amplification and other electronic aids by buskers in the streets of Bath. I have no wish to stop busking, and I realise that one person's music is another person's noise. However, the excessive use of amplification is contrary to the spirit of the buskers' code of practice and is becoming a nuisance.		

Notwithstanding the legal and practical difficulties of enforcing the code, does the Cabinet Member accept that there is a problem and, if so, does he have any proposals for addressing it?

Answer from:

Councillor David Dixon

We recognise that there are some problems with buskers, particularly in the Union Street area within the city centre. Our approach has been to work with the Busker's Guild to communicate our concerns and expectations around how long buskers should play for and at what volume. Whilst this approach addresses the vast majority of complaints, we do continue to experience problems with one particular busker. The Council's Environmental Protection Manager, recently met the police and BID Rangers to determine how best to address this and similar problems in the future. It has been agreed that we will enforce noise abatement powers (under the Environmental Protection Act 1990) to deal with the minority of buskers who do not act reasonably and conform to the buskers code.

Supplementary Question:

I recognise that the Cabinet member cannot commit to a particular course of action but will he agree that in general, if action were taken only once under the Environmental Protection Act, this would have a salutary effect on the behaviour or others?

Answer from:

Councillor David Dixon

If it is possible to bring a suitable case, then action would be taken. We are looking at this in some detail.

M 02

Question from:

Councillor Brian Webber

Has an assessment been made of the likelihood that the Live Music Bill (now before Parliament), if enacted, could give rise to an increase in complaints about noise from amplified live music escaping from pubs and clubs in the centre of Bath or elsewhere? Did the Council submit any comments on the Government's wider proposals to deregulate entertainment from Schedule 1 to the Licensing Act 2003?

Answer from:

Councillor David Dixon

There has been no formal assessment carried out by the Council. It is however, possible that any increase in entertainment could lead to an increase in noise related issues. This is an assumption as it would depend on whether the lifting of the perceived burden of the Temporary Event Notice (TEN) system actually encourages businesses to provide more live entertainment. The Council's Environmental Protection team's powers to deal with noise problems will remain in place but the task of dealing with problem premises (should they arise) might increase the need to carry out more regulation outside of office hours. The team has an existing system and funding to do this should it be necessary.

It is important to remember that conditions attached to existing licences would remain in force, and will continue to be enforced, unless removed by the holder via an application to the Licensing Authority.

The Environmental Protection team contributed to a collective response to the consultation which was delivered by the regional Bristol, Gloucester, Wiltshire and Somerset Environmental Protection Group.

M 03	Question from:	Councillor Brian Webber
<p>Under the previous Administration proposals were gestating for the replacement of certain metered parking spaces in the Central Zone in Bath by spaces for resident's permit holders only. Does the current Administration intend to proceed with these proposals, and if so when?</p>		
Answer from:		Councillor Roger Symonds
<p><i>The survey completed as part of Bath Parking Strategy in 2009 indicates that there is currently availability for all residents within the zone and therefore further survey work would be necessary to update the findings to ensure that the changes are relevant and make best use of the asset for all road users.</i></p> <p><i>Early proposals were drafted in March 2011 for the removal of some Pay & Display bays within the City Centre to reserve the bays for use purely by residents. As those proposals would have an impact on the income to the authority provision would need to be made for this before being implemented. Current income from the Pay & Display within the identified roads is in excess of £30k per annum.</i></p> <p><i>Within the proposed forward plan for implementation of Traffic Regulation Orders I am currently considering, the identified proposals are scheduled for further consideration in financial year 2013/14 as the scheme is not of strategic or road safety benefit and therefore is not considered a high priority at this time.</i></p>		
Supplementary Question:		
<p>Is he aware that although the current administration is not bound by the policies of the previous one, nevertheless it had always been the intention that the introduction of parking meters in Pulteney Road would be a compensation for the loss of provision elsewhere?</p>		
Answer from:		Councillor Roger Symonds
<p><i>I will meet with Councillor Webber and will explore his ideas.</i></p>		

M 04	Question from:	Councillor Brian Webber
<p>(a) Have the Board of the Bath Recreation Ground Trust submitted their formal application to the Charity Commission seeking approval of the proposals on which there</p>		

was a public consultation in May 2011? If so, will the formal application to the Charity Commission be published, and when?

(b) If the Charity Commission assents to the Trust Board carrying forward negotiations with the prospective lessee of a new stadium, at what stage is it envisaged that the main terms of the proposed lease will be published for comment by the general public, and when is that stage expected to be reached?

(c) Do the Trust Board, by virtue of their delegated powers, have unlimited authority to enter into a lease on behalf of Bath & North East Somerset Council, who are formally the sole trustee of the charity?

(d) How and when is it envisaged that the Council will be given an opportunity to express a collective opinion on the proposed terms of the lease?

Answer from:

Councillor David Dixon

a) The full submission was despatched just before Christmas. Arrangements are being made to post a copy of the submission onto the Trust's website.

(b) The full terms of the proposed lease are commercially sensitive and will not be open for public debate. The Charity's independent advisors have reviewed the lease to ensure the interests of the Charity are protected. Concerns about operational issues will be addressed through the management committee.

(c) The Trust Board has delegated authority to enter into a lease on behalf of the sole trustee with approval from relevant statutory officers. The Board is obliged to act in the interests of the Charity and has sought and will continue to seek advice from appropriate independent advisors.

(d) The Trust Board is delegated to carry out the discussions on behalf of the Council as sole trustee. Full details have been submitted to the Charity Commission which will consider the merits of the proposals and the processes adopted to consult with beneficiaries. As this matter progresses it will be with full liaison with Cabinet and will follow the relevant approval processes required under the constitution.

M 05

Question from:

Councillor Charles Gerrish

Can the Cabinet Member please explain the six month delay to a decision on implementing yellow lines in Lockingwell Road and Charlton Park Keynsham, as well as to other parking schemes previously planned in the town?

Answer from:

Councillor Roger Symonds

I have previously explained why I decided to place progress on Traffic Regulation Orders in abeyance whilst I consider prioritisation and resources.

The proposed changes to the Traffic Regulation Orders in the noted locations were advertised in August 2011. Once the consultation has finished all representations and objections to the proposals must be considered fully by officers before recommendations are made to the Cabinet Member. The regulations specify that the order must be made within 2 years of the notice of the proposals being first published. Therefore the consideration of the proposals is within the defined timeframe for such considerations to be made. As the Councillor will be aware, the proposals included a large number of locations that had to be considered carefully and not just the 2 locations

noted.

Recommendations on "No Waiting At Any Time" restrictions at Lockingwell Road, Charlton Park and the other locations will be considered at the February Cabinet Meeting.

Supplementary Question:

May I ask whether the Cabinet member himself would be happy to be told that he would have to wait 2 years for a scheme in his own ward to be implemented?

Answer from:

Councillor Roger Symonds

I understand Councillor Gerrish's frustration and I will take steps to expedite the scheme.

M 06

Question from:

Councillor Malcolm Lees

The Cabinet Member previously indicated that a decision would be made on the proposed new residents parking schemes in Weston and Newbridge by the 18th of November. This deadline was missed. Could the Cabinet Member please therefore explain the reason for this and confirm when a decision will now be made?

Answer from:

Councillor Roger Symonds

As previously stated, I decided that there should be no further work carried out on changes to parking restrictions and the introduction of Residents Parking Zones whilst we take stock of what has been promised, what the current demands are and what our priorities should be across the whole of Bath & North East Somerset. This is in order that we can establish how best to plan and use the limited resource at our disposal for this work and ensure that any changes made are consistent with the authority's transportation priorities.

The work to categorise and present the report was significantly more difficult than anticipated and this led to a delay from officers submitting the findings to me. Officers also had to deal with a number of other significant issues arising in the meantime. I have however now received the report and will update all members on the plan once I have agreed it.

Supplementary Question:

Can he put a timescale on when he will report back? Is the authority in contact with the RUH about the difficulties caused by their staff parking on the road?

Answer from:

Councillor Roger Symonds

We will be contacting the RUH to ask about progress on their Parking Plan

M 07	Question from:	Councillor June Player
<p>What action is the Council prepared to take to restrict the To-Let signs in areas such as Westmoreland and Oldfield Park?</p> <p>Prior to 2009 I understand that there was a Gentlemen's Agreement amongst Estate Agents whereby To Let signs were not put up outside vacant properties. I would ask that this Council follow in the steps of other cities where To Let signs are being banned/restricted in problem areas. The signs increased and relentless annual appearance blights many streets. Due to the internet and its use by the students, there is no longer the necessity to display these signs. They are only of benefit to the Estate Agents for free advertising.</p> <p>Due to the failure of this Gentlemen's Agreement and the apparent disregard for the state and concerns of communities I ask that the Council seeks approval from the Sec. of State under the Town & Country Planning Act to direct that in future Estate Agents have to 'seek express' consent before they put up a sign in Bath and/or Wards that are heavily populated with HMO's.</p>		
Answer from:		Councillor Tim Ball
<p><i>It is acknowledged that the Council's existing policy and practice on a number of issues related to advertisements within Bath is in need of review. I have asked Officers to undertake this review and this will include the issue of For Sale and To Let signs. I understand there was a "Gentleman's Agreement" in place some time ago in relation to Conservation areas. However this was superseded by the current Article 7 control which imposes a more restricted regime in these areas. Consideration can be given to imposing such restrictions on areas beyond Conservation area boundaries. However before making this decision we would need to consult with all Groups and Organisations who may be affected by such a decision. I am expecting that work on this review including a brief setting out the scope of the work will commence in February this year following the end of the Core Strategy hearings. In the meantime I have asked officers to write to the local agents to request that they use restraint with regard to their advertising.</i></p>		

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS - PUBLIC

There were none

Had the Council meeting tomorrow not been cancelled, I was going to ask the Chair if I might raise the question of the future of the Victoria Hall as an urgent matter. The circumstances surrounding the impending closure of the hall on 1 March do make this an urgent matter, and I am very pleased that Cllr Bellotti has agreed to visit Radstock to assess the situation for himself. I bought a house in Radstock in 2003 because when I got off the 'bus when house-hunting, it 'spoke' to me, and told me of a community where I would be at home. Two years later, I had an epiphany, 'If I can't save the world (as the Class of '68 thought they could), I'll save the Victoria Hall.' I joined the Victoria Hall working party which produced a report, a survey and a plan for the future, which, however, was conveniently shelved by Cllr Darricott and not progressed. Presented with it in 2007, Cllr Hanney said that the future of the Victoria Hall must be treated as part of the 'holistic re-development of the centre of Radstock' but at least under pressure from the late Cllr Hall and myself, he authorised £40,000 of essential repairs and another survey.

