

Democratic Services

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Date: 18th July 2014

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To: All Members of the Housing and Major Projects Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel

Councillor Eleanor Jackson

Councillor Steve Hedges

Councillor Brian Simmons

Councillor Gerry Curran

Councillor June Player

Councillor David Veale

Councillor Ben Stevens

Councillor Tim Ball

Chief Executive and other appropriate officers

Press and Public

Dear Member

Housing and Major Projects Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel: Tuesday, 29th July, 2014

You are invited to attend a meeting of the **Housing and Major Projects Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel**, to be held on **Tuesday, 29th July, 2014 at 5.30 pm** in the **Brunswick Room - Guildhall, Bath**.

The agenda is set out overleaf.

Yours sincerely



Mark Durnford
for Chief Executive

If you need to access this agenda or any of the supporting reports in an alternative accessible format please contact Democratic Services or the relevant report author whose details are listed at the end of each report.

This Agenda and all accompanying reports are printed on recycled paper

NOTES:

- 1. Inspection of Papers:** Any person wishing to inspect minutes, reports, or a list of the background papers relating to any item on this Agenda should contact Mark Durnford who is available by telephoning Bath 01225 394458 or by calling at The Guildhall, Bath (during normal office hours).
- 2. Public Speaking at Meetings:** The Council has a scheme to encourage the public to make their views known at meetings. They may make a statement relevant to what the meeting has power to do. They may also present a petition or a deputation on behalf of a group. Advance notice is required not less than two full working days before the meeting (this means that for meetings held on Wednesdays notice must be received in Democratic Services by 4.30pm the previous Friday)

The public may also ask a question to which a written answer will be given. Questions must be submitted in writing to Democratic Services at least two full working days in advance of the meeting (this means that for meetings held on Wednesdays, notice must be received in Democratic Services by 4.30pm the previous Friday). If an answer cannot be prepared in time for the meeting it will be sent out within five days afterwards. Further details of the scheme can be obtained by contacting Mark Durnford as above.

- 3. Details of Decisions taken at this meeting** can be found in the minutes which will be published as soon as possible after the meeting, and also circulated with the agenda for the next meeting. In the meantime details can be obtained by contacting Mark Durnford as above.

Appendices to reports are available for inspection as follows:-

Public Access points - Riverside - Keynsham, Guildhall - Bath, Hollies - Midsomer Norton, and Bath Central, Keynsham and Midsomer Norton public libraries.

For Councillors and Officers papers may be inspected via Political Group Research Assistants and Group Rooms/Members' Rooms.

- 4. Recording at Meetings:-**

The Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 now allows filming and recording by anyone attending a meeting. This is not within the Council's control.

Some of our meetings are webcast. At the start of the meeting, the Chair will confirm if all or part of the meeting is to be filmed. If you would prefer not to be filmed for the webcast, please make yourself known to the camera operators.

To comply with the Data Protection Act 1998, we require the consent of parents or guardians before filming children or young people. For more information, please speak to the camera operator

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- 5. Attendance Register:** Members should sign the Register which will be circulated at the meeting.

6. THE APPENDED SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS ARE IDENTIFIED BY AGENDA ITEM NUMBER.

7. Emergency Evacuation Procedure

When the continuous alarm sounds, you must evacuate the building by one of the designated exits and proceed to the named assembly point. The designated exits are sign-posted.

Arrangements are in place for the safe evacuation of disabled people.

Housing and Major Projects Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel - Tuesday, 29th July, 2014

at 5.30 pm in the Brunswick Room - Guildhall, Bath

A G E N D A

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

2. EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

The Chair will draw attention to the emergency evacuation procedure as set out under Note 6.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

At this point in the meeting declarations of interest are received from Members in any of the agenda items under consideration at the meeting. Members are asked to indicate:

(a) The agenda item number in which they have an interest to declare.

(b) The nature of their interest.

(c) Whether their interest is **a disclosable pecuniary interest** or **an other interest**, (as defined in Part 2, A and B of the Code of Conduct and Rules for Registration of Interests)

Any Member who needs to clarify any matters relating to the declaration of interests is recommended to seek advice from the Council's Monitoring Officer or a member of his staff before the meeting to expedite dealing with the item during the meeting.

5. TO ANNOUNCE ANY URGENT BUSINESS AGREED BY THE CHAIRMAN

6. ITEMS FROM THE PUBLIC OR COUNCILLORS - TO RECEIVE DEPUTATIONS, STATEMENTS, PETITIONS OR QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE BUSINESS OF THIS MEETING

At the time of publication no notifications had been received.

7. MINUTES - 27TH MAY 2014 (Pages 7 - 14)

8. CABINET MEMBER UPDATE (Pages 15 - 30)

The Cabinet Member(s) will update the Panel on any relevant issues. Panel members may ask questions. Cabinet member update papers are now attached.

9. COUNCIL STRATEGIC RIVER GROUP (Pages 31 - 50)

The purpose of this report is to provide an update to the Panel on the Strategic River Group (SRG) and Working Groups especially the River Safety Officers Working Group.

10. MIDSOMER NORTON - PROJECTS UPDATE (Pages 51 - 58)

This report updates on progress on sites within Midsomer Norton.

11. ANNUAL HOUSING REPORT (Pages 59 - 70)

The Head of Housing will give the Panel a presentation on this item. The presentation is now attached.

12. PANEL WORKPLAN (Pages 71 - 74)

This report presents the latest workplan for the Panel.

The Committee Administrator for this meeting is Mark Durnford who can be contacted on 01225 394458.

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BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET COUNCIL

HOUSING AND MAJOR PROJECTS POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

Tuesday, 27th May, 2014

Present:- Councillors Eleanor Jackson (Chair), Steve Hedges (Vice-Chair), Brian Simmons, June Player and David Veale

Also in attendance: Derek Quilter (Divisional Director for Project Management), Graham Sabourn (Head of Housing) and Tim Hewitt (Regeneration Team Manager)

1 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

The Chair drew attention to the emergency evacuation procedure.

3 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Councillor Gerry Curran had sent his apologies to the Panel.

The Cabinet Member for Homes & Planning, Councillor Tim Ball and the Cabinet Member for Sustainable Development, Councillor Ben Stevens had also sent their apologies to the Panel.

4 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Steve Hedges declared an other interest to the Panel as his son works for Curo.

5 TO ANNOUNCE ANY URGENT BUSINESS AGREED BY THE CHAIRMAN

There was none.

6 ITEMS FROM THE PUBLIC OR COUNCILLORS - TO RECEIVE DEPUTATIONS, STATEMENTS, PETITIONS OR QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE BUSINESS OF THIS MEETING

Mr David Redgewell, South West Transport Network addressed the Panel. He said that the fleet of First vehicles needed to be upgraded to have comfortable leather seats and wi-fi available so that they would become more attractive to use. He added that he was pleased to say that the toilets within the bus station had been restored,

but that it was a real shame that the café was now absent, so the toilets were still closed.

He referred to the bus gate trial on Dorchester Street as a debacle and said that further consultation would be required if it were to be reintroduced.

He stated that he believed that any new public transport routes associated with Bath Western Riverside should form part of the Bath Transport Strategy. He added that there currently were some bus stops in the area but hardly any buses used them.

Councillor June Player commented that she was aware that some wheelchair users who live in Bath Western Riverside are affected by being unable to access services because of pavement height.

The Chair suggested that this be reported to the Equalities team within the Council.

7 MINUTES - 11TH MARCH 2014

The Panel confirmed the minutes of the previous meeting as a true record and they were duly signed by the Chair.

8 CABINET MEMBER UPDATE

The Head of Housing introduced this item in the absence of Councillor Tim Ball.

He said that in response to a query raised by the Chair that he had the following information regarding boat dwellers. The Council has approved the establishment of the Council Strategic River Group. This is a multi-partnership group which includes representatives of the Environment Agency, the Canals & Rivers Trust & Wessex Water and is chaired by Councillor Ben Stevens. He added that at the meeting on the 2nd May it was agreed that this group would progress the wider issues resulting from the task & finish group on boat dwellings, which would include utilising the £40k of funding agreed by Council.

The Chair asked if an officer would be available to work directly with the group.

The Head of Housing replied that an officer would be allocated to the group and that he believed the job description was in development.

The Chair commented that she would like to receive an update on the work of the group in due course.

The Head of Housing explained that the Housing Options & Homelessness Team has recently received a number of positive assessments as a result of benchmarking initiatives and peer review activities. These were:

- Peer review by 2 local authorities using the Government's rigorous Homelessness Gold Standard framework. The feedback was very positive. We scored 73% the 2nd highest score of the 8 authorities who have so far gone through this voluntarily process. They were particularly positive about our partnership working.

- Mystery shopping provided by Shelter, the national homelessness charity, has been very positive. In particular they commented that telephone calls were promptly answered and that staff were friendly and helpful. The website was graded as excellent. There was however some concerns expressed about an email that was not responded to. This will be investigated.
- Independent benchmarking, facilitated by the Housing Quality Network Ltd using 2013/14 data shows that of 12 national peers:
 - B&NES operate with 0.49 FTE staff per 10,000 households (less than half the mean peer group);
 - B&NES staff make more statutory decisions per FTE than the average of the peer group;
 - B&NES homelessness prevention rate per FTE is the highest in the peer group;
 - At the time of writing there were 10 households in temporary accommodation, a record low for the Council. This is despite a national increase in homelessness. If the national rate of households in temporary accommodation was applied to this Council we would have in excess of 170 households in temporary accommodation.

Councillor Brian Simmons commented that he was aware of two rough sleepers in Keynsham and that they were not able to travel to Bath to access facilities.

The Head of Housing replied that it was only feasible to have one centre and added that outreach workers do visit people across the Council.

Councillor Steve Hedges asked how many of the 513 new affordable homes were truly 'affordable'.

The Head of Housing replied that the majority of them had been delivered under the social rent regime, though some of the later developments would indeed be affordable rent tenancies, that is, up to 80% of local market rent.

Councillor Steve Hedges asked how many Mandatory Housing in Multiple Occupation (HMO) licence applications had been received.

The Head of Housing replied that around 1,000 applications had been received and that these were now being visited.

Councillor June Player asked if there was a condition of the licence that referred to the garden of a property.