Although the Victoria Hall has limped along since 2000 in limbo between B&NES and NRTC, it has flourished as the heart of community life and is well used by community groups, the silver band, a Pentecostal church and businesses every night of the week and at weekends. It is the only large community space capable of holding big meetings and with a proper kitchen could host many more parties and celebrations than it does at present. To board it up now would mean the dispersal, or even the end of some of these groups because there are no alternatives nearby. It needs LTC, proper management and committed volunteers, but Radstock Museum, Meadow View Residents Action Group and Radstock in Bloom members are by no means the only people committed to its future. It may well prove that there is a reverter on the site, as with other central Radstock buildings, or a covenant mirroring the one laid on Lady Waldegrave's first community hall on the site, built in 1866, which will constrain future use, but what is needed now is action.

I request cabinet, on behalf of the people of Radstock, first, to make a commitment not to sell it for offices or some other private purpose. Secondly, to instruct officers to work with the community to ensure a viable future perhaps on the model of the Old Town Hall in MSN, perhaps co-run by the Museum but in all cases to ensure that the vibrancy of night life in Radstock remains, and it provides for recreation and education as originally intended.

Finally, please arrange for a temporary management committee to run the building after 29 February.

Dr Eleanor Jackson, B&NES Councillor for Radstock.

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The TRO's for the new road layout in Radstock. Cabinet, 11 January

First, I have to thank Cabinet for listening to my exhortations in September to defer their decision until they had the right information, such as the analysis of the 2009 traffic flow survey, and had considered the wider implications of the new scheme. I appreciate the amount of effort which has gone into the consultation, and I only wish that the breadth and depth of the responses had been made available on the B&NES website for ordinary people to read. We are now much further forward, and I am glad that it appears that B&NES are listening at least some of the time to some of the things Radstock people say.

New councillors ought to study, 'Yes, Minister' and in particular the episode where Bernard explains that to get the answers you want, you have to make sure you have the right suggestive questions. If one compares this consultation with the June 2007 exercise, (and those 166 answers ought to be available, too) the question and answer are the same, the result inevitable. The NRR scheme was better than the 1981 'Brand's Hatch option', these orders lead to a considerable improvement on the NRR scheme. Yet having gone so far to meet the objections and keep the Frome Road open, one wonders why it is not possible to drop the whole scheme and save B&NES at least £400,000, and the traders considerable loss of earnings during the roadworks.

Yesterday I heard the arguments on Radio 4, only it concerned the Chiltern high speed railway. One might call it Concorde 4. Or the Rapid Transport Package 2. Why spend so much money to knock a few minutes' journey time off for those travelling *through* Radstock? We want to make it a vibrant local centre and a tourist destination. Lorries hurtling through the Street will ruin it. I am strongly in favour of speed limits and axle weights, but Adrian Clarke and his colleagues admitted they were unenforceable. We want to encourage existing businesses –and that means proper parking, accessible and free, and not congested space shared with flat dwellers and RADCO's clients.

The Methodist Church have asked to say that reversing Fortescue Road with no right turn on exit will cause enormous difficulties for weddings and funerals, and their elderly congregation need places nearby. If you are minded to allow these TROs, please place a condition that adequate parking for the traders be provided on the site or around it when the planning application is submitted.

More to the point, Cllr Crossley has twice publically stated, that without the housing development, there will be no changes to the road system. I believe him to be a man of integrity and request him now to renew that pledge. No houses= no road scheme. Perhaps add too, no reduction in parking as well.

Eleanor Jackson (Ward Councillor)

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B&NES Cabinet Meeting Wednesday 11 January 2012

Amanda Leon: Radstock Action Group

In support of 'the best preserved mining town centre in the country'.

Under the cloak of self-congratulation induced by deciding not to close the Frome Road, you are ushering in a set of proposals which are marred by inaccuracies and inconsistencies in the supporting paperwork and which fail to convince that there is anything in the alleged revisions which really puts the people of Radstock at the centre of the plan.

What started out as a plan to close the Frome Road as an essential part of housing development has transformed into 'Road Upgrade' (B&NES Press Release) via 'Tackling congestion in Radstock and kick-starting the economy' (B&NES document). Unfortunately, there is nothing in the current proposals which will upgrade the roads, let alone benefit those who visit, work and/or live in the town. What is the real reason behind all of this?

I wish to draw your attention to the following clarifications of the 'truth' as presented by B&NES. They are just selected examples, there are many more:

1. The 7.5 tonne weight limit applies only to limited parts of the new scheme and there is no indication of how it will be policed.
2. Even 7.5 tonne trucks are permitted to be 12 metres long – the manoeuvres required under the new scheme will result in congestion as large vehicles try to negotiate ill-thought out turns and traffic junctions; ultimately people will give up coming to the town.
3. Your consultation fails to ask the questions which would have given you answers you didn't want to hear. We didn't want the new road, so you said, 'OK we've heard what you say, but now tell us what you think of the finer details about the new road which you're getting anyway'.
4. B&NES claims variously a net loss of between 24 (Glen Chipp) and 17 (latest press release) parking spaces. According to B&NES, the new housing will have no parking and residents will have to park on the public highway. So more houses with no parking and, in addition, the elimination of at least 70 other parking spaces, only partially replaced.

As a cabinet, and as individuals, you need to be able to answer the following questions, and many more, before any further decisions are made:

1. Why have you not asked whether people want the new road, the traffic flow in Fortescue Road reversed or the Street made two way?
2. Where are the 40 new jobs coming from and how long will they last?
3. Why is the traffic modelling based on 2009 rather than current data and how do you explain the discrepancies between what is shown and the regular observations of those who live in Radstock?
4. How can traffic flow be reduced by turning a one way road into a two way?

5. Why do the 'improved' journey times cited in support of the scheme include breaking the new 20mph speed limit which is being proposed?
6. How is the large amount of money (£1.6m) cited going to be generated for the Somer Valley and how much of it will Radstock get?
7. Why have out of date maps been used in documentation?
8. It has been argued that this matter needs to be speeded up in order to get the £800K grant for the road from the Homes and Communities Agency. Is it not the case that if you don't build the road, you don't need the money?
9. Cllr Crossley has stated very clearly that there will be no road if there is no housing development. Why are plans for the road going ahead as there is no 'live' housing plan in existence?
10. What are the reasons for ignoring requests made for a moratorium until an integrated and sustainable strategic plan for Radstock is drawn up?
11. What is in any of this for Radstock?

Mr G R Dando,
Lyndhurst,
17, Meadow View,
Radstock,
BA3 3QT

19th December 2011

Mr G Chipp,
Strategic Director for Service Delivery,
Bath and North East Somerset Council,
Floor 1, South Block,
Riverside,
Temple Street,
Keynsham,
Bristol,
BS31 1LA

Dear Mr Chipp,

Response and objection regarding Radstock Regeneration and Highway Improvement Scheme

There are three areas on which I feel I must object and offer them for your consideration.

Point 1)

Is in relation to the change in direction of one way flow of traffic in Fortescue Road based on the grounds of health and safety. This will create danger in several ways.

Firstly the Puffin Crossing will be dangerously close to the proposed mini roundabouts for pedestrians and motorists.

Secondly large goods vehicles intending to travel towards Bath or Bristol will have to turn Left out of Fortescue Road onto the A367 facing in completely the wrong direction. This will encourage them, and possibly other vehicles, to U turn on the proposed new mini roundabout. This type of lay out is contrary to recommendations in Highway Agency Guidelines Ref DMRB 2007 Section TD 54/7 Pt 2 Chapter 2 Para 2.7 and 2.1 around road safety and feel this scheme is ill conceived and dangerous.

As this is a major road scheme I believe there should be an independent safety audit completed as a matter of urgency before further money is wasted.

Point 2)

Changes to car parking bays as a result of the NRR Scheme

The proposed building of 210 houses will seriously affect the availability of parking not only for the residents of these properties but also for other local residents. There are currently fifty parking bays at the Victoria Square car park which will be lost. Reducing the number of spaces will seriously

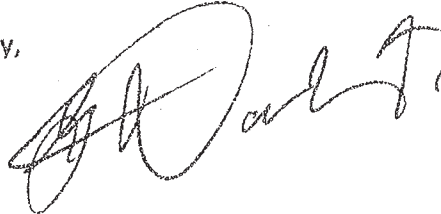
impact upon public access to facilities such as the Doctors Surgery, Royal Mail Delivery Office and other local businesses. Hardly an act of regeneration more an act of degeneration.

Point 3)

The proposal of two mini roundabouts as opposed to a single large one has been defended on cost benefits. The suggestion of £1.4 Million pounds is a figure I suggest is grossly inflated but even in relation to this exaggerated amount the cost of public safety can't be equated. Safety, instead of a primary consideration, is, on this plan, falling somewhere much further down the list.

I look forward to receiving your response.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Paul J.', written over a large, stylized circular flourish.

The Highway Agency has issued new guidelines for mini-roundabouts ref. Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) August 2007, section TD54/07 Part 2, Chapter 2. This sets the standard for trunk roads but should also be relevant to the mini-roundabout at the junction of A367 and the Street because of the volume of traffic handled including more heavy goods now, because of weight restrictions on Cleveland Bridge, Bath.

Para 2.7 of the manual states the use of mini-roundabouts is not recommended at or near junctions where turns in or out of side roads are prohibited.

This is because drivers do not expect to see vehicles u-turning on mini-roundabouts. The exit from Fortescue Road is left turn only requiring Midsomer Norton and Bath bound vehicles to u-turn on the mini-roundabout. This is unsafe for road users as indicated in this manual B&NES maintains that there is no evidence that vibrations from vehicles cause structural damage to buildings. In this case, why are they restricting traffic over Pulteney Bridge and Cleveland Bridge and through traffic in front of the Royal Crescent, Bath etc?

Norton Radstock Regeneration Company was set up by Bath and NE Somerset and the Regional Development Agency to find ways of redeveloping the redundant railway lands in a manner that would increase opportunities for housing and employment within the town and bring the heart back into the town centre.

In the years following the decline of the mining and associated railway activity there has been little investment in the infrastructure of the town, to cope with the rapidly growing levels of car and lorry traffic passing through it. We therefore welcome this proposal to improve the traffic flow and thereby improve the air quality within the town.

However this must not be the full story of the transport improvements: as traffic levels grow there will need to be further investment in reducing the amount of through traffic, while developing and promoting less carbon-emitting methods of travel and connections within the town, and we look forward to working with your Transport department to identify these..

C Le G M
9th Jan 2012

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Statement to Bath & North East Somerset Cabinet, 11th January 2012
Regarding Norton Radstock TRO's

I will consider just a few points as I am sure there are other members of the public here tonight who will be looking at others and in more detail.

- There are no statistics on how much traffic will be using the new Link Road and The Street, but it is obvious there will be considerably more than at present, all travelling past the Victoria Hall which is part of a Conservation Area.
- On Friday 6th January at 8:30 p.m there were 4 buses stopped in The Street. We must expect this situation to be repeated earlier in the day when there is more traffic and less space in the Link Road. Yet another cause of traffic jams.
- How will the 7.5 tonne weight limit be enforced? What chance is there that it will be as rigorous as the bus-gate in Bath?
- The traffic statistics presented for the Consultation were at best an estimate of usage in the future, using the current layout and that proposed. There was no attempt to remove some of the unknowns by using current volumes and then modelling the flows. No attempt was made to differentiate between HGV's and private vehicles.
- Radstock needs access to the benefits of easy access to the national (and international) rail network. The road is likely to adversely affect this, but now is the time for this Authority to establish its support for a railway in principle by ensuring that roads and future Planning Applications do not adversely affect this.
- One of the stated objectives of the road is to "aid regeneration". Tourism is an essential part of any economy, so it needs to be encouraged. A typical example of course is Bath which aims to attract visitors from all over the world and without them would be considerably poorer. It is therefore surprising that this Authority is content to spoil that opportunity for

Radstock by re-directing so much traffic through the town centre and reducing parking places.

- Finally, we have seen a typical example of “project creep”. Initially, the road was part of the whole NRR development project: then it became “to support regeneration” and finally “to improve traffic flow” was included. A Project Manager is fully aware that such changes always cost: a much larger project, the NHS aim of unifying patient records ran many times over budget largely due to “moving the goal-posts”. Fortunately, that project was cancelled!

For the reasons above and the fact that no quantifiable benefits have been published, I ask that this project is also cancelled.

Thank you for time.

George Bailey

Catherine Whybrow's address to B&NES cabinet 11th Jan 2012

I am a director of NRR, nominated by Radstock Residents Association, giving my personal view.

Radstock has an unusual settlement pattern with most housing on the hills round old coal pits. The centre was mainly streams, roads and railways. In 1958 Pevsner wrote: "Radstock is really desperately ugly." We were told once the railways had gone we would get a proper town centre. Even then the County of Avon said the nine-road junction was one of their worst, as they put in the double roundabouts and a new bridge to stop the flooding.

Radstock has improved. We have the artistic wheel, the museum, two cycleways, two parks, and a Conservation Area. We are "the best preserved mining town in Southern England", a backhanded compliment. But we still have bad traffic jams and no proper town centre. You gave the old railway lands to NRR to develop and to enable a new road pattern for Radstock.

In 2003 NRR had extensive local consultations about the road pattern hoping to find a clear solution. No such luck. All the solutions have big problems. We opted for sending all the traffic to the south thus clearing the centre and north side for a more pedestrianised town centre, passed with our 2007 plans.

But Radstock always hated the new pattern because it attacked what centre we do have at present only in anticipation of providing a new one. Those who only disliked the traffic joined with anti-NRR campaigners (NIMBYs and those passionate about nature or steam railways) to form a formidable protest group. So your highways department last autumn reassessed the proposed changes, and used new modelling techniques to come up with a better way to ease the peak-time traffic flow. It keeps Frome Road open, only sends lighter traffic through the centre which then has 20 mph restrictions, it provides a new bus station and extra pedestrian crossings. (I was on a B&NES committee which put 2 new pedestrian crossings in Radstock; they really helped.)

My main aim is for a lively and safe town centre. I think this is the best we can get. Radstock can produce objectors to any traffic pattern but all developments in Radstock are on hold until the roads are settled. The centre needs more residents and our young people need the housing. Radstock needs this decision now. Please let regeneration finally go ahead.

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Bath & North East Somerset Council

MEETING:	Cabinet	
MEETING DATE:	11th January 2012	EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN REFERENCE:
		E2369
TITLE:	Improving access to superfast broadband in Bath and North East Somerset: the Broadband Delivery UK Opportunity	
WARD:	All	
AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM		
List of attachments to this report:		
Appendix 1: "Connecting Devon and Somerset" project presentation		
Appendix 2: Connectivity Maps		
Appendix 3: Alternative Technologies Overview		
Appendix 4: Responses on broadband from communities		

1. THE ISSUE

1.1. This report is being tabled under 'Special Urgency' measures (Rule 16) due to:

(1) the DCMS announcement that they are bringing forward the BDUK deadline for submitting a Local Broadband Plan from December 2012 to end of February 2012;

(2) the timetable of the 'Connecting Devon and Somerset' project (Appendix 1), this being the only Cabinet meeting available prior to a decision being required about joining the project.

1.2. A Local Broadband Plan is required by Broadband Delivery UK to access funding from Government for bringing superfast broadband infrastructure to 90% of all premises in Bath and North East Somerset.

1.3. In order to access the BDUK funding a final plan needs to be agreed with the Government by the end of April.

1.4. Somerset County Council, Devon County Council, North Somerset District Council and Plymouth and Torbay Councils have a joint project called 'Connecting Devon and Somerset' which could meet these timescales and which is open to B&NES to join.

2. RECOMMENDATION

The Cabinet decides whether to:

2.1. To enter into an agreement with Somerset County Council, Devon County Council, North Somerset District Council and Plymouth and Torbay Councils to undertake a joint bid for Broadband Delivery UK funding to provide at least 2 Mbps to 100% of premises and superfast broadband of at least 20 Mbps to 85% by 2015. In this event, Cabinet will need to:

2.1.1. Make a commitment to BDUK to undertake the works

2.1.2. Agree to underwrite the BDUK allocation of £690,000

2.1.3. Agree to meet the terms and conditions of the 'Connecting Devon and Somerset' programme

2.1.4. Authorise Council Capital expenditure of £475,000 and a potential call on capital contingency funds of a further £215,000 in accordance with para 2.1.2 and

2.1.5. Additionally, use £179,000 of available ERDF funding to contribute to business support activities as part of the overall BDUK programme (see 5.5.3)

2.1.6. Delegate authority to sign the programme agreement to the Strategic Director of Development and Major Projects in consultation with the Executive Member for Sustainable Development

2.1.7. Commit appropriate support from existing resources to meet the 'Connecting Devon and Somerset' project timetable

This option will be subject to the normal Council capital expenditure decision making process.

OR

2.2. Not to undertake a joint bid and instead to proceed with an alternative project to identify how internet access can be brought to as many of our residents as possible. This would include investigating the development of community opportunities in our villages and rural areas.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1. £475,000 of funding from the capital programme over three years to cover the Council contribution to the joint costs of project management, procurement and capital works, in partnership with Somerset County Council, Devon County Council, North Somerset District Council, Plymouth and Torbay Councils. The anticipated profile of this capital expenditure is £175,000 (2012-13), £150,000 (2013-14) and £150,000 (2014-15).

3.2. If Cabinet decides to take this option, there would be a revenue cost of up to £75K per year by 2014-15 for borrowing and capital repayment assuming an asset life

around 10 years. This will be factored in against the revenue budget headroom available as part of the 2012/2013 Budget process. The Revenue Budget, Capital Programme proposal and related Borrowing Approvals are subject to the approval of the Full Council in February and so any decision is subject to this confirmation.

3.3. Recognising the need to underwrite up to a total BDUK allocation of £690k, there is a risk that the Council will be required to find an additional £215k of funding for this project. In the absence of other identified funding this would represent a potential call on the Council's capital contingency provisions.

3.4. Or £50,000 of initial revenue funding will be required to develop an alternative project to identify how internet access can be brought to as many of our residents as possible. The longer term costs to deliver improved broadband access to 85% premises under this option are unknown, but are estimated to be in the region of £3m.

4. CORPORATE PRIORITIES

4.1. Improving broadband infrastructure supports the following Corporate Priorities, set out in more detail in section 5.2:

- Promoting the independence of older people
- Improving life chances of disadvantaged teenagers and young people
- Sustainable growth
- Addressing the causes and effects of Climate Change
- Improving transport and the public realm

It in turn support policies and aims set out in the following documents:

- Infrastructure Delivery Plan 2010
- Draft Core Strategy 2011
- The Local Strategic Partnership's Sustainable Community Strategy 2009-2026
- The Economic Strategy for Bath and North East Somerset 2010 – 2026
- Future Council and Service Transformation report 2010
- Vision for Bath and North East Somerset 2006.

5. THE REPORT

5.1 Technical Information

5.1.1. Technologies are in development which offer real alternative solutions to fibre optic cable for rural broadband. These are outlined in appendix 3. There are acceptable download speeds (10 Mbps) but upload speeds are restricted (4 Mbps) and to achieve these through satellite the cost is prohibitive for many individuals at £85 per month.

5.1.2 With the latest technology for satellite broadband having only just gone live, improvements to the restriction on upload speeds are likely to be incremental due to the nature of satellite technology. Similarly, costs decreases are likely to be

incremental also, due to the massive investment of £0.5b for the latest KA technology satellite needing to be recouped over its lifetime of 15 years¹.

5.1.3 Fibre optic cabling is seen as the preferred solution by specialists consulted in broadband technologies, even the technical specialists in satellite broadband and the other alternative technologies currently on trial.

5.1.4 Shared solutions such as wireless or white space can have their capacity completely compromised by one user gaming or streaming video and are seen to be suitable only as a last resort or for extremely isolated rural communities on a small scale.

5.1.5 Certainly, alternative technologies have their applications. BDUK see satellite technology as appropriate to the final 1-2% of premises across the country in remote rural areas or those with particular topographical challenges and a Rural Community Broadband Fund is designed to facilitate delivery of these kinds of projects, but in order to access this funding and any future rounds a Local Broadband Plan is required.

5.2 Impacts on Individuals and Communities

5.2.1 Broadband has the potential to promote the independence and well-being of older people by: helping to provide better and more equal access to public services, reducing the sense of isolation through the use of social media, and enabling older people to remain economically and socially active by providing better infrastructure for home-working.

5.2.2 Encouraging greater use of broadband holds great potential for older people who find it harder to access healthcare services, by allowing better access to online diagnostic information, and in future by potentially allowing communication and support from healthcare and social service professionals via video-linking.