The Head of Housing replied that the licence was to protect the tenant in terms of the condition of the property and not really about the appearance of gardens. He asked Councillor Player to pass to him the details of the properties that she was concerned with.

Councillor Steve Hedges asked when a licence would be reviewed.

The Head of Housing replied that they would be reviewed in five years' time.

The Divisional Director for Project Management addressed the Panel in the absence of Councillor Ben Stevens. He wished to highlight the following points from the report that was circulated.

London Road

- o Original scheme proposal has been re-evaluated in light of concerns raised by cycling community group(s).
- o Revised scheme developed - support from community groups now in place
- o Contract award anticipated in June 2014.
- o Anticipated commencement of works on site: Summer 2014
- o Target completion of scheme by end of 2014

Bath Transport Package

• Bus Stops

- ER Hemmings are delivering the Bus Stop construction works; currently 242 stops have been upgraded. The Bus Stop programme is expected to complete around March 2015.

Keynsham Regeneration Project

- o Project remains on-time and on-budget
- o Brass and gold cladding is nearly complete
- o Raised access flooring is ongoing
- o Internal decorations commenced

Weston All Saints Primary School

KS1 new classroom block

- o The previously withdrawn Planning application was re-submitted in April which is expected to go to committee in June

St. Nicholas CE Primary School

The Chair commented that through her work as a governor at St. Nicholas' School, Radstock she was aware that some major repairs were required.

The Divisional Director for Project Management replied that he was aware of a further leak at the site and that floor work was planned for the summer and would be in place by September.

The Chair thanked the officers for their updates.

9 FUNDING APPROVAL FOR INDICATIVE AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROGRAMME

The Head of Housing introduced this item to the Panel. He explained that the Council has made available capital funding to support the delivery of affordable housing. He added that the report due before Cabinet on June 11th provided the indicative Affordable Housing programme for 2014-15 and the evolving pipeline programme for 2015-18. He said that it outlined the proposals for determining the

affordable housing projects for funding and sought to agree an effective and robust delegated authority for funding approval decisions.

He said that a proposal was to be made to amend the decision making process to allow the Director of Place in association with the Cabinet Member Homes & Planning to allocate funding.

Councillor Steve Hedges commented that he saw no argument against this proposal.

The Chair commented that she felt it would be an effective way of working. She also asked if it would alleviate the problem of granted permissions not being built.

The Head of Housing replied that it would not. He added that it was about pursuing developments when approached by partners.

Councillor Brian Simmons asked if the Council would receive any funds back through Section 106 agreements.

The Head of Housing replied that it would not but that it would receive the New Homes Bonus if a development was successful.

10 BATH WESTERN RIVERSIDE / SOMERDALE : NEXT PHASE

The Regeneration Team Manager introduced this item to the Panel. He highlighted to the Panel some of the key points from the report.

Somerdale

The detailed part of the application is for 157 dwellings, change of use of Block A for up to 113 apartments. It also covers highway works, social and sports pavilion (new Fry Club), new sports pitches, alterations to factory buildings B and C for employment use (B1) leisure (D2 uses) and retail (A3, A4 and A5 uses).

The Section 106 agreement was signed on February 19th 2014.

The employment space is being marketed. A full page advert has been placed in Estates Gazette (w/c 12th May). Taylor Wimpey and their representatives are preparing a marketing strategy which is required by the S106 Agreement for the Council's approval within six months of signing the agreement. Regular meetings with the Council's Economic Development Team and Invest in Bristol & Bath form part of the strategy, and these are already under way.

Bath Western Riverside

Phase 1 of Bath Riverside commenced on site in early 2011 and is currently delivering up to 813 residential units. The project is delivering affordable homes (101 to date with a further 55 under construction) early in the development. The project has established a good market for the product with strong sales.

Significant outputs have already been achieved;

- 300 homes constructed – 101 affordable 1, 2 and 3 bed flats and houses

- Biomass Energy Centre completed and operational
- £750k in S106 contribution to B&NES
- £260k PA received in New Homes Bonus
- Demonstrated Crest/B&NES/HCA and Curo have formed a good partnership

With the support of the Council to use LEP Revolving Infrastructure funding (RIF), Crest entered into an Agreement with Wales and West (WWU) under which the gas towers have been decommissioned and the demolition and remediation processes commenced. The first phase of decommissioning is complete and WWU has now surrendered the Hazardous Storage Licence. In parallel, Crest (and by contracting RIF, the Council) has been granted an option to acquire the Wales and West site which extends through to 2018 and which provides the necessary control from which to bring forward the remaining phases.

The Council is developing plans to relocate the waste transfer and recycling site with options to consolidate and improve the waste service activities. This may be achieved by relocation of the waste management operation to Pixash Lane, Keynsham and the Household Recycling Centre onto an alternative Bath site.

Councillor Steve Hedges asked if the gasometer was still there.

The Divisional Director for Project Management replied that the gasometer was still there, but it had been de-commissioned. He added that it will take two years to take it down.

The Chair asked if the Radstock Road recycling facility was due to close down.

The Regeneration Team Manager replied that he was not sure and would try to find out for her. Following the meeting the Democratic Services Officer was informed by the Regeneration Team Manager that there are absolutely no plans to close the public Recycling Centre at Wheelers Hill, Old Welton (off Radstock Rd).

The Chair asked if the highways works associated with the NRR were due to commence before the 16th July 2014.

The Divisional Director for Project Management replied that there were no plans to commence before that date and that the Town Council would be notified of a start date. He added that they hoped to leave as much infrastructure in place as possible during the works.

Councillor June Player asked if any update was available regarding the old Bath Press site.

The Regeneration Team Manager replied that the Council had met recently with Tesco and that he now expected a residential led application to be submitted.

The Chair commented that she would appreciate an update on project activity in Midsomer Norton in due course.

The Regeneration Team Manager replied that he would be happy to provide one to the Panel.

Councillor Steve Hedges commented that he believed some people may be sleeping on the Bath Press site.

The Chair asked for the Head of Housing to note this comment.

Councillor David Veale asked if any retail outlet was planned for the site.

The Regeneration Team Manager replied that a small scale one was likely.

The Chair thanked him for the update on behalf of the Panel.

11 PANEL WORKPLAN

The Chair introduced this item to the Panel. She said that she would like them to receive a report from the Council Strategic River Group as soon as possible. She added that the Medium Term Service & Resource Plan needed to be placed upon the workplan.

The Head of Housing commented that four registered providers had been invited to address the Panel on their plans for the future in July.

The Panel agreed with these proposals.

The meeting ended at 7.30 pm

Chair(person)

Date Confirmed and Signed

Prepared by Democratic Services

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**Bath & North East
Somerset Council**

**Development, Regeneration & Project Delivery Member Update
Councillor Ben Stevens – Cabinet Member for Sustainable Development
July 2014**

Council Direct Projects

Bath Western Riverside

- Residential occupations
 - **Phase 1 complete and occupied**
 - 58 Open Market and 55 Affordable unit completions anticipated in financial year 2014. 14 open marketing completions to date.
- **Phase 1**
 - Complete
- **Phase 2**
 - 135 Units complete
 - 105 under construction for completions in 2014
- **Phase 3**
 - Building B17 (55 further affordable homes) under construction
 - Energy Centre complete and commissioning underway.
 - **Building B11, 13 & 15 granted consent**
 - B5 & B16 signature buildings submitted for Reserve Matters consent in March 2014
- **BWR Future Phases**
 - Gas Holder has been decommissioned and Hazardous Storage License revoked
 - Reserve Matters for the majority of remaining 'secured' land homes (up to 820 units) have now been granted **LPA**.

London Road

- Original scheme proposal has been re-evaluated in light of concerns raised by cycling community group(s).
- Revised scheme developed - support from community groups now in place
- Preferred contractor identified and provisionally appointed
- Highways Technical Approval and Traffic Regulation Order processes are being progressed.
- We are in consultation with the preferred contractor t being value engineered to meet the project budget
- Anticipated commencement of works on site: Summer 2014
- Target completion of scheme by winter / spring 2015

Batheaston Bridge

- All works are now complete

Victoria Bridge

- Off-site steelwork fabrication and iron conservation works are ongoing.
- On-site conservation of stonework and construction of backspan substructures underway.
- Discharge of Listed Building Consent conditions is being progressed.
- Works completion anticipated in December 2014.
- Temporary closures of the bridge, towpath and river are being implemented by the Contractor, where required for safety reasons to enable works to be progressed. Forthcoming closures times/dates are being communicated via Twitter, the B&NES Victoria Bridge webpage and on signboards located on site.

Bath Flood Mitigation

- Pre-planning consultation is now complete.

- Production of documents for planning application underway.
- Submission of planning application and listed building consent application envisaged in Summer 2014.

Bath Transport Package

- **Lansdown**
 - Sports pitch – works have commenced and are due for completion in September 2014.
- **Newbridge**
 - Removal and treatment of Japanese Knotweed has taken place.
 - Traffic management system is now in place.
 - Highways works continuing with programme.
 - Car park extension excavation is complete with the stone formation in progress.

- **Real Time Information (RTI)**

- 68 buses fitted out ready with the RTI equipment.
- On street displays installation due Autumn 2014.

- **Bus Stops**

- ER Hemmings are delivering the Bus Stop construction works; currently 282 stops have been upgraded. The Bus Stop programme is expected to complete around March 2015.

- **Bus Shelters**

- First phase of the shelter installation programme is complete; 43 shelters have been installed to date including 2nr High Street and Abbey Shelters; 50 new poles installed to date
- Second batch of shelters are currently being installed
- **VMS (Variable Message Signs)**
 - 4 Outer VMS signs are operational
 - 5 car park signs are operational
- **Stall St/Lower Borough Walls: Pedestrian Improvements**
 - Detailed design is now finished and awaiting technical approval
 - Tenders due to go out during July 2014.