5.2.3 Online learning tools are now commonplace and distance learning is increasing in popularity. Learndirect, Open University and BBC Learning are ever increasing their online offering. As more learning resources become available online, it is likely that those households with adequate broadband connections, and which can afford broadband packages, will benefit more than those with slow or inadequate connections.

5.2.4 There is some evidence that ownership of a computer at home is linked with better GCSE results². It is therefore important that teenagers and young people living in more rural areas have as much opportunity to access broadband services as their urban counterparts.

5.2.5 The Draft Core Strategy, the Economic Strategy, and the Sustainable Community Strategy all highlight the importance of sustainable growth across the District. That is, encouraging private sector investment and jobs growth in appropriate areas to replace recent private and public sector job losses, and enabling more rural local centres to play their part in this process. Broadband infrastructure would help to facilitate this process.

¹ The KA band covers the frequencies of 26.5–40 GHz.

² Schmitt and Wadsworth (2004), as quoted in "Mind the Gap: Digital England, a Rural Perspective", Commission for Rural Communities (2010)

5.2.6 The increased ability to work and set up businesses from home would reduce the need to use the road network, thereby contributing to a reduction in congestion and pollution around our main urban areas (including Bath).

5.3 Impacts on Business

5.3.1 Entrepreneurs are very likely to at least start their businesses at home, largely due to the risk of taking on overhead costs in the early stages of business development.

5.3.2 Fast, reliable internet connectivity is critical in allowing home-based businesses to develop markets and communicate with customers, suppliers, and to connect with other remotely located staff.

5.3.3 Roughly one third of the population in B&NES is based in more rural areas. We estimate that around 40,000 people live in areas which are more susceptible to low internet speeds. Improving broadband connectivity to these areas would provide better conditions for start-ups in these rural areas, especially in higher value-adding sectors (see paragraph below)

5.3.4 Supporting our smaller rural centres: should more people be able to take up flexible work practices (home working) and start businesses in their home, it is likely that this could contribute to increased spend in, and use of, local high street shops and amenities

5.3.5 Improving business productivity: enhanced broadband accessibility has a significant role to play in improving productivity, thereby improving chances of business survival. It allows businesses to take advantage of new technologies which produce cost savings and increase revenue, for example through the use of online customer and supplier management systems, and allowing overseas markets to be more effectively tapped.

5.3.6 According to available data, roughly 23% of the District's businesses are based in more rural areas with a likelihood of poorer digital infrastructure. We estimate that roughly 650 businesses are located in postcodes with connectivity of 2 MBPS or below. Map 1 at Appendix 2 shows that these are mostly smaller firms of 1 – 10 people which could potentially compete more effectively with better access to ICT.

5.3.7 A report on the business benefits of ICT estimated that productivity uplift in the South West could be as much as £3bn over five years if more small businesses in particular were able to effectively adopt new technologies. The report cited improved broadband infrastructure as a critical requirement, along with improving ICT skills and providing advice on effective adoption.

5.3.8 The report also cited particular types of firms which could make the most gains from more effective use of ICT, including creative, professional, advanced engineering and construction firms. 34% of all construction firms in the District are based in our rural areas.

5.3.9 Supporting the growth of innovative and creative firms: Demand for better connectivity is driving the development of information and communication technologies, for example social media applications, but also the development of content for these applications.

5.3.10 Bath and North East Somerset has a thriving creative and digital community, which could benefit from increased local online projects and use. Content-creating

firms are notoriously “speed-hungry”, requiring fast upload as well as download speeds, which can be delivered via superfast broadband.

5.4 Community feedback

- 5.4.1 There is considerable support for improved broadband access in these communities, many of which have identified improved internet connectivity as a priority in their Parish Plans (see Appendix 4).
- 5.4.2 Responses from the Draft Core Strategy consultation highlighted broadband as an issue in rural communities.
- 5.4.3 The recent Voicebox 19 report found that people living in rural communities were significantly more likely to be dissatisfied with their internet connections, and also that people living in rural communities are more likely to work from home.
- 5.4.4 A total of 14 public statements were made from individuals, businesses and Parish Councils at the Scrutiny meeting on 5th December 2011 in favour of the BDUK option.
- 5.4.5 The Council has been receiving individual enquiries from community and Parish Council representatives looking to investigate individual cases and solutions for particular areas. While we are able to facilitate these to some extent, the information required is largely that which would be provided by the research and technical knowledge that would be delivered through undertaking a Local Broadband Plan or similar study.

5.5 Cost Benefit Analysis

OPTION 1

- 5.5.1 There is an opportunity to join the ‘Connecting Devon and Somerset’ project and to develop a joint bid to access funding from BDUK. This would provide 2 Mbps to 100% of premises and superfast broadband of at least 20 Mbps to 85% by 2015. This would access £690,000 BDUK funding for infrastructure and £1,380,000 private investment from an infrastructure provider.
- 5.5.2 Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK – see below) estimates that roughly 18,000 premises in Bath and North East Somerset would be eligible to receive government support for improving infrastructure.
- 5.5.3 Under this approach £179,000 European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) funding is also available to support and assist small and medium sized businesses to exploit the opportunities presented by the rollout of superfast broadband. The funding is available only if the BDUK offer is taken up and can be used for:
- Awareness raising and demand stimulation
 - Specialist advice
 - Embedding superfast broadband business support
 - Connecting business to superfast broadband ie. Delivering the ‘last mile’ or FTTP (fibre to the premise).

- 5.5.4 Under this option the total cost to the Council is £475,000 due to the increased economies of scale. The cost of improving broadband access to 18,000 premises in Bath and North East Somerset equates to £26 per premise.
- 5.5.5 The benefits of this approach are fixed costs, fixed outputs, a running project and large economies of scale. Further benefits are that funding of £2,249,000 is brought in to deliver broadband infrastructure to the B&NES area. This equates to a leverage of council funding to overall investment of 1:4.7. The disadvantages are that a quick decision has to be made, without the time to undertake the initial study Cabinet had proposed to research other options.
- 5.5.6 Under this option B&NES will be able to take advantage of joining the 'Connecting Devon and Somerset' demand stimulation programme, which includes consultation and has so far signed up 4,000 supporters.

OPTION 2

- 5.6 An initial investment by the Council of £25,000 would be required to undertake a piece of research to identify how internet access can be brought to as many of our residents as possible, including investigating the development of community opportunities in our villages and rural areas.
- 5.7 The Council would have time to consider further all alternative options, some of which may not require extensive Council funding. A further £25,000 could deliver the community and business consultation requested by the Scrutiny panel.
- 5.8 However, it is likely that these pieces of work will demonstrate demand and initial research indicates that fibre optic cabling is required to deliver the scale and capacity needed for broadband infrastructure in B&NES.
- 5.9 This approach therefore runs the risk of confirming the need for extensive capital investment, while losing the opportunity to partner with adjacent authorities, to achieve economies of scale, to access the BDUK, ERDF and private funding and therefore to utilise the £2,249,000 funding in the 'Connecting Devon and Somerset' offer.
- 5.10 This approach has increased project costs as a result of not partnering with adjacent authorities.
- 5.11 The cost estimates from BDUK are based on achieving 85-90% coverage with superfast broadband. A further project would be required to reach the final 10-15% but an opportunity to access Rural Communities Broadband Fund (see section 5.16) to deliver this will have been lost. Whereas the 'Connecting Devon and Somerset' offer is for 100% coverage.
- 5.12 Furthermore, there is a finite capacity in the UK telecoms industry to deliver large infrastructure works. There is an additional risk under this option that telecoms infrastructure contractors will be committed to large scale BDUK projects and not have the capacity to engage with a relatively small area like B&NES.
- 5.13 Under this option a full consultation exercise with white premises (the 18,000 premises in B&NES with poor broadband which are eligible for BDUK funding) including planning, procurement and analysis would take up to 16 weeks.

COSTINGS TABLE

	Option 1: join with Devon and Somerset – delivering 2 Mbps to 100% premises and 20 Mbps to 85-90% premises		Option 2: initial research and likely second stage delivery, achieving 20 Mbps to 85-90% premises
Cost	Cost to B&NES	Other income generated	Cost to B&NES
Initial mapping			
Initial research into bringing broadband to rural B&NES	X		✓ £25,000
Consultation	X		✓ £25,000
Delivery costs			
Mapping, procurement, legal and project management costs	✓ £175,000		✓ £300,000
Demand Stimulation and Skills Uplift	X	£179,000 from ERDF	✓ £100,000
Broadband Infrastructure 25% BDUK allocation	X	£690,000 BDUK allocation	✓ £690,000
Broadband Infrastructure funding from B&NES	✓ £300,000		✓ £690,000
Broadband Infrastructure 50% private investment	X	£1,380,000 Private infrastructure provider	✓ £1,380,000
Additional Officer time (2 years @ £50,000 pa. including on costs)	X		✓ 2 fte to deliver for 3 years £300,000
Sub total	£475,000	£2,249,000	£3,510,000
TOTAL	£2,724,000		

Accessing the BDUK fund – the Local Broadband Plan

5.14 In order to access the B&NES allocation of BDUK funding and private investment capital, the authority must produce a **Local Broadband Plan**.

5.15 The Local Broadband Plan would:

- Set out the area's ambitions for improving broadband infrastructure
- Develop a business case for better broadband provision, with reference to economic growth, digital inclusion and improved public services access
- Map the current and forecast connectivity picture (including slow speeds and areas with a lack of investment) and identify how appropriate private sector solutions are
- Identify priority areas for intervention
- Review the modelling undertaken by BDUK, identify where BDUK data / assumptions need to be challenged and challenge where appropriate
- Provide an overview of likely capital cost in order to deliver the overall objective of reaching the fastest speeds possible for the greatest number of premises
- Produce a funding strategy which provides maximum value for money, to include what the private sector might be expected to contribute
- Plan and lead on a community and business engagement programme to gain support and register demand
- Plan how the project will be rolled out.

A Local Broadband Plan for Somerset and Devon has been undertaken, which could be extended to cover B&NES.

Rural Community Broadband Funding

5.16 On 29th November 2011 the Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE) announced a £20m joint fund with BDUK for rural communities in the 10% hard to reach areas covered by a Local Authority Local Broadband Plan, or if the LBP is not in place, if they are able to demonstrate that they will be in the 10% hard to reach areas in a LBP when finalised.

5.17 Funding of 50% is available, expressions of interest for the first round are due by 31st January 2012 and funding needs to be contracted by 31st December 2013.

5.18 A decision to join the Devon, Somerset, North Somerset, Plymouth and Torbay project would ensure that all premises receive a minimum of 2 Mbps. It is therefore unlikely that B&NES would need to consider applying for Rural Community Broadband Funding in addition to joining the Devon and Somerset project. If the Council does not undertake a Local Broadband Plan it would not be able to apply for the RCBF.

Project Governance

5.19 Should the Council decide to go ahead with developing a bid in partnership with Somerset, Devon, North Somerset, Plymouth and Torbay, it is proposed that a project board involving all three authorities be set up to manage the development of the Plan and to oversee specialist consultant work.

Timings and Delivery

5.20 Draft Local Broadband Plan work for B&NES will be completed by the end of February 2012 should the Cabinet decide to join the 'Connecting Devon and Somerset' project.

5.21 The table below sets out potential timings for the whole project.

Table 1: Estimated project timings:

Item	Estimated timing
Undertake data and mapping and prepare Local Broadband Plan	Immediate start
Submission of draft LBP to Government (BDUK)	End of February 2012
Submission of final LBP to Government	April 2012
Procurement process begins	October 2012
Demand stimulation activities begin	Spring 2012
Rollout of infrastructure begins	October 2013
Rollout of infrastructure is complete	End 2014 / early 2015

6 RISK MANAGEMENT

6.1 The report author and Lead Cabinet member have fully reviewed the risk assessment related to the issue and recommendations, in compliance with the Council's decision making risk management guidance.

7 EQUALITIES

7.1 A formal Equality Impact Assessment will be carried out.

7.2 If the Council should decide to submit a Local Broadband Plan to the Government, which is the first step in delivering improved broadband infrastructure in the District, there are some real opportunities to:

- Reduce the inequality of service generally experienced by those living in more rural areas than those living in more urban areas;
- Improve communities' ability to use the internet to access public service information, work from home if travel is difficult, develop their businesses, use distance learning materials, and so on;
- Ensure more vulnerable communities and groups, such as older people, can receive help to access better internet services which might for example help to support them in dealing with health issues.

8 RATIONALE

8.1 This report shows that, in general, people living in our more rural areas are at a disadvantage due to the lack of planned broadband infrastructure upgrades.

- 8.2 Improved broadband connectivity supports a diverse range of Council priorities, from supporting private sector jobs growth, to improving the independence of older people.
- 8.3 Initiating work on a Local Broadband Plan with neighbouring authorities will allow the Council to better understand connectivity issues, and identify any potential costs associated with delivering superfast broadband to premises not already receiving upgrades from BT.

9 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 9.1 **Do nothing:** should the Council decide not to move forward with Local Broadband Plan work.
- 9.2 In this case, an opportunity will be lost to potentially access Government funding to deliver improved broadband services in our more rural areas.
- 9.3 This option assumes that the private sector will deliver superfast infrastructure to more premises in B&NES not currently covered by current rollout announcements or that alternative technologies have the capacity to deliver.

10 CONSULTATION

- 10.1 Cabinet members; Parish Councils; Other B&NES Services; Local Residents; Community Interest Groups; Stakeholders/Partners; Other Public Sector Bodies; Section 151 Finance Officer; Chief Executive; Monitoring Officer; Business representative bodies.
- 10.2 The Chair of the ECD PDS Panel has been consulted over the urgent decision and agreed that the matter is urgent and cannot reasonably be delayed.

11 ISSUES TO CONSIDER IN REACHING THE DECISION

- 11.1 Social Inclusion; Customer Focus; Sustainability; Human Resources; Young People; Corporate; Impact on Staff.

12 ADVICE SOUGHT

- 12.1 The Council's Monitoring Officer (Divisional Director – Legal and Democratic Services) and Section 151 Officer (Divisional Director - Finance) have had the opportunity to input to this report and have cleared it for publication.

Contact person	John Wilkinson x 6593
Sponsoring Cabinet Member	Councillor Cherry Beath
Background papers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cabinet Paper E2328, 9th November 2011: 'Improving Access to Superfast Broadband in B&NES – the Broadband Delivery UK Option', appendices and Cabinet Resolution • Economic and Community Development Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel, 5th December 2011, call-in of decision E2328 • Draft Core Strategy • Economic Strategy for Bath and North East Somerset • Sustainable Community Strategy for Bath and North East Somerset • Vision for Bath and North East Somerset
Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format	

Connecting Devon and Somerset



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What is Connecting Devon and Somerset?

Somerset County Council and Devon County Council, are working together to bring Superfast and Improved broadband to the area. With a successful bid for c. £30m of funding from government (BDUK), and a commitment of c.£10m from each county council, preparations are currently underway to procure and deliver the best solution possible for rural Somerset and Devon – the “final third”, **rural areas** that are unlikely to benefit from commercial investment.

Without this project 700,000 people and nearly 26,000 businesses with a combined turnover of £9 billion have no certainty of superfast or improved broadband.



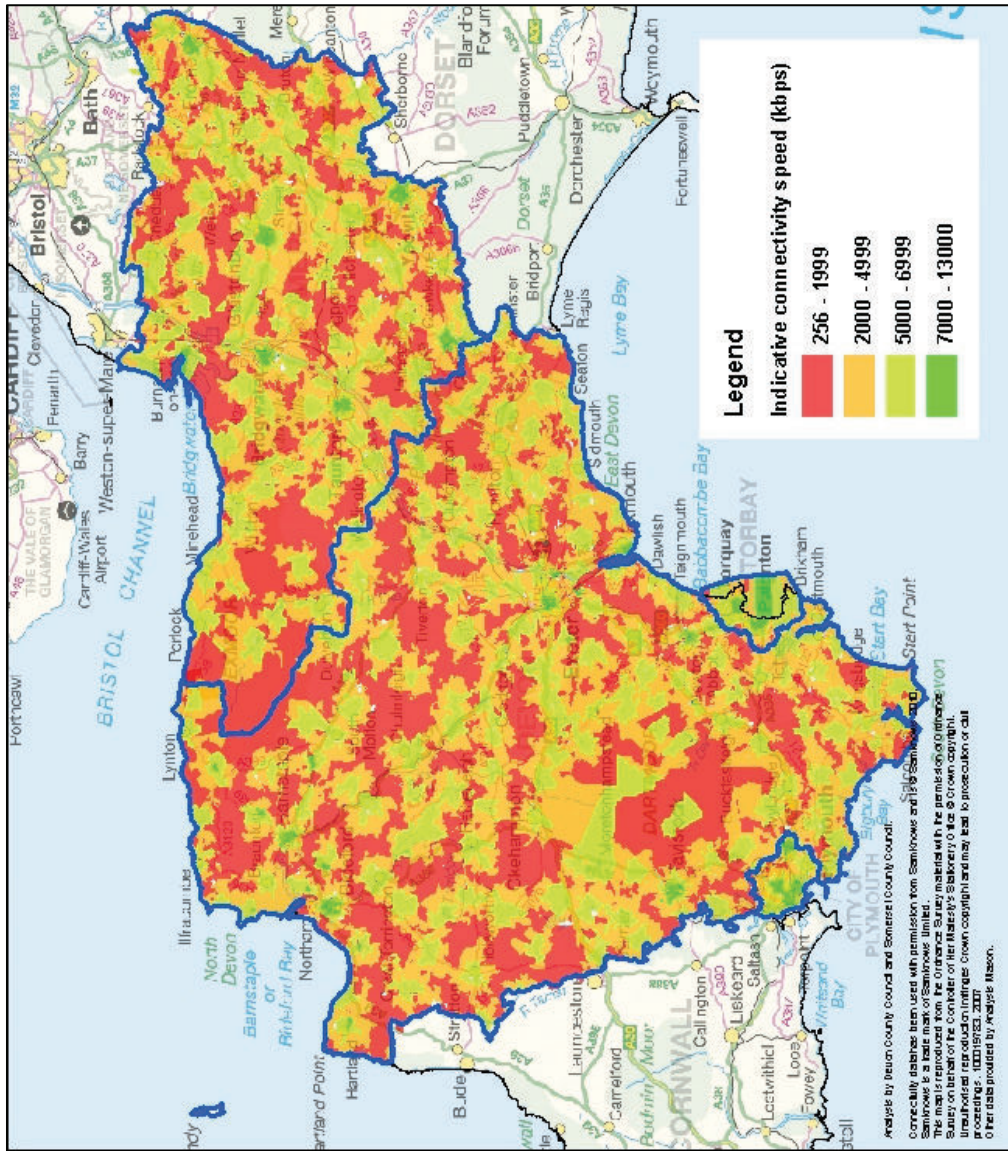
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Currently...

- Many of our rural areas experience poor connectivity speeds, coverage and reliability because of the excessive distance or the quality of the line from the telephone exchange
- A real Urban v Rural divide
- Brake on rural business growth – access to markets, customers, research, complying with regulation etc
- Undermines vitality of our rural communities – job opportunities, education, tele-health, delivering public services
- Risk of businesses moving to areas of better connectivity
- Harder to attract inward investment

Currently...



This map shows the indicative internet speeds received at postcode level across Devon and Somerset. All those areas in red currently receive less than 2 Mbps.



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Programme Objectives

- **Objective 1:** Deliver 'standard' universal broadband for **every** home and business, by 2015, that is reliable, robust, future-proofed, significantly better than currently experienced, and at least 2Mbps
- **Objective 2:** Deliver 'superfast' broadband **for at least 85%** of homes and businesses by 2015



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- **Objective 3:** Ensure that the 2015 network can be upgraded between 2015 and 2020 to deliver **100% superfast broadband**, and even higher superfast speeds where needed
- **Objective 4:** Provide broadband access through **at least 10 service providers** offering services at prices equivalent to national averages, and achieving agreed benchmarks for quality of service and speeds experienced by end users

- **Objective 5:** Support economic growth, enable digital inclusion and enhance our attractiveness to the telecoms market through an effective programme of demand stimulation ensuring take-up of standard and superfast broadband services by **at least 50%** of households and businesses in ‘white’ areas and an **additional 25% take-up** in ‘grey’ and ‘black’ areas
- **Objective 6:** Balance competing priorities in **phasing roll-out** to ensure that rural communities are not disadvantaged whilst ensuring that businesses receive the broadband they need when they need it

- **Objective 7: Deliver the best value for money solution** without ongoing public sector subsidy by making the best use of public sector assets and facilitating the development of community broadband hubs where appropriate
- **Objective 8: Transform the way public services are delivered** through moving as many services online as possible, developing innovative methods of delivering services, equipping businesses and residents with the skills and motivation to utilise these services effectively

What is Superfast Broadband?