Keynsham Regeneration Project

- Project remains on-time and on-budget
- PV installation is complete
- Raised access flooring is complete
- Internal decorations are ongoing
- 2nd fix mechanical & electrical works are continuing
- Finishes works have now commenced
- Highways regeneration works have now commenced

Grand Parade & Undercroft

- Tender documents have been issued for main works – due back in mid July
- Preferred restaurant tenant has been identified for the undercroft restaurant
- Marketing is ongoing for the vaults restaurant

Document: Development, Regeneration & Project Delivery Member Update
Page: Page 5 of 8
Meeting Date: July 2014

- Draft feasibility report has been issued for the enhanced market (Phase 2)

Odd Down Playing Fields

- **3G Pitch**
 - Planning consent granted in January 2014.
 - Contractor for pitch build is SIS. They are now on site and progressing with works.
 - Works are progressing in the strip of the top soil and are currently in line with the programme.

- **Changing Rooms**

- Planning consent granted in January 2014.
- Works have started on site – they are progressing in line with the programme.
- We are progressing an option to provide storage / workshop facilities for cyclists. This will need to go back through planning and will be funded by cycling bodies. This is being progressed alongside the agreed planning consent.

Lewis House Forecourt

- Contractor appointed and on site April 2014
- Completion date is still August 2014

Lewis House Generator works

- Works to be commenced following the completion of the Forecourt Refurbishment.

Temple Precinct

- Final account was agreed at the end of June.
- A platform lift is now being delivered separate from the main scheme.

Assembly Room dilapidations

- Works are due to commence in September 2014 – Dilapidation works are required under the terms of new lease
- Priority one works are awaiting costs back from framework contractor

Gas Replacement

- Works are on site commenced
- 4 week delay due to utilities removals and further testing of gas flares – delay does not have an impact on the budget or operations of the site.

Children’s Services

Weston All Saints Primary School

- **KS2 classroom & Kitchen extension**
 - Project is due for completion at the beginning of July – final snagging is taking place
 - Previous weather related delays have been resolved and the project is in line with revised programme.

- Kitchen extension has been handed over and is ready for staff training over the summer.
- **KS1 new classroom block**
 - Planning submission was granted on Wednesday 2nd July.
 - Negotiations with contractors are continuing.
 - Target start-on-site date is towards the end of August 2014.

Castle Primary School – 2 classroom extension

- Project progressing well to programme and within budget
- External skin of the building has been constructed – the roof was made water-tight on the week commencing 7th July 2014.
- Construction of Elliott Building is due to start at the end of July 2014.

Paulton Infants School

- Phase 3 of the works started on the 16th June.
- Overall programme is on target and practical completion of phase 3 works is due in August 2014.

St Saviours Primary School

- Scheme registered for planning approval
- Enabling works and temporary accommodation started
- Tender documents for main contract issued to preferred contractors.
- Scheme expected to be complete in September 2015.

**Housing Services Update
Housing & Major Projects Policy Development & Scrutiny Panel
July 2014**

General Update

Long Service Recognition

- Two members of staff have been celebrating this month at the Mayor's long service award ceremony. Ann Robins has worked for the local authority for the last 25 years, while Dawn Hillman has worked for an impressive 40 years.

Re-shaping the Way we Work with our Housing Association Partners

- Across the West of England attention has been focussed on the successor arrangements to the West of England Housing Development Panel. The WoE HDP is the legal contracted panel of Registered Providers (our housing association partners) and developers who were selected to become the delivery agents to drive the delivery of affordable and market housing across the Region. This formal contractual panel comes to an end during 2015/16.
- It is acknowledged by all the parties involved in the WoE HDP that the formal arrangements have not delivered on the scale of development anticipated and after a series of facilitated workshops, reviews and consultation exercises, recommendations are taking shape for successor arrangements to be much more flexible and informal with a major focus on delivering the local priorities identified by each Unitary Authority, but with the benefit of a WoE-wide strategic umbrella partnership that retains the positive elements of the joint working established under current arrangements.
- The Heads of Housing and the Enabling Managers are now working up the details of the new locally focussed partnership arrangements, identifying the broad strategic parameters against which potential partners will be selected at the WoE level. Work is soon to commence to identify the key themes against which B&NES will be assessing the RP partners wishing to work within the authority.
- A report outlining the key elements of the new partnership proposals is being taken to WoE PCHB in July and then to each of the 4 UA's for sign off. In B&NES this is likely to be by way of Single Member Decision later this summer.
- Housing & Major Projects will be kept informed of progress and will be asked to comment on the key affordable housing themes for the assessment of B&NES partners.

Key Projects Update

Gypsy and Travellers

- Full planning consent has been granted for a 13 pitch Gypsy & Traveller site on land adjacent to the Lower Bristol Road. In addition a recent single member decision has provided ability to draw down the budget as required and to contract with an RP partner.

- We are currently in negotiations with the RP partner and expect to contract in the next few weeks.
- The allocations and nominations policy has been drafted. It will need to be formally agreed.
- On 18th July the Council secured a possession order for the land. Some existing occupiers have already left the site. The remaining occupiers are expected to leave on the 29th July. Some of the more vulnerable households will be provided with temporary accommodation elsewhere.

Additional Licensing Scheme

- On 12th June 2013 Cabinet approval was received to introduce an additional licensing scheme for HMOs in the designated area for a period of 5 years commencing on the 1st January 2014 with licence applications being accepted from 1st October 2013. The designated area focuses on the wards of Oldfield Park, Westmoreland and parts of Widcombe.
- At the time of writing Housing Services has received around 1,000 applications for additional licensing approval. Most of the licensable HMOs have now been inspected and the team are now drafting the licences.
- Around a third of these have been found to contain significant hazards or complex management issues for which follow up enforcement action is being taken.

Empty Properties / CPO

- Housing services are taking forward the Councils policy to bring long term empty homes into use by seeking to purchase two of the highest priority empty homes in B&NES. Cabinet have authorised the Head of Housing to make Compulsory Purchase Orders for this purpose.
- It is anticipated that the Order will be served on the 31st July. A 21 day appeal period follows before confirmation can be given by the Secretary of State. In the interim we continue to work with the owners of the properties to investigate whether a voluntary purchase agreement can be agreed.

Energy @ Home

- Energy@Home is a Council led partnership initiative with particular involvement of Housing Services and Corporate Sustainability. The procurement process for the Energy@Home advice service is nearly complete and the service due to commence in September. The retrofit delivery provider procurement has also started and expected to be available for providing finance and arranging energy efficiency improvement work by the end of the year.
- Phase 1 of Energy@Home is about to launch with a grant scheme providing up to £7300 towards energy efficiency measures funded through a successful bid to DECC.

The grant means that subject to a survey B&NES residents may be able to install solid wall and other insulation measures with no upfront installation costs.

Affordable Housing

- Draft Affordable Housing element of the Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document completed following informal consultation with our RP partners. The draft Planning Obligations SPD is awaiting approval prior to wider consultation this Summer.
- Cabinet has approved the new approach to Capital funding for affordable housing as outlined at the last HMP committee. And work is underway focussing on how we can use the council's capital funding to deliver against key housing priorities. Particular emphasis is being made on bespoke housing solutions for priority housing cases or client.
- Scoping work has begun on a strategic review of the affordable housing provision at BWR to consider the success of the development in terms of affordability, sustainability and contribution to the wider regeneration aims for the City Centre. This work is being jointly commissioned by the Council, Curo and Crest and will be a useful tool in helping Housing Services determine the level and nature of affordable housing being sought on Phase II at BWR and the wider Enterprise Area.

• Q1 Performance

What we have done well...

97% of customers are satisfied with our services. We have exceeded the 90% customer satisfaction target and been awarded a customer service excellence kitemark. Putting the customer first and having high standards for the quality and timeliness of services is very important to us

100% of decisions on homeless application were made within 33 days.

42% of all advice and prevention approaches were successful in preventing or relieving homelessness compared to the target of 33%.

554 new affordable homes have been delivered since April 2011 in partnership with registered providers, and we are on track to meet our target of 610 by the end of March 2015.

31 weeks is the average completion time for a disabled facilities grant.

12 households in temporary accommodation at the end of June 2014. This is the lowest it's ever been and is well below the target of 24.

3% sickness for the Housing Services compared to a corporate target of 5%

How we will improve...

83.3% Equalities Impact Assessments are in Place (10 out of 12). We expect to have the remaining 2 done by the end of the next quarter.

75.2% Many of the "invoices" we pay are received third hand and relate to DFG & other grant payments. These invoices are merely proof of grant completion. Since we have little control over receipt of these types of invoices it is difficult to improve performance.

43% of performance development reviews were completed at the end of the first quarter. We expect to have all staff PDRs in place by the end of the next quarter.

159 properties were improved compared to a target of 180. However, over 100 schedules for work have recently been issued. As such the target is likely to be met in subsequent quarters.

	Current Quarter (Q1 14/15)		Direction of travel	Target	
<u>1. Customer</u>					
Customer Complaints	100%			87.0%	
Customer Satisfaction	96.6 %			90.0%	See note above
Invoices paid 30 days	75.2 %			93.0%	See note above
Performance Reviews	43.0 %			100%	See note above
Staff Sickness	2.9 %			5.0%	See note above
Telephone response	90.0 %			90%	
Equalities Impact Assessment	83.3 %			100%	See note above
<u>2. Improved homes</u>					
Number of unsafe or unsuitable homes improved (DLI)	159			720	See note above
Disabled Facility Grants	47			250	See note above
Housing conditions enforcement actions completed	71			350	See note above
Improvements for vulnerable people	41			120	
Empty properties brought back in to use (PPC)	12			50	
(DLI) – Directorate Level Indicator (PPC) – Place Plan Commitment					

	Current Quarter (Q1 14/15)		Direction of travel	Target	
<u>3. New homes</u>					
Total affordable homes provided (DLI and PPC)	90.8 %		↑	100%	See note above
Affordable homes for rent	89.1 %		↑	100%	
Affordable homes for the intermediate market	96.1 %		↑	100%	
<u>4. Preventing Homelessness</u>					
Number of households in Temporary Accommodation (DLI)	12		↓	24	See note above
Homelessness cases prevented	42.2 %		↑	33.0%	
Homelessness decisions (Q)	100.0 %		↑	90.0%	See note above
Housing Advice services requests (Q)	541		→	2040	
(DLI) – Directorate Level Indicator (PPC) – Place Plan Commitment					

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Bath & North East Somerset Council		
MEETING:	Housing & Major Projects Development Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel	
MEETING DATE:	Tuesday 29th July 2014	EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN REFERENCE:
TITLE:	Strategic River Group	
WARD:	All	
AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM		
<p>List of attachments to this report:</p> <p>Appendix 1: Strategic River Group structure and membership</p> <p>Appendix 2: Update report River Safety Group</p> <p>Appendix 3: Draft Canal & River Trust Annual Report 2012/13</p>		

The purpose of this report is to provide an update to the Panel on the Strategic River Group (SRG) and Working Groups especially the River Safety Officers Working Group. The Panel requested at its March meeting an update report and action plan on River Safety activities.