- The new generation of broadband - much faster, more reliable and using a different technology than we are all used to today.
- Whilst traditional broadband is delivered via copper telephone lines, superfast broadband commonly uses fibre optic cable, often in conjunction with copper lines – FTTC
- Upload and download speeds that are lightning fast when compared to traditional broadband - sometimes as high as 40Mbps to 100Mbps.
- Although mainly associated with fibre optic, other technologies such as wireless, satellite and advanced copper solutions (ADSL2+) can also be used to deliver high speed broadband – we expect our project to use a combination of these technologies

Benefits for all

- There is the potential for every person in the area to benefit from superfast and improved broadband. Here are just a few examples:
 - People with disabilities or caring responsibilities who would find it hard to travel to work may now be able to work effectively from home
 - Flexible/remote working will improve people's quality of life through having more control over where and when they choose to work
 - Elderly people could stay at home and enjoy 'telecare' rather than entering residential care
 - Connections to friends, family and colleagues will have a new dimension with video becoming an everyday occurrence.

Some of the business benefits

- Helping our small businesses to grow
- Increased use of online tools
- Flexible working – multiple benefits
- New innovative ways to reach out to potential customers
eg B&B video tours, easier to upload large files
- Streamlining working practices, leading to greater productivity
- Become more competitive
- Opening up of new markets



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Some of the business benefits

- Doing things quicker and more efficiently
- Improved customer service
- Environmental impacts and cost savings through use of video conferencing
- Opportunities to collaborate in real time
- Improve viability of rurally located businesses and start ups
- Supporting the self-employed



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Our Approach

- Joined with Somerset and North Somerset – critical mass, shared land border and growth agendas
- Supported by the Heart of the South West LEP
- Endorsed and supported by 19 MPs and several MEPs
- Buy-in from other public sector bodies
- Supported by two National Parks
- Organisations and businesses significant support – represented more than 40,000 businesses across area
- 4000 residents registered their support
- DCC and SCC investing own capital and providing revenue funding to deliver the project
- Lobbying other funding sources – ERDF, DEFRA etc



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Project update

- Funding - £100m
- The Area
- Timescales & procurement
- Extent of the challenge
- Demand Stimulation/Registration Programme
- Skills
- Community Hubs

Staying in touch

www.connectingdevonandsomerset.co.uk

Newsletter sign up and the latest news

Local Broadband Plan available for download

mdballard@somerset.gov.uk

01823 355867



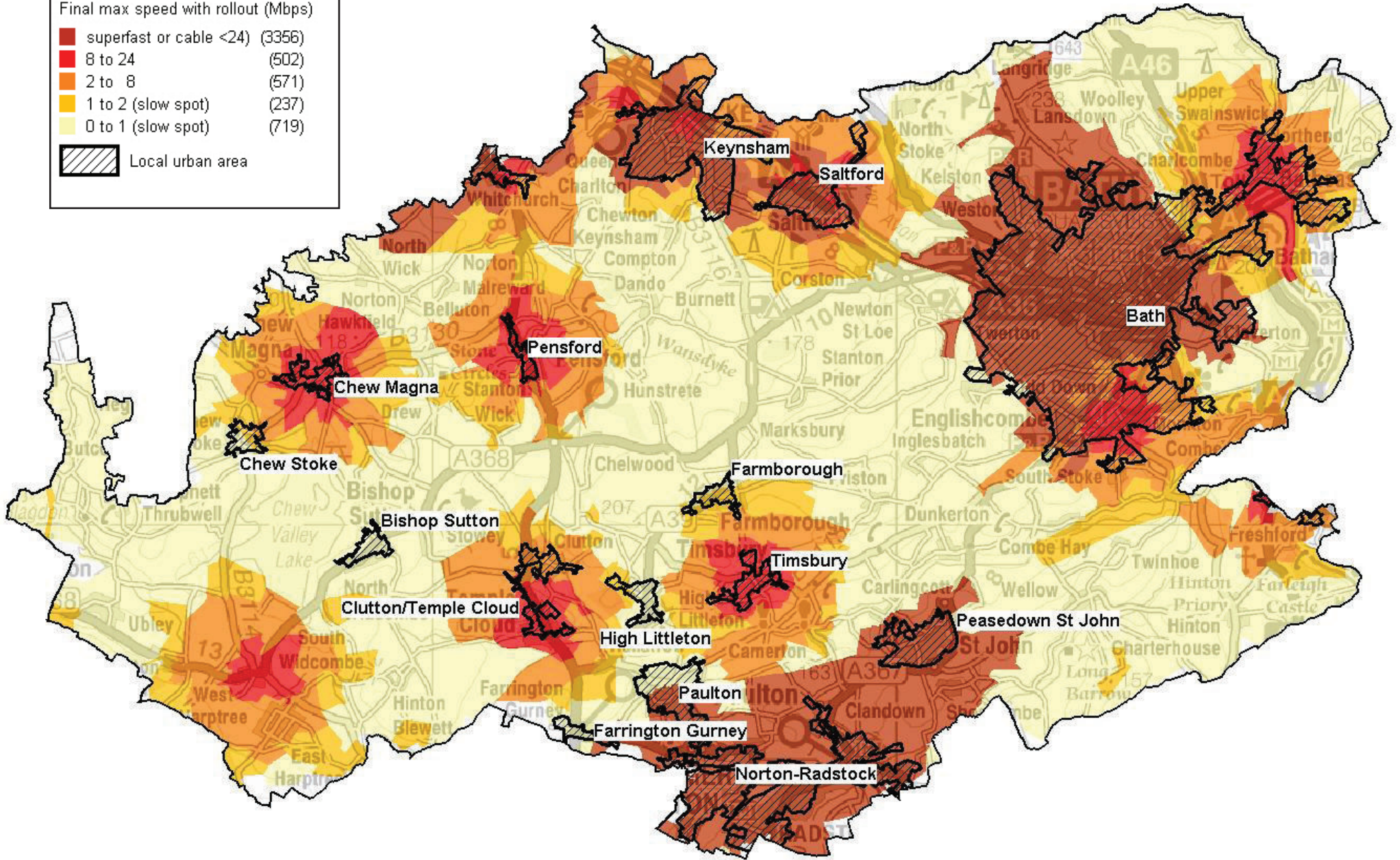
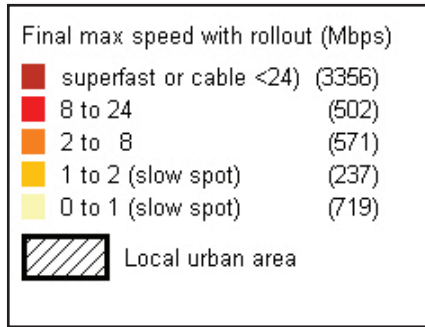
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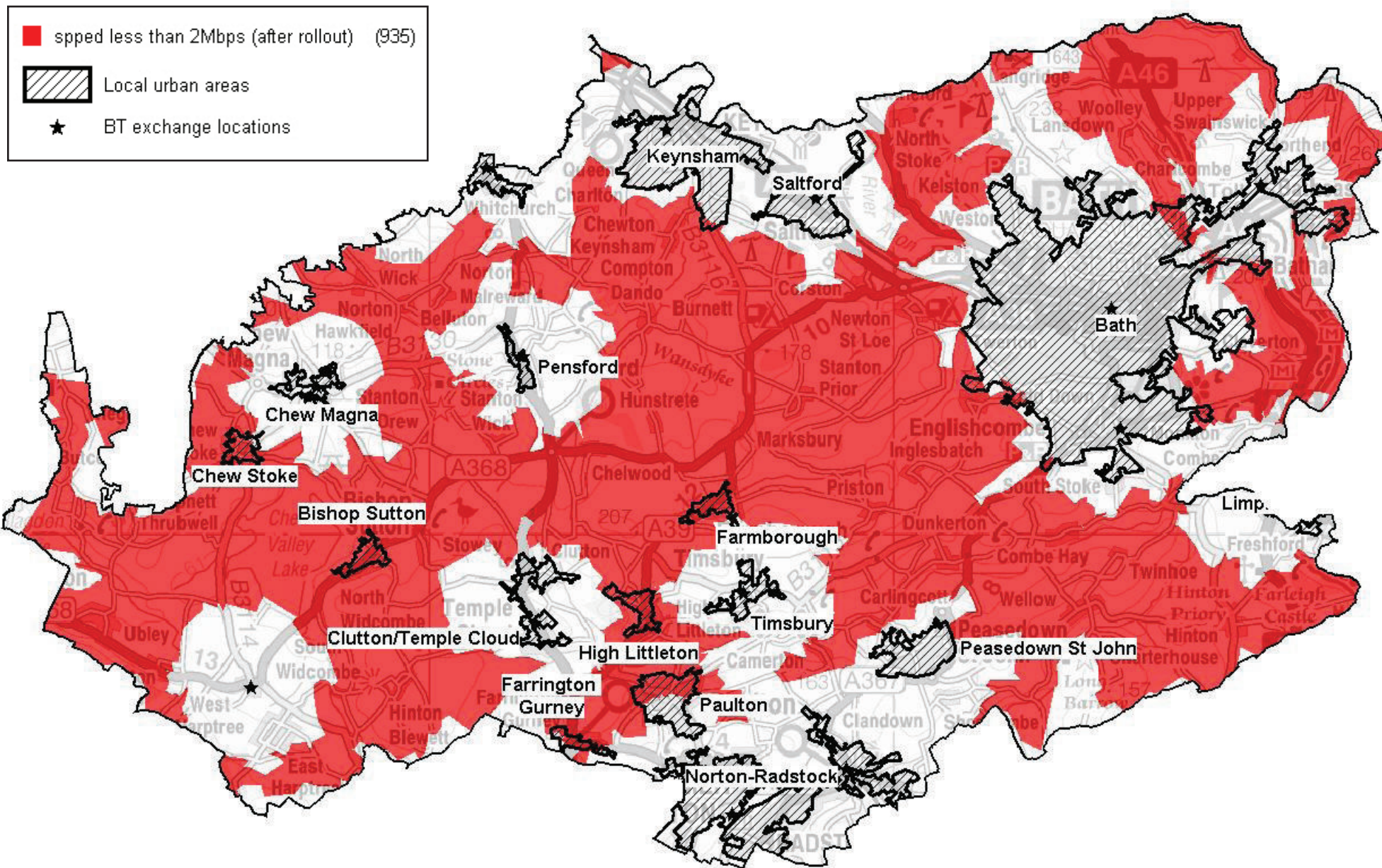
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APPENDIX 2: Connectivity in Bath and North East Somerset

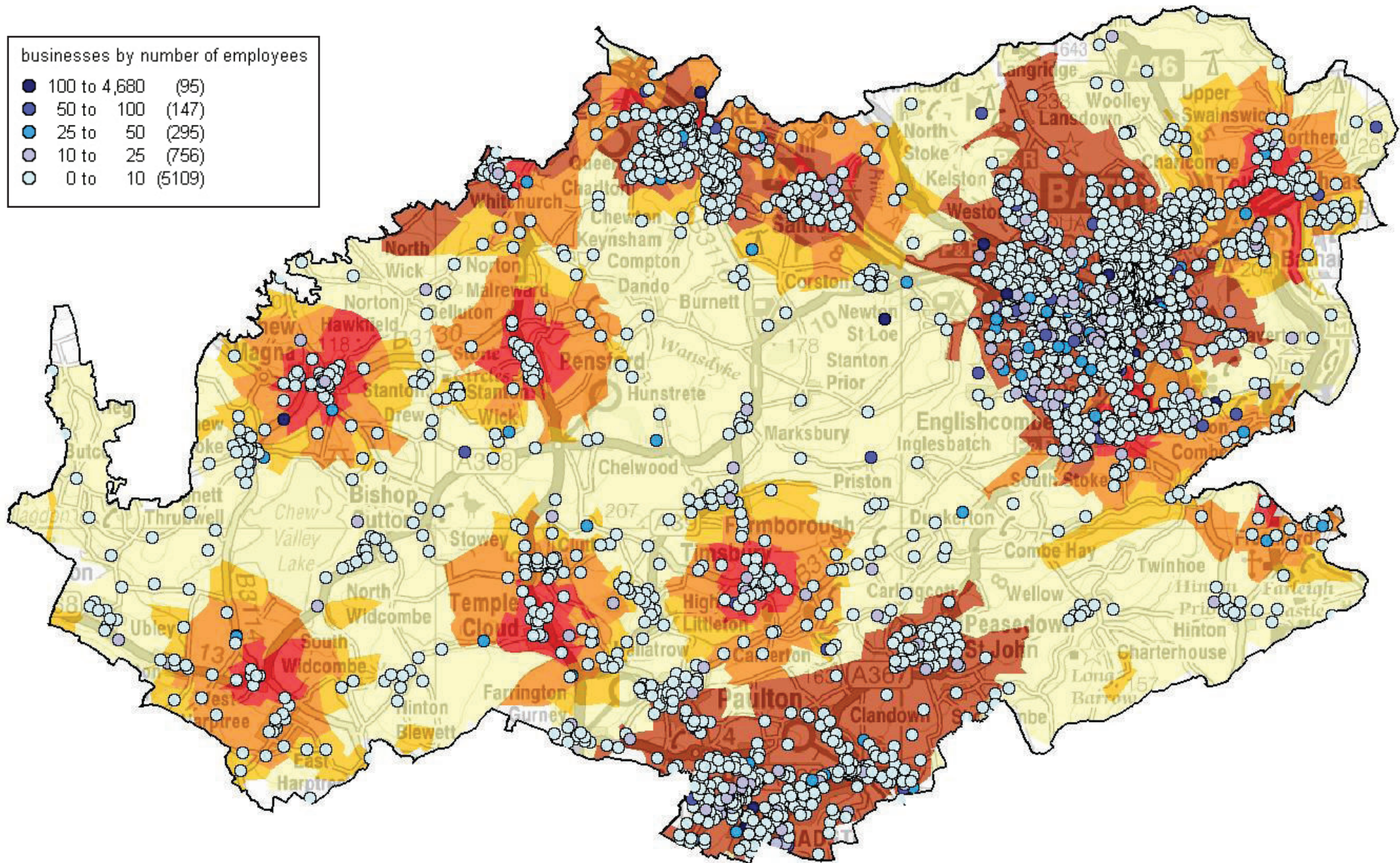
1) Breakdown of maximum theoretical download speeds across B&NES by postcode once BT FTTC rollout complete (includes cable)
(Point Topic data)



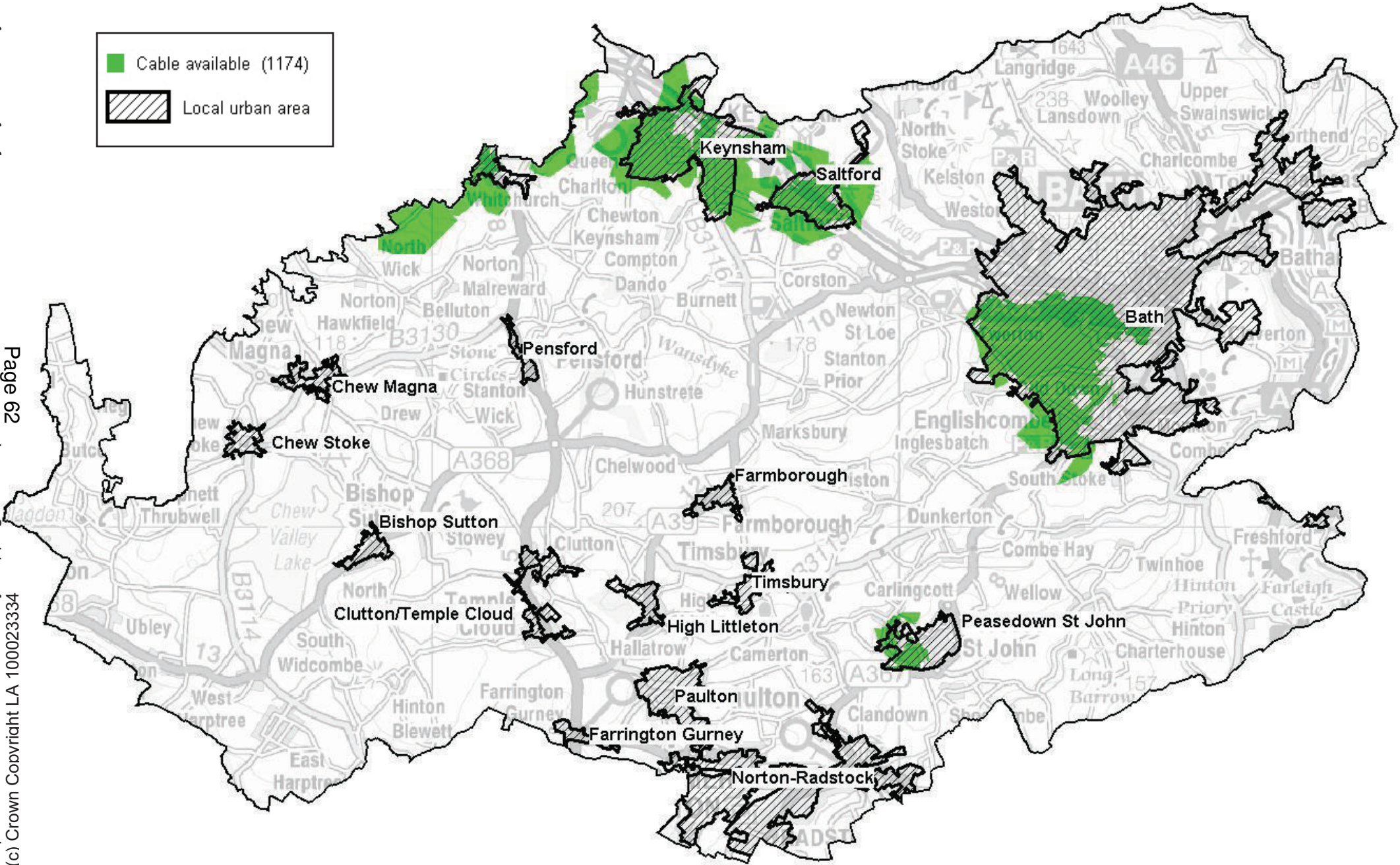
2) Postcodes continuing to receive poor or no broadband service (less than 2Mbps maximum theoretical download speed) after BT FTTC rollout (Point Topic data)



3) IDBR businesses by number of employees and maximum download speed including BT FTTC rollout and cable



4) Postcode areas with virgin cable coverage (Point Topic data)



APPENDIX 3: Alternative Technologies

Satellite Broadband

Satellite technology can deliver 6Mbps at a cost of around £20/month to the individual with no cost to the council over the same time period to the BDUK opportunity. However at the moment on this tariff, while download speeds can reach up to 6Mb, upload rates are typically 1Mb and monthly data allowances are 4Gb. Ofcom research indicates that average monthly downloads in the UK are 17Gb and the technology simply cannot deliver symmetrical services on download/upload speeds, which preclude business uses and two way video. Business users in particular need uploading capacity as much if not more than download. Installation of satellite broadband including a wireless home router costs approximately £350 to the individual, though some companies including Avonline are considering including the cost of the satellite (£200) in the package, so installation costs are reduced to £100 with £50 for a wireless home router.

This package would not currently be able to deliver the equivalent service available by cable in Bath or other urban areas in the District. An improved quality package is available via satellite providing 10Mb download, 4Mb upload and 25Gb monthly data allowance, however this costs in the region of £85/month to the individual and still cannot deliver a symmetrical download / upload service.

EXAMPLE BROADBAND SPEEDS AND COSTS BY LOCATION						
Location / Type	Maximum download speed	Maximum upload speed	Monthly Usage Limit	Installation Cost	Cost per month	Cost in the first year
Urban / Cable	24Mb	24Mb	40Gb	-	£3.25	£39
Rural / Satellite	6Mb	1Mb	4Gb	£350	£20	£590
Rural / Satellite	8Mb	2Mb	8Gb	£350	£35	£770
Rural / Satellite	10Mb	2Mb	13Gb	£350	£45	£890
Rural / Satellite	10Mb	4Mb	25Gb	£350	£85	£1370

The main satellite broadband provider in the South West Avonline (using Tooway technology) states that future improvements in speeds and reductions in cost are likely to be slow and incremental for a number of reasons. The latest KA technology satellites that went up over Europe in June have an operating lifetime of 15 years and the £0.5b investment that launched each of the satellites is to be re-couped over the 15 years based on their limited commodity of bandwidth and capacity. The price-plans currently available are therefore priced on this 15 year investment plan. Furthermore, Avonline report that all satellite investment is now in this KA technology, which just recently brought the pricing down from £500/600 month to the current plans available, and while future developments will of course take place this is currently cutting edge and no future step changes are envisaged for 5-10 years. In short, while things will improve with the engineering and the hardware, 'tweaked improvements' only are envisaged.