B&NES has recognised the importance of the River Avon in its draft Core Strategy and Green Infrastructure Strategy. It has worked closely with a range of stakeholders to ensure that the area makes the most of its economic, environmental, cultural and social value.

A River Corridor Scrutiny Day took place in May 2012, building on the work of the

River Corridor Group. The PDS Panel Recommendation was accepted by the Cabinet, the rationale being: "This Administration is keen to ensure that any future developments near or related to the River will not "turn their back" on the river, but see the river as the excellent asset it is, and enhance the river frontage for public access"

In addition on 16 January 2014 Full Council accepted a motion to set up the Strategic River Group chaired by the Cabinet Member for Sustainable Development: "Under the leadership and guidance of the Council's Strategic Director for Place to urgently form a Round Table Working Group from the top level decision makers of the Canal & River Trust, the Environment Agency, Wessex Water, The River Regeneration Trust, and Senior Officers from this Council to discuss the river on a wider basis including flooding issues and proposed flood mitigation projects and other aspects such as usage."

The Strategic River Group was formed in March 2014 (Appendix 1 structure and membership of SRG) and has met twice so far in March and May with next meeting due on 18th July

The group is made up of Senior Officers from Wessex Water, Environment Agency, Canal & Rivers Trust and from B&NES the Director of Place, Divisional Director for Environmental Services, Divisional Director for Community Regeneration, other council officers, the River Champion, The River Regeneration Trust and is chaired by Cllr Ben Stevens Cabinets Member for Sustainable Development

Within the SRG there are 5 working groups:

- Waterside Communities
- Economy
- Water Management
- Connectivity
- Leisure

And there are two cross cutting themes, Health & Safety and Green Infrastructure

River Strategy

One of the recommendations of the River Corridor Scrutiny Day in May 2012 was the need for a River Strategy. There have been a number of recent reports and studies which would be used to inform the strategy

To move the River Strategy forward it has been agreed there is a need for a River co-ordinator and currently there are discussion between Wessex Water, Environment Agency and B&NES on funding the post

River Corridor Fund

At Cabinet meeting 6th June the Community Regeneration Capital Programme 2014-15 was approved which included the River Corridor Fund of £340K, which included identified edge protection safety works at Widcombe

River Safety Officers Working Group

The River Safety Officers Working Group is made up of Avon Fire & Rescue, Avon & Somerset Police, Canal & Rivers Trust, RoSPA, B&NES Officers

The last meeting took place on 5/6/2014, quarterly meetings have been set up and will report back to the Strategic River Group

Appendix 2 Update report for ECD outlines current actions being progressed by the River Safety Group. For those actions to be progressed by B&NES, costs will be covered by existing budgets.

The Environment Agency has undertaken an inspection of access ladders within the canalised section of the River Avon within Bath. The majority of these ladders are in a good state of repair although it is noted that they are not designed to allow public access and egress from the river.

Through work carried out it has been suggested that attaching timber battens to the steel sheet piling might improve egress from the river in an emergency situation as well as improving the river edge visually and the biodiversity of the river. The Environment Agency are supportive of this approach and idea of setting up a trial area is being discussed.

Waterside Communities

In July 2013 a Task and Finish Group chaired by Cllr Eleanor Jackson produced a report on Boat Dwellers and River Travellers with a series of recommendations. To create capacity to take this work area forward and the other elements of the Strategic River Group the role of 'river coordinator' is being explored with SRG partners. It is hoped to secure this post and start to make progress on some of the recommendations by the Autumn.

Kennet & Avon Canal Annual Report 2013/14

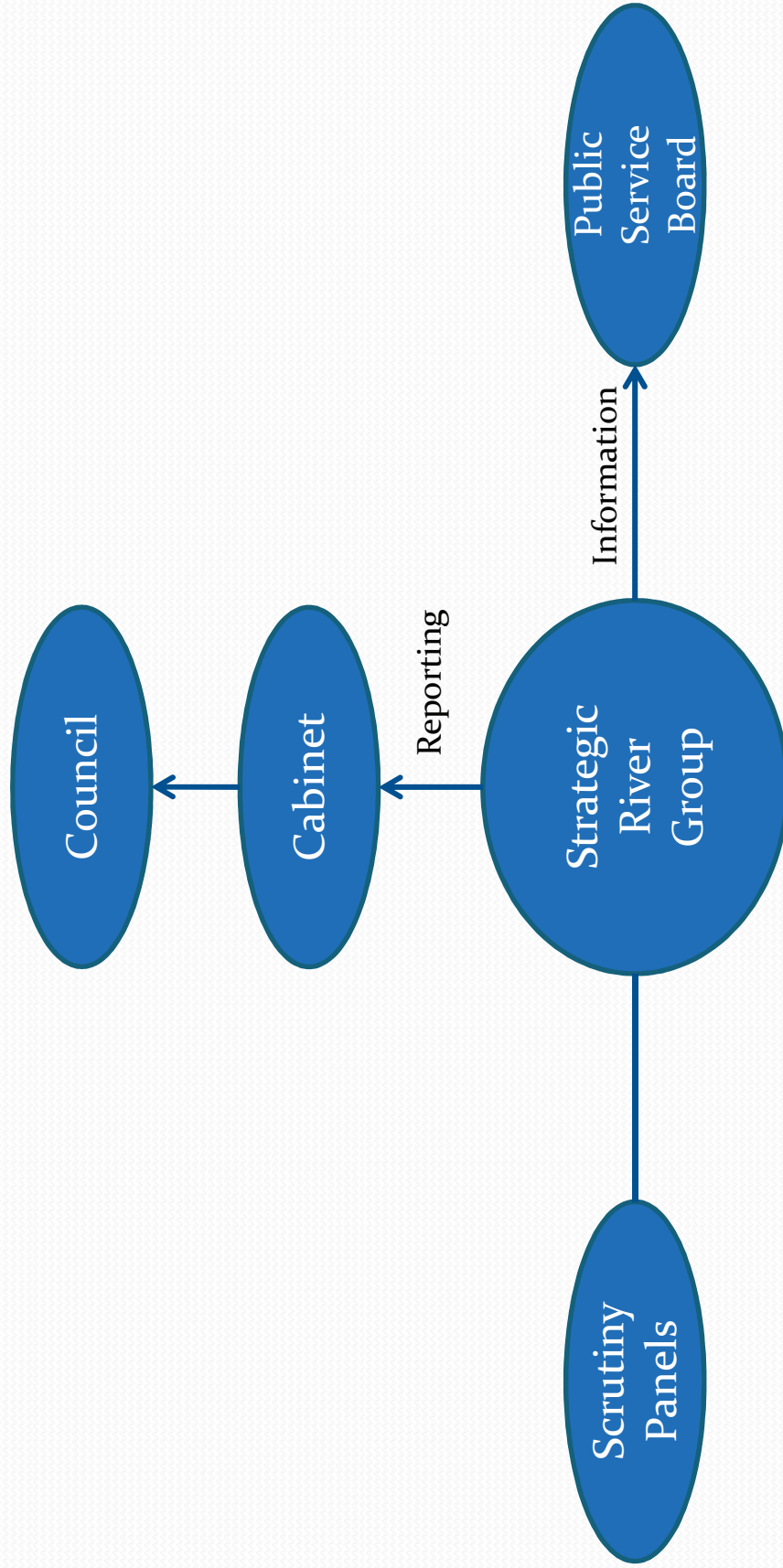
B&NES provides funding to K&A Canal as part of a legal agreement which was set up as a condition of a significant Heritage Lottery Fund bid in 1996 for the restoration of the canal.

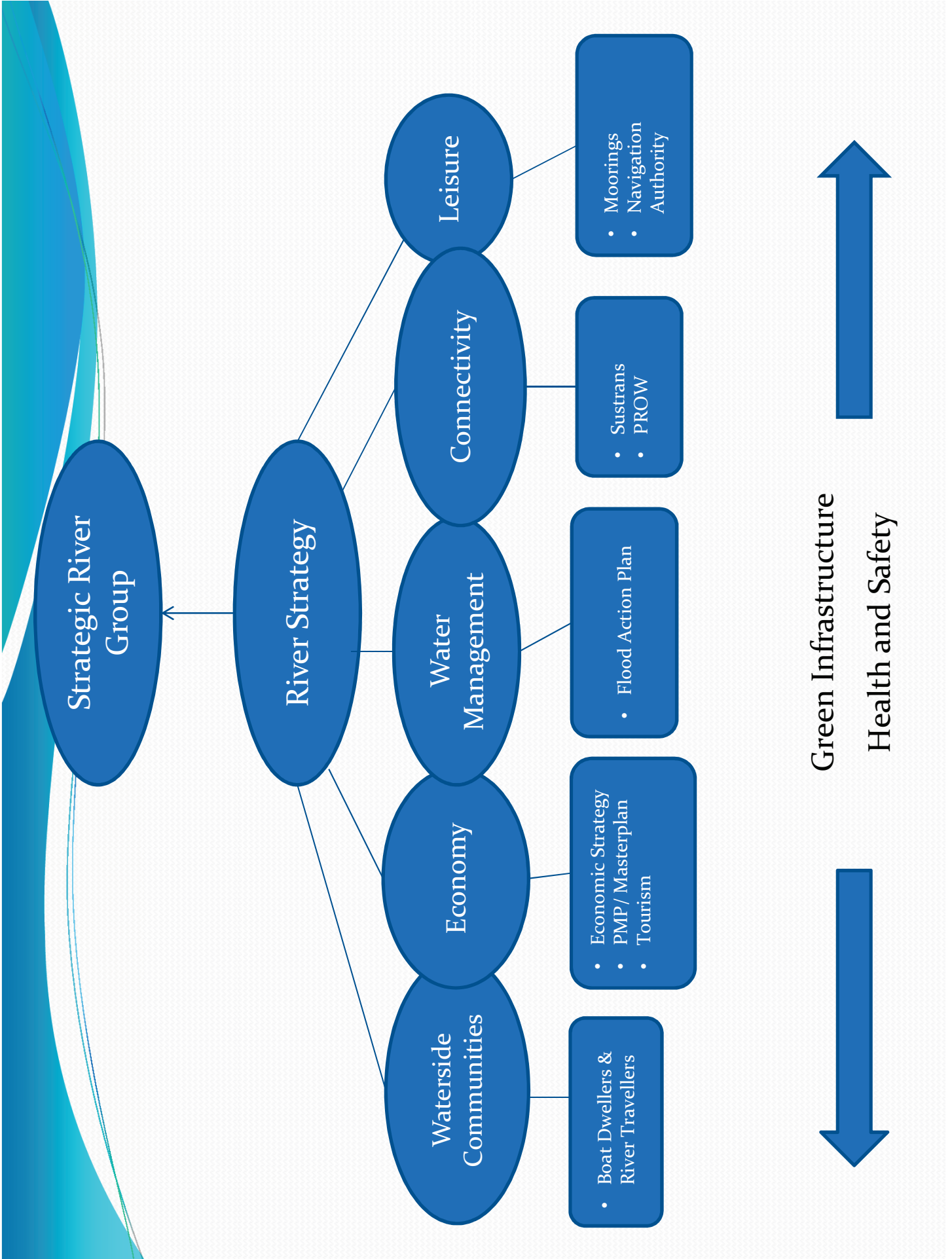
As part of this agreement CRT are required to produce an annual report, which summarises maintenance and operation expenditure on the K&A Canal. A draft copy of this is attached as Appendix 3.

Over 7,500 hours of volunteer involvement was recorded for 2013/14 in the B&NES section of River Avon and K&A Canal

For the current financial year 2014/15 CRT propose to invest £700,000 on River Avon Navigation Improvements on the Bath to Hanham section of the river. This has no financial implications for B&NES.

Strategic River Group Governance Structure







Membership

- Cllr Ben Stevens, Chair (B&NES)
- Cllr Dave Laming, River Champion(B&NES)
- Louise Fradd (B&NES)
- Matthew Smith (B&NES)
- John Wilkinson (B&NES)
- Tim Hewitt (B&NES)
- Mark Minkley (B&NES)
- David Crowson (Environment Agency)
- Richard Rutter (Canal & River Trust)
- Dan Green (Wessex Water)
- Geoff Dunford (The River Regeneration Trust)

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Update for the Economic and Community Development PDS Panel on 17th July 2014

The table below summarises the current actions being progressed by the River Safety Group:

Item	Comments	Actions	Action Owner	June update
Life-belt housings- <i>management</i>	There is evidence that some life-belt stations on the south side of the River Avon are not being actively managed and are empty.	B&NES agreed to identify landowners and send a joint letter to landowners providing advice on how to manage life-belt stations. Letter will incorporate partner logos to demonstrate multi-agency support for this approach.	B&NES	Letter drafted and agreed. To be sent in July 2014.
Life-belt housings- <i>information</i>	Provide contact details on life-belt stations so that public know who is responsible for managing it and who to call if equipment is missing.	B&NES will arrange this on housings that it is responsible for managing. Landowners will be requested to do this in letter (see above).	B&NES	Proof of new life-belt station sticker has been finalised and will be added to B&NES managed stations in July 2014.
Educational initiatives	Ensure that educational initiatives about safety near rivers continue to engage the student community.	Avon Fire and Rescue Service intend to refresh their water safety campaign 'Don't let river water be your last drink' in partnership with Bath Spa University and University of Bath.	Avon Fire and Rescue Service Student Community Partnership	Agreement reached that current campaign would continue for the present. A focus group with students will be convened in September 2014 to devise a new campaign. This will be facilitated by the Student Community Partnership.
Educational initiatives	Ensure that promotional material linked to 'Don't let river water be your last drink' campaign is displayed in licensed premises.	Licensing Officers will distribute material during enforcement visits.	B&NES	Completed.
Signage	Provision of new permanent warning signage at entrance points to northern River Avon path.	New design to be commissioned and consulted upon.	B&NES	New design has been finalised after consultation. Will be erected at 8 locations along northern River Avon path following fencing repairs in July 2014.
Grab lines	Existing grab lines have been replaced by the Canal and River Trust in 2012 but need to consider how these are maintained in the future.	Arrange for grab lines to be checked along stretch between Churchill Bridge and Windsor Bridge in 2014.	Canal and River Trust	A survey has been completed of the existing grab lines in 2014 and little was found to be wrong with the condition of the existing lines. Options report to be submitted to Strategic River Group meeting of 18/07/2014 for consideration of who should maintain grab lines in the future.
Inspection ladders on certain sections of the riverbank	The ladders are not designed to allow public access and egress from river. Are any improvements possible?	The Environment Agency has committed to: -carry out an internal Public Safety Risk Assessment (PSRA) and share the results of this investigation with the key stakeholders	Environment Agency	This is on track to be completed in December 2014.

<p>Collation of data about river-related incidents</p>	<p>Recognition that there is no central point for collation of data about water related incidents.</p>	<p>-carry out a visual inspection by boat of the ladders along the whole of the Bath flood defence scheme</p> <p>-produce a plan showing where these ladders are located and share this with the emergency services and Bath and North East Somerset Council</p> <p>-investigate installing a system to highlight these ladders from the bank for the emergency service purposes only. We wish to make it clear that these ladders have not been designed for public safety purposes. However we agree with the general consensus that the current ladders should not be removed</p>	<p>Environment Agency</p>	<p>This has been completed and a report has been produced which is currently being discussed between the partner agencies and will be discussed further at the Strategic River Group.</p> <p>Completed.</p> <p>This is being explored and an update will be provided at the next River Safety Group meeting.</p>
<p>Page 40</p>	<p>Avon Fire and Rescue Service has completed a scoping project to locate B-lines and buoys within vandal-proof cabinets along the River Avon.</p>	<p>The River Safety Group was very supportive of this idea and requested that it be escalated to Strategic River Group for further discussion.</p> <p>Next step will be the creation of a prototype cabinet to evaluate the viability of this idea.</p>	<p>B&NES</p> <p>Avon Fire and Rescue</p>	<p>Initial investigations have shown that this is going to be difficult to achieve locally. The River Safety Group is exploring the use of the national Water Incident Database (WAID) system as a means to achieve this.</p> <p>Report to be submitted to SRG meeting of 18/07/2014 for consideration</p>

(Funding Partner Logos to be Added as Header)

The Kennet and Avon Canal Heritage Lottery Fund Partnership (HLFP)

ANNUAL REPORT *(Draft: Rev3: 4 July 2014)*

April 2013 to March 2014

Executive Summary

This report summarises maintenance and operation expenditure on the Kennet and Avon Canal, as divided by Local Authority Area, for Business Year 2013/14. The report sets out information that fulfil the Trust's reporting obligations that are set out in the HLF (Restoration of the Kennet and Avon Canal) agreement.

Role and Objectives of the Canal and River Trust

The Canal & River Trust (the Trust) was established in July 2012 and has responsibility for canals, rivers, docks and reservoirs, along with historic buildings, archives and three waterway museums, including the National Waterways Museum.

These valuable assets are recognised as a national treasure and a local haven for people and wildlife, and they are held and managed by the new Trust on behalf of the nation. The principal role of the Trust is to care for this unique legacy, holding it in trust for the nation in perpetuity.

The Canal and River Trust has been working hard during the last twelve months to develop and refine its long term strategy, recognising that the Trust has a different focus and to British Waterways.

Guided by the Trust's new Chief Executive, Richard Parry, the organisation is under-going a significant change in emphasis to ensure that this longer term strategy is achieved.

The Trust recently unveiled its key values that will provide the context for all of its future work; Excellence, Openness, Caring, Inclusive and Local.

Funding

Funding streams remain as reported in the 2012/13 summary, noting that the Trust is becoming increasingly engaged with raising money from individual donors and sponsors. Income is derived from the following sources:

- individual donors and corporate sponsors;
- commercial income including revenue from the licensing of boats, moorings and angling; and revenue from property and utilities;
- grants from the other organisations e.g. HLFP; and
- a 15 year contract with government.

Many individuals and organisations are supporting the Canal and River Trust on both local and national levels. The Trust has been able to raise funds to address local, specific issues. For example, locally, the Kennet and Avon Canal Trust recently made a significant donation toward funding flood damage repair works on the River Kennet.

With respect to grants and contributions from other organisations, the Trust is similarly continuing to explore new opportunities all of the time. For example, the Trust hopes to secure funding via West Berkshire Council (the Bellwin emergency relief works fund) to rebuild lengths of public towpath that were washed away during winter floods.

The Trust is proactive in utilising its property assets and joint venture vehicles to bring forward land to deliver regeneration, wider benefits to the community and to attract private sector investment. As a charitable trust, all net rental income and capital receipts generated from our property estate and other commercial activities are used to maintain the waterways.

Waterway Partnership

As reported in 2012/13, as part of the Trust's governance arrangements, 13 local partnerships have been established to help the Trust shape strategic plans. The Partnerships guide the Trust's decisions about spending and help develop local engagement, external funding while championing the interests of the waterways

The three year strategic action plan for the Kennet and Avon Waterways will be published shortly. This plan was developed in consultation with the waterway's many partners and stakeholders (see Draft Plan in Appendix).

Kennet and Avon Canal: Key Statistics

The following tables summarise key statistics about the Kennet and Avon Waterways:

Canal length in each area		km
Reading	R Kennet - London St to Fobney lock	3
Reading	Fobney Lock to boundary	2
West Berks		43
Wilts		65
B&NES	Boundary to R Avon	9
B&NES	R Avon to Hanham Lock	18
Total		140 km

In addition to the towpath there are numerous engineering, environmental and heritage assets which are managed and maintained by CRT;

Eng Assets	Wilts	B&NES	West Berks	Reading	Total
Locks	57	12	34	3	106
Bridges	90	42	78	12	222
Aqueducts	8	2	2	0	12
Tunnels	3	2	0	0	5
Reservoirs	0	0	0	0	0

	B&NES	Wiltshire	West Berks	Reading
Conservation Areas	5	8	8	0
Non stat wildlife sites	Entire canal corridor	10 approx	14 approx	4
SSSI	5 (in or adjacent)	3	6	0
Permit holder moorings	26	41	36	2
Visitor moorings	17	28	12	0
ANOB	Cotswolds AONB	North Wessex Downs AONB	North Wessex Downs AONB	
Heritage Sites (See Appendix 2)	1 World Heritage Site 5 Grade II* 2 historic Parks and Gardens 6 Grade II 1 Scheduled and Grade 1 Aqueduct	1 Scheduled lock flight 1 Grade 1 Pumping Station 1 Historic Battlefield 1 Grade II* 9 Grade II	1 Scheduled Lock 2 Scheduled and listed Locks 7 Grade II 1 Grade II*	

Expenditure - Kennet & Avon Waterway April 2013 to March 2014

CRT has undertaken an analysis of what was defrayed on the K&A Waterway in 2013/14 on activities ranging from lock repairs and vegetation management to bank and weir maintenance.

In 2013/14, the cost to the Canal and River Trust of operating and maintaining the Kennet and Avon Canal was just over £4 million. This compares to a total invoiced contribution from the Councils of £295,410.

CRT also analysed what should be spent on the waterway if sufficient revenue resource were made available, a model it refers to as 'Steady State'. This model however does not take in to account the expenditure it would need to spend on arrears to reach a position at which 'Steady State' could be adopted. In comparison, the 'Steady State' model suggests that a budget of £5,516,640 + RPI would be needed each year to maintain the waterway within the three funding council areas. The Council contributions therefore make a significant step toward bridging the gap between the waterway budget and the Steady State figure.

Maintenance works along the canal are prioritised every year, taking account of factors such as public safety, structural condition, amenity and usage. This being the case, the proportion of total expenditure in each Local Authority area varies from year to year, depending on current priorities. Note also that each of the Local Authority areas is different in both length and number of principal assets (bridges, locks, aqueducts, culverts etc) that fall within its boundaries (see Key Statistic information, above).

The figures below have been abstracted from the Canal and River Trust's accounting system. As such, they will be largely accurate with the exception of possible cost coding errors that may not have been identified and corrected.

Bath and North East Somerset

A length of approximately 27 kilometers of the Kennet and Avon Waterways falls within the Bath and North East Somerset Local Authority area. Note however that of this 27km, the Canal and River Trust only owns approximately one third. The River Avon section is generally in riparian ownership, with the exception of the locks and associated structures.

Over £215k was spent within the B&NES area during 2013/14. Similar to previous years, a significant portion of this expenditure was river related. Flooding events during the winter required a concerted tidying up effort and around £40k was spent on spot-dredging to reopen the locks.

Routine vegetation management cost over £20k, including £16k on grass cutting and £6k on hedge trimming. A further £20k was spent on tree management. Weston Cut benefitted from a nationally funded campaign of offside vegetation management; the channel is now clear of overhanging vegetation. Associated dredging works removed around 30 bicycles from the channel.

Waste disposal and recycling accounted for approximately £12k of expenditure within the Bath and North East Somerset area.

Works to the towpath adjacent to Cleveland House have improved drainage; volunteers were successfully engaged with this project and there continues to be a strong volunteering base in Bath (**Figure 1**). Volunteer Lock Keepers are now an integral feature of the Widcombe Lock flight and a section of waterway around Deep Lock has been adopted.

Further afield from the City, nearly £7,000 has been spent on the continuing restoration of Claverton Pumping Station, an important local visitor attraction. Works have been entirely undertaken by skilled volunteers, saving the Trust significant maintenance costs.

The Canal and River Trust has recorded 7,500 hours of volunteer effort in the Bath and North East Somerset area for the year 2013/14.



Figure 1: Volunteers, Saltford, River Avon

Wiltshire Council

A little over one million pounds has been spent on the 65km of waterway and towpath within the Wiltshire Council area in 2013/14, including routine vegetation works.

Bank protection works and associated towpath reconstruction remain the most significant area of expenditure in Wiltshire. Notable projects from 2013/14 include works between Bradford on Avon and Widbrook (£90k) and Milkhouse Water, Pewsey (£71k).

Large scale offside tree management works have been undertaken, notably at Muir Hill (between Dundas and Avoncliffe Aqueducts).

Annual grass cutting cost approximately £38k and waste management and recycling cost £29k.

Volunteers play an important role in the operation and maintenance of the Kennet and Avon Canal in Wiltshire. Notably, a very strong group of volunteers are present in Bradford on Avon and have contributed enormously to the upkeep of the canal.

The Canal and River Trust has recorded over 13,500 hours of volunteer effort in the Wiltshire Council area for the year 2013/14.

West Berkshire Council

Over £990,000 has been spent in the West Berkshire area (a navigation length of approximately 43km) during 2013/14. Lock Repairs contributed to around half of this total, with major works undertaken in Hungerford and at Tyle Mill.

Around £34k was spent on routine grass and hedgerow management.

Other significant expenditure was made toward towpath and bank repairs, both planned and unplanned.

Planned works included the towpath west of Newbury (**Figure 2**, below), toward Guyer's Lock (£70k). Unplanned works have arisen in the Burghfield area (west of Reading, see **Figure 3**, below) where flood water significantly damaged the towpath and canal embankments. Repair work commenced in 2013/14 and has continued into Business Plan 2014/15.

The Canal and River Trust has recorded just under 1,000 hours of volunteer effort in the West Berkshire area for the year 2013/14.



Figure 2: Planned Bank Protection Works and Towpath Reinstatement, Newbury



Figure 3: Flood Damage and Overtopping, Burghfield

Planned Future Works

The Canal and River Trust operates a three year rolling programme for more significant works. The works programme is subject to variation and is updated to account for unforeseen arising works; for example repairs to flood damage. Major works (generally works that will cost in excess of £100k) are part of a National programme; therefore works arising on other waterways can have an impact on the Kennet and Avon programme.

At present, significant forthcoming works on the Kennet and Avon Waterway are as follow:

Year 2014/15:

- Dog Head Stakes Weir replacement and associated navigation improvements, £500k – due on site late summer 2014 (Newbury, West Berkshire)
- River Avon Navigation Improvements (installation of weir booms and signage, landing stage improvements – tall mooring bollards and canoe ramps, installation of electronic warning system etc.), £700k in – due on site October 2014 (Bath to Hanham, B&NES)

Year 2015/16:

- Seend Wharf Bridge, abutments stabilisation and bridge refurbishment works, £250k (Seend, Wiltshire)
- Dredging schemes – exact locations to be agreed but currently Avoncliff £100k (Wiltshire)
- Sheffield Lock Refurbishment, £300k (West Berkshire)
- Biss & Semington Aqueducts Refurbishment, £75k for design development and £425k for construction. Note aspiration for 50% HLF contribution to fund works to these Listed structures (Semington and Trowbridge, Wiltshire)

Year 2016/17:

- Dredging, Long Pound £600k (Devizes to Wootton Rivers, Wiltshire)
- Dredging, Crofton, £300k (near Marlborough, Wiltshire)
- Pewsey Embankment Moorings (bank protection and wharf brick work repairs), £500k in (Pewsey, Wiltshire)
- Pewsey and Milkhouse, protection of embankments from badger damage, £300k (Pewsey, Wiltshire)

In addition to the above major schemes, the Waterway will be continuing with its programme of bank protection and towpath improvement works.

Much of the work that the Canal and River Trust does has a strong emphasis on maintaining or enhancing the natural environment. All of the bank protection works referenced in this report are undertaken in an environmentally sensitive way that protects and enhances the emergent reed fringe and provides connectivity for flora and fauna at the water's edge. An insight into this work is well provided in the following linked YouTube video that was filmed and edited by one of volunteers:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=71aiWage1IU&feature=youtu.be>

Summary

CRT continues to recognise the importance of the contributions made by each of the HLF funding partners. Without this support the gap between current expenditure and 'Steady State' would grow and inevitably non-essential activities such as vegetation maintenance and towpath refurbishment could be reduced in scope or curtailed.

A loss of amenity would be counter-productive to all parties involved; the Canal and River Trust remains committed to working constructively with its Partners.

Mark Stephens, Waterway Manager,

Kennet and Avon Waterways,

July 2014

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Bath & North East Somerset Council		
MEETING/ DECISION MAKER:	Housing & Major Projects Scrutiny Panel	
MEETING/ DECISION DATE:	29 July 2014	EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN REFERENCE:
TITLE:	Midsomer Norton - Projects Update Report	
WARD:	All	
AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM		
List of attachments to this report:		

1 THE ISSUE

- 1.1 Midsomer Norton is the principal market town for the Somer Valley, serving a number of rural settlements. The town centre provides a range of retail outlets, a library, and leisure facilities. It caters for the majority of the local service needs in the Somer Valley area. Reinforcing the town as the service destination for the rural hinterland is a key priority.
- 1.2 A strong and thriving town centre is crucial to retaining and attracting employers to the Somer Valley area. The town centre has suffered from a lack of investment. Job and GVA increases are an important indicator of success, but the focus for Midsomer Norton town centre is to strengthen the retail offer, encouraging more support for local shops and services. This report updates on progress on sites within Midsomer Norton.

2 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 Housing & Major Projects Policy Development & Scrutiny Panel is asked to note the progress on Midsomer Norton sites.

3 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCE, PROPERTY, PEOPLE)

- 3.1 There are no direct resource implications arising from this report. As individual projects are progressed they will be subject to the normal Council decision making processes for any budgetary approval.

4 STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS AND BASIS FOR PROPOSAL

- 4.1 The redevelopment of sites within Midsomer Norton is guided by the Council's agreed planning policy framework. These will develop and strengthen existing communities, and will protect the most important assets whilst delivering viable social, economic and environmental benefits.
- 4.2 All development schemes will be the subject of detailed planning applications for consideration of the Council as the Local Planning Authority. Decisions will therefore be taken in accordance with the appropriate statutory and regulatory guidance in due course.

5 BACKGROUND & PROGRESS REPORT

- 5.1 The Core Strategy sets out the Council's vision for the wider Somer Valley Area, and for Midsomer Norton. For the Somer Valley Area the ambition is to:

“create a thriving and vibrant area with a sense of wellbeing, its own identity and promoted as a whole, with Midsomer Norton and Radstock as the focus. Facilities in Midsomer Norton and Radstock will be available and accessible for the communities in the surrounding villages.”

- 5.2 The adoption of the Core Strategy which sets out the Council's five year housing land supply is especially useful for the Somer Valley. It provides the justification for allocated housing developments. It adds certainty to bringing forward development sites within the plan, rather than sites promoted outside of the housing development boundaries which were vulnerable due to the absence of a housing land supply.
- 5.3 Midsomer Norton also provides key employment opportunities, services and leisure provision to the communities. The Town Centre will continue to be the principal centre with improved public realm and enhanced townscape and a Town Park.
- 5.4 New employment floorspace will be focussed at the Westfield Industrial Estates, the Old Mills, Midsomer Norton Enterprise Park and Midsomer Norton Town Centre. The Midsomer Norton Town Centre extract from the Core Strategy (Policy SV2) is shown below.



Figure 1: Midsomer Norton Town Centre (Core Strategy Extract)

5.5 The Placemaking Plan will identify key measures required to achieve the ambition. The Placemaking Principles set out in the Core Strategy are;

- a: Strengthen the shopping offer in the southern end of the High Street and provide better pedestrian connections from the main car parks to the core retail area, creating a stronger frontage to South Road.
- b: Enable more intensive use of the South Road car park providing the opportunity to accommodate a modern food store. Any development here should retain public car parking for the town centre.
- c: Conserve the town centre's heritage and unique townscape character.
- d: Enhance the positive feature of the River Somer.
- e: Reduce the amount of traffic using the retail core of the High Street and improve the environment for pedestrians.
- f: Improve routes and major entrances into the centre.
- g: Improve access to green infrastructure including the proposed Town Park.

- h: Improve linkage to Sustainable Transport Routes.
- i: Improve the range of leisure and visitor attractions as part of the total town centre offer

5.6 Following its designation as a Neighbourhood Area in November 2013, Midsomer Norton Town Council has established a core group to prepare a Neighbourhood Development Plan. This will operate in conjunction with the Placemaking Plan, providing guidance on future developments for the town.

5.7 The Placemaking Plan will identify key measures required to achieve the ambition. This will include:

- Strengthen the shopping heart – provide larger shops in the core area of the High Street to attract national retailers.
- Create the opportunity for redeveloping outdated units to provide a mix of new shops, office and housing.
- Improve local attractions – planting and public realm improvements.
- Maximise the potential of nearby development sites to complement and support the High Street.

5.8 Following its designation as a Neighbourhood Area in November 2013, Midsomer Norton Town Council has established a core group to prepare a Neighbourhood Development Plan. This will operate in conjunction with the Placemaking Plan, providing guidance on future developments for the town.

Key Sites Update

5.9 South Road Car Park, The Hollies and the High Street Core are shown in the plan below. An update is provided on each. An update on Town Park, Welton Bibby & Baron site is also provided, and expansion at the Midsomer Norton Business Centre.

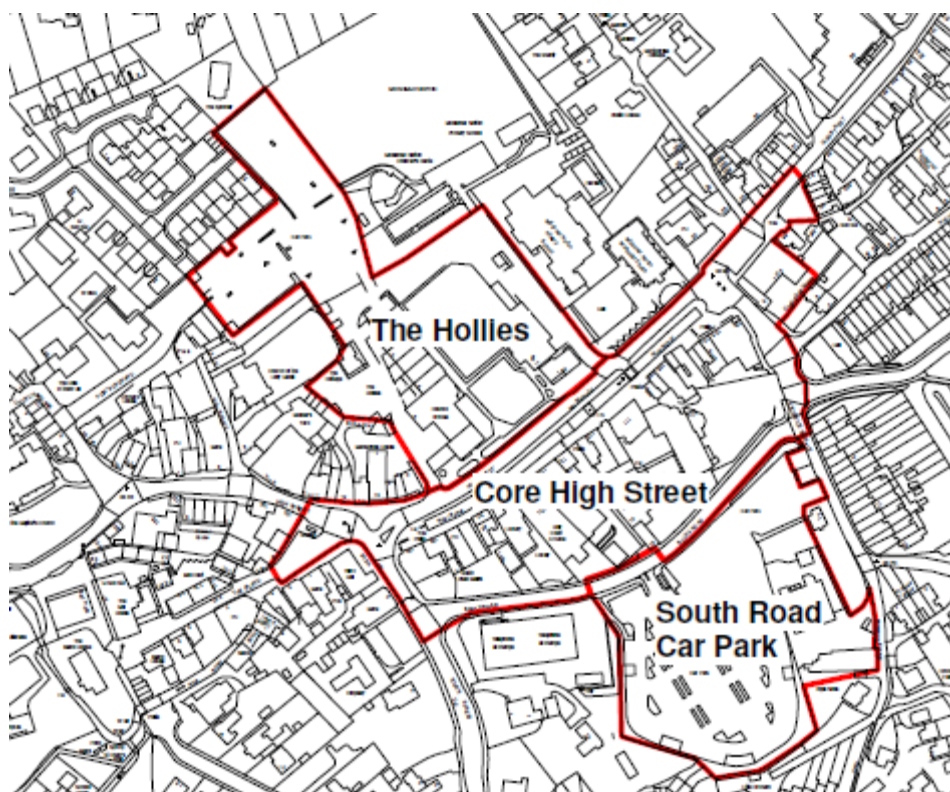


Figure 2: Plan of development sites in Midsomer Norton (Town Centre)

South Road

- 5.10 Feasibility studies show that a food retail unit of around 45,000 sq ft could be sited on **South Road Car Park**, with undercroft parking. The site is designated for food retail within both the Core Strategy and Midsomer Norton's ERDP
- 5.11 Site investigation works have been undertaken. The results have been shared with prospective purchasers. Concept design including scale and massing studies have been submitted for pre-application advice. These have also been shared with interested parties to demonstrate what is acceptable in terms of size and design.
- 5.12 Marketing and a tender process for disposal of South Road through a formal procurement process has taken place and the preferred developer has been named as Wrenbridge Land Limited.
- 5.13 Continued liaison with interested parties, Town Council and traders is necessary to set out how to mitigate car parking losses during the development period and post-development for solutions within the town.

The Hollies

- 5.14 Discussions with the owners of the site are on-going. The expectations for this site are set out in the Core Strategy. Retail expansion, to assist the town centre may be pursued. This will be progressed through the formal pre-application process.
- 5.15 Evidence of retail need indicates that two supermarkets (at Hollies and South Road) would take up the demand for food sales and also contribute to increased footfall within the core High Street area. The aim is to act as a catalyst to regenerate the area around the Palladium/Brewery through private sector investment.

High Street Core

- 5.16 Regeneration of the **Retail Core**, either as a whole or in phases, will provide enhanced retail offer. It is possible to provide larger retail for which there is an identified need. The historic features of the **Palladium and the Brewery** would be retained and the scheme could act as a business hub.
- 5.17 The area gives an opportunity to provide an attractive link between South Road and the High Street. It is therefore important that steps are taken to deliver the South Road site. This will act as a catalyst and will enhance the value and attraction of the Retail Core.
- 5.18 Sources of funds to assist the projects include commercial investment, Section 106 funds and the Revolving Infrastructure Fund (RIF).

Town Park

- 5.19 The **Town Park** proposal is included in the Core Strategy. A formal planning application for change of use to Town Park was submitted by Midsomer Norton Town Council in January 2014.
- 5.20 Its status within the Core Strategy has supported delivery, and the application has been granted. The land is in private ownership. The Council, together with the Town Council are exploring the means of implementation now that the planning permission has been granted..

Welton Bibby & Baron

- 5.21 Terrace Hill has signed up to a conditional purchase of the whole **Welton Bibby Baron** site. They have been consulting locally to gauge views on proposals. This would be likely to include redevelopment for a supermarket and housing, although the details are as yet unknown.
- 5.22 Welton Village Residents have undertaken work on preferred uses at the site. This will help inform the Placemaking Plan, and future development at the site.
- 5.23 It is likely that any development scheme will progress through to a formal pre-application process. For retail purposes, the site is considered edge-of-centre. Town centre sites such as South Road and the Hollies remain preferred sites for retail. It will be necessary to integrate any development here with the wider vision for the town.

Midsomer Norton Business Centre

- 5.24 The Midsomer Norton Business centre fulfils an important role in the economy of the local area, providing 5,000 sq ft of managed accommodation and meeting facilities for local businesses to access and utilise. Since its creation in 1993, the business centre has enjoyed over 90% occupancy and housed between 16-20 local businesses consistently during that period.
- 5.25 Following the termination of the Business Link contract by Central Government, the Centre has struggled to cover its own running costs and cross-subsidisation from Business West is no longer possible. As a result, BANES has been subsidising the running of the Business Centre.
- 5.26 In order to secure a solution for the long term future of the Business Centre, the Economic Development and Regeneration teams will undertake review of options which would enable the continued operation of the business centre without the requirement for

ongoing subsidy. In June, Cabinet agreed a sum of £125,000 allocated to develop proposals and undertake feasibility work.

develop the proposals and

6 RATIONALE

6.1 The report is for noting. Consideration of the schemes as planning applications will be necessary when they are submitted, assessed against the relevant material considerations including the Concept Statements.

7 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

7.1 None.

8 CONSULTATION

8.1 Development Management, Property, Environment.

9 RISK MANAGEMENT

9.1 A risk assessment related to the issue and recommendations has been undertaken, in compliance with the Council's decision making risk management guidance.

Contact person	<i>Jonathan Medlin 01225 477593</i>
Background papers	
Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format	

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HOUSING SERVICES ANNUAL REVIEW

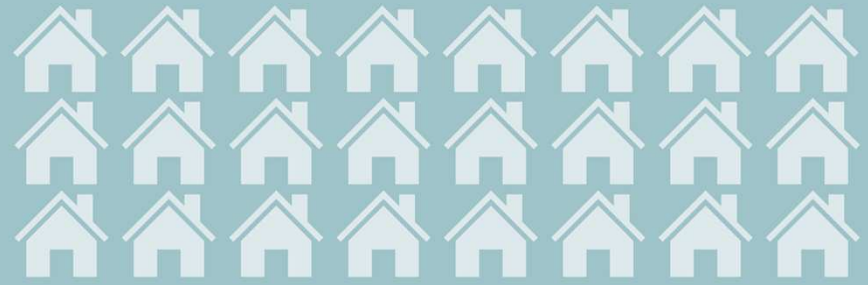
2013-14

KEY FACTS...

3,880 customers received our help and advice 

40,922 
Calls answered

38 
members of staff (FTEs)

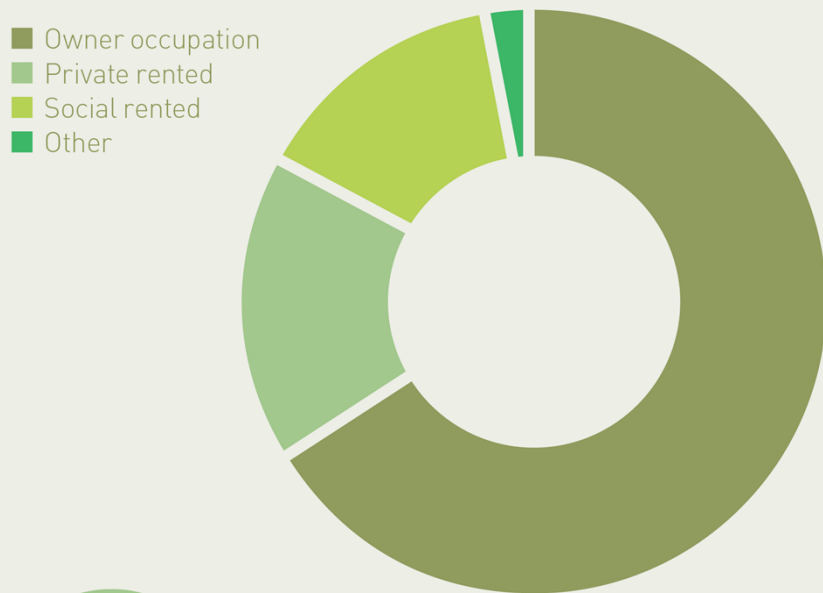


852

households housed

UNDERSTANDING THE HOUSING MARKET

HOUSING TENURE



9:1

house price to earnings ratio



AVERAGE COST FOR A 2 BED PROPERTY

	£ pw	Gross income needed*
Standard mortgage	£232	£48,256
Private rent	£190	£39,520
Affordable rent	£152	£31,616
Social rent	£78	£16,224

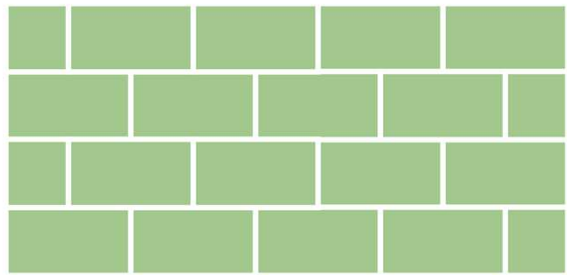
13.40%

annual % price change

£312,355

average house price

DEVELOPING NEW HOMES



affordable homes completed in 2013/14

109

513

affordable homes built since 2011

286



new affordable homes secured on 13 sites



IMPROVING OLD HOMES



558

properties improved

89

empty homes brought back into use

£929,300

successful Green Deal communities bid to be used to improve the energy efficiency of homes

REGULATING THE PRIVATE RENTED SECTOR

successful landlord prosecutions resulting in £34,000 financial penalties

6



An Additional licensing scheme for Houses in Multiple Occupation was introduced in Oldfield, Westmoreland and part of Widcombe.

1,000

applications received



140

mandatory licences already issued

ALLOCATING SOCIAL HOUSING

621



households housed

Changes made to the Homesearch register, including prioritising local people, reduced the number of households on the register from **12,439** to **4,834**.

82,830

bids placed

HELPING HOMELESS HOUSEHOLDS

530

homeless cases were prevented

GOLD STANDARD
PEER REVIEW

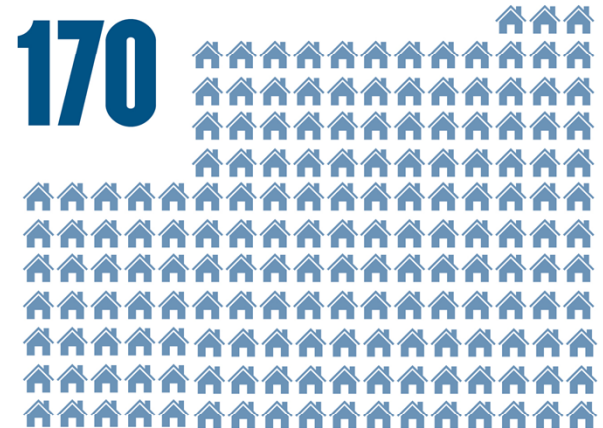


10



households in temporary accommodation. If we followed the national rate it would be

170



37%

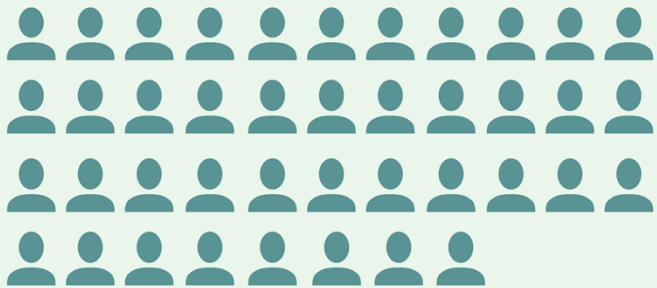
increase in the number of customers seen face to face due to a new way of working



Benchmarking showed that our homeless prevention service was one of the highest performing and the most cost effective.

CREATING INDEPENDENCE

47



young homeless people were accommodated through the Supported Lodgings Scheme.

980%

of them leaving supported accommodation then went on to work, training or education.

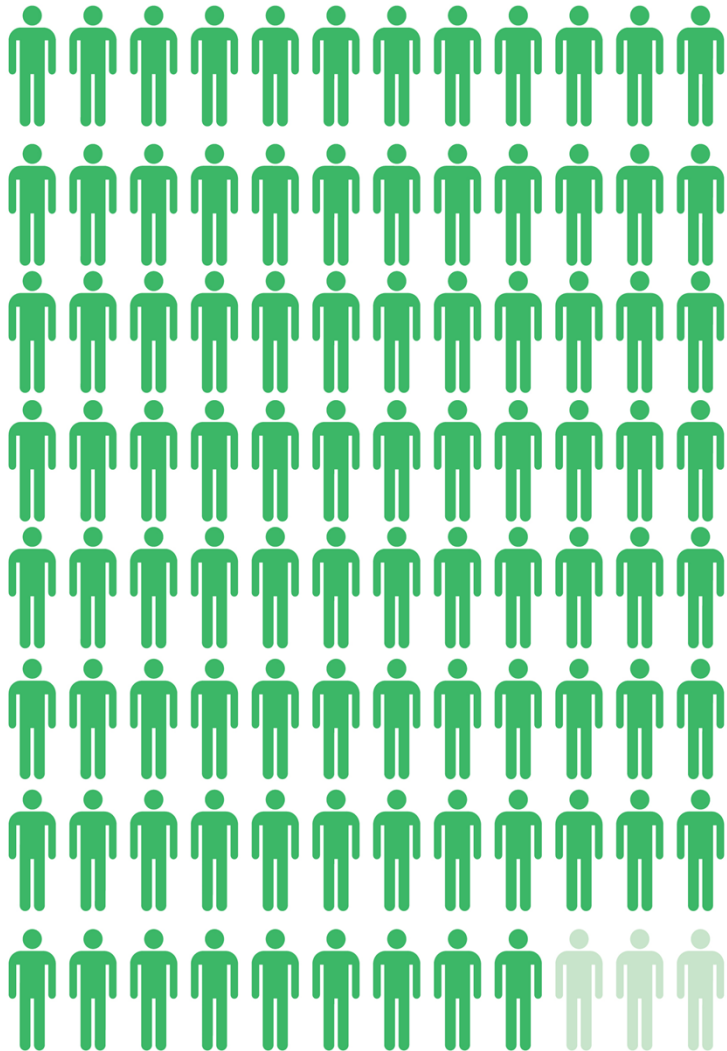


227

DFGs completed

Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) provide adaptations to enable people to remain independent at home at an average cost of **£4301** and an average enquiry to completion time of **32 weeks**

EXCELLENT CUSTOMER SERVICE



97%

of customers either very satisfied or satisfied with our service



CUSTOMER SERVICE EXCELLENCE



Customer Service Excellence (CSE) awarded for the third year running and assessed as continuing to perform at a consistently high level

12



complaints received



**AND ALL THIS WAS ACHIEVED
WHILE STILL MEETING OUR
£89,000 SAVINGS TARGET**



THE CHALLENGE 2014-15

- To develop a balanced housing market
 - To continue to make Housing Services as efficient as we can be
-

HOUSING AND MAJOR PROJECTS PDS FORWARD PLAN

This Forward Plan lists all the items coming to the Panel over the next few months.

Inevitably, some of the published information may change; Government guidance recognises that the plan is a best assessment, at the time of publication, of anticipated decision making. The online Forward Plan is updated regularly and can be seen on the Council's website at:

<http://democracy.bathnes.gov.uk/mgPlansHome.aspx?bcr=1>

The Forward Plan demonstrates the Council's commitment to openness and participation in decision making. It assists the Panel in planning their input to policy formulation and development, and in reviewing the work of the Cabinet.

Should you wish to make representations, please contact the report author or Mark Dumford, Democratic Services (01225 394458). A formal agenda will be issued 5 clear working days before the meeting.

Agenda papers can be inspected on the Council's website and at the Guildhall (Bath), Hollies (Midsomer Norton), Riverside (Keynsham) and at Bath Central, Keynsham and Midsomer Norton public libraries.

Housing and Major Projects PDS Forward Plan

Bath & North East Somerset Council Anticipated business at future Panel meetings

Ref Date	Decision Maker/s	Title	Report Author Contact	Strategic Director Lead
HOUSING & MAJOR