Avonline further stated that businesses, particularly creative / digital and tech businesses need to be on fibre and would not survive in rural areas on satellite technology. Avonline is however keen to promote the benefits of satellite technology and to show what it can deliver. They have a

mobile exhibition that can travel to rural areas to do demonstrations for rural communities and can discuss or clarify any of these points in more detail.

White Spaces

BT are involved in a study in Argyll and Bute to research whether so called “white spaces” in the ultra high frequency (UHF) television spectrum can be used to deliver broadband internet in difficult to reach areas. Initial results are said to be promising with maximum download rates of 6Mbps, but maximum uploads are 1Mbps.

The technology is also restricted by ‘contention’ and ‘latency’ – for example, one person gaming or streaming content can take up 15Mbps, leaving no bandwidth left for other users. The technology is considered suitable for extremely remote households and a maximum of 40 households in one area. Scaled solutions cannot be practically applied, not even to the extent of covering a large village.

4G Technology

Trials are looking at 4G (4th Generation) mobile technology to provide a broadband alternative for people who struggle to get a decent service down a fixed line. 4G (or LTE – Long Term Evolution) uses the 800 Mhz spectrum on the radio network, which is to be auctioned in 2012 by Ofcom, and which could be deployed as early as 2013. The technology works but there is a trade off between flat terrain and high antenna equivalent to high TV masts which have a reach of 12km. The idea is to use existing masts which could be leased from owners ARQUIVA or to use mobile operators own masts.

Services are expected to be comparable to existing 3G mobile in terms of cost and accessibility. So if someone is able to use their mobile to access the web in a rural area, they would be able to use 4G at a cost of around £15 / month. Theoretically, 4G / LTE can support up to 70 Mgps. 20 Mgps is more realistic as capacity is shared between users in any one antenna area and this decreases the further you are from the antenna. Trials have shown however that actual performance in real experience trials are more like 4-8 Mgps and uploads are maximum 1Mgps.

BT suggest that 4G is suitable for small, remote communities, certainly of less than 1,000. The technology is not appropriate for scaled use due to ‘contention’ and ‘latency’. Contention is where capacity is shared between users, so the masts used in Cornwall are delivering 40 Mbps maximum but shared between 40 customers or more and to increase this you simply need more masts. Latency is a delay in upload / download speeds.

There are options for an individual to upgrade by installing a bigger antenna on their own premises and their own 3G router. The SIM card from a 3G dongle could be put in to the router, but costs and performance improvements are not yet confirmed.

Community Solutions

Both BT and Avonline report that wireless community solutions can be great in concept but difficult to work with in practice. Issues include ownership, billing and technical support, though these can be overcome with proper resource and support. There are successful examples including in the Forest of Dean, but also examples of where wireless networks have been installed with a limited capacity, which has then precluded improvements under BDUK funding due to state aid, eg. in Suffolk the community installed a wireless network 2 years ago to deliver 2Mbps. BDUK is now circling round them due to state aid restrictions. There is therefore a risk that undertaking projects

that do not maximise possible capacity at this stage, due to technical limitations, will then be precluded from further improvements using public funding.

Community solutions are also applicable to fibre and may be more appropriate in order to invest in solutions which are future proofed and which deliver appropriate capacity. An interesting project in Cumbria has struck a deal with BT, whereby the community is digging and laying 40km of trenches and ducting to spec and BT is putting the fibre in. The community had to demonstrate committed demand in order to secure the deal from BT.

BT are happy to meet with communities that can represent their demand eg. Claverton and Wellow. However, they would prefer this to be facilitated and undertaken in a systematic way rather than on a community by community basis. B&NES is seen to be more about infill in most cases, however the most rural areas eg. around Chew Magna are 'category 1' where intervention would be needed to bring in broadband.

Communities in areas that are close to enabled cabinets could come together to subsidise the gap. For example, in Kent, the Parish Council is subsidising BT by £50,000 to bring broadband in to their community.

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APPENDIX 4 : Support for Improved Broadband Services in Rural Areas

a) Excerpts from Parish Plans

Compton Dando 2010

To be taken on by the Parish Council

Inadequate broadband provision	Ensure poor broadband rural blackspots are highlighted to B&NES, eg via map showing quality, speed (from working group).	B&NES were unaware of poor rural broadband provision. Broadband important for rural businesses. See also 'Local people' section
Inadequate mobile phone reception	Investigate reception of different providers (via questionnaire?) & publish results locally, put pressure on suppliers to improve service.	Longer term - explore possibility of improvements via wireless LAN

Dunkerton 2007

Attempts should also be made to encourage British Telecom to make Broadband more widely available in Dunkerton, and to alert residents to the existence of the website if and when it is set up.

Enquiries have been made seeking to improve local broadband availability, currently very poor in Dunkerton, by 'piggy-backing' new developments in Bath Business Park.

Freshford 2008

Do you have broadband 58% yes, 42% No

Do you have home access to the internet 78% Yes, 22% No

Action: Develop services for home workers

The examination of national trends in employment, particularly with respect to the changing retirement age for women, the growth in flexible employment, - including all types of working arrangements such as job sharing; flexible hours; working from home; and hot-desking will be of generally positive interest both to our older workers and to our young families. There is also much national evidence of many more people working on into their 70s than has ever been the case before. Their advice and expertise has rarely been in such demand.

Home Working Publish on website register of skills and interest. Establish a community business club/meeting place for home workers to provide social contact and networking.

New Ventures Set up a working group to explore types of small businesses that could be easily set up in the village. Establish a small fund administered by the PC to encourage the development of appropriate new employment opportunities in the village. Identify local buildings/ land that could be used for incubating new businesses. Promote local business development in Freshford. Establish “Village Skills” training, around environmental projects and village improvements.

Part Time Employment Establish a register to provide local childcare/ parent care to allow some part time working. Advertise all local part time jobs on website

Paulton 2010

Improve TV and broadband services to the village

73% of respondents already receive digital TV signals (although this will have increased significantly since the recent digital switchover). However, 39% said they would use cable TV if available. 64% of respondents said they already had a broadband connection, although many complained of poor service, and 9% said their house could not be connected to a broadband service.

Improved road and telecommunications infrastructure

88% of respondents do not think there are enough facilities in the village to attract employers. 9% of respondents have found that their house cannot be connected to a broadband service, although 64% said they already had broadband. Many respondents complained about poor quality telephone calls, broadband services and DAB digital radio signals. These requirements for infrastructure improvements need to be reflected in the Local Strategic Plan, formulated by B&NES Council.

Improve TV and broadband services to the village (High priority)

73% of respondents already receive digital TV signals (although this will have increased significantly since the recent digital switchover). However, 39% said they would use cable TV if available. 64% of respondents said they already had a broadband connection, although many complained of poor service, and 9% said their house could not be connected to a broadband service. The Steering Group has contacted cable TV and broadband service providers to seek access to cable TV and improved broadband services for the village. As of our press date, no substantive response has been received.

Improved road and telecommunications infrastructure (High priority)

Important enablers for the establishment of new businesses in the parish are felt to be improved road and telecommunications infrastructures. It is difficult to reach the national motorway network from Paulton, and the village centre is congested at rush hour, thus providing a disincentive to potential business development. Also, the current telecommunications infrastructure does not provide the fibre optic cabling which would offer high bandwidth broadband services. Such broadband services would better support the high data transfer requirements of the type of professional service businesses that the Polestar development is hoping to attract. It would also enable more effective home working for those who would like to take advantage of flexible working arrangements.

Wellow 2006

Of the utilities, both electricity and water services were seen as reasonable or good by over 80% (no gas service is available, despite a pipeline running through the Parish). By contrast, phone services were rated positively by less than 60% and as poor by over 35%. This is of concern in an age of increasing dependence on telephone services and the rapid growth in the use of the internet (especially broadband) by small businesses and households. Radio reception fared even worse, less than half giving a positive rating and almost as many rating it poor. TV reception however, was rated positively by over 70%.

All telephone lines to be connected as soon as possible to the newly laid cable serving Wellow to ensure best possible connections for voice calls and the fastest possible high quality connection speeds to the internet via broadband.

Bring Broadband to Wellow (only a few homes have it).

b) Responses to Spatial Options consultation (Autumn 2009)

Home working and broadband	David Orme	Potential for growth in homeworking will only be realised if there is broadband access. It should be seen as an area for early improvement, some radical thinking and innovative partnering, not an inviolate
Page 70	Freshford Parish Council	We do not accept the negative implication re rural broadband, the extension of which to all rural settlements should be encouraged. Strategy should assume that development of broadband will continue to accelerate and that a greater portion of the rural population will be working from home than is now the case.
	Ubley Parish Council	Ubley Parish Council would like to understand more about the commitment to home working. For this to be a reality there must be action to see that rural broadband speeds are increased to a basic minimum level. Currently many areas of the Chew Valley have unacceptably low broadband speeds
	Priston Parish	Support for homeworking must include increasing both access itself and the quality of access to the broadband infrastructure. Bath and North East Somerset should have a policy on this issues and use the influence of the West of England Partnership to pressurise for improved broadband infrastructure across rural areas.
	Pamela Cole	<p>In order for there to be a buoyant economy in the rural areas, it is essential that access to high speed broadband is improved. Fast reliable internet access is absolutely essential for diverse rural businesses.</p> <p>It is not acceptable to create a policy which from the outset includes the assumption that access to broadband will be limited. In the future it will be increasingly important and essential for all sorts of everyday activities. This is a major factor restricting</p>

		<p>'accessibility' in rural areas and has the added effect of impacting most on the elderly and poorer members of communities.</p> <p>Strategy for rural diversification should include commitments to work towards improving access to high speed broadband so that the rural areas are not disadvantaged both economically and socially.</p>
	Englishcombe Parish Council	Recommend pressure for improved and reliable broadband to assist Businesses and home working projects.
	Avon Wildlife Trust	Agree.
Page 71	Dunkerton Parish Council	The current poor rural broadband coverage seems to be seen (at para 7,41) as an insurmountable obstacle that we will just have to put up with. This is unadventurous and misleading. Should work with broadband providers to ensure commitment and delivery.
	Bathampton Parish Council	The policy should include a commitment to work to remove the limitations.
	Paulton Community Plan Steering Group	<p>Just how will commitment and support be shown to home working?</p> <p>The policy, to be useful, must address the limitations on the rural economy imposed by lack of access to high speed broadband, not just accept them.</p>
	Claverton Parish Council	Should work proactively to remove limitations of access to broadband.

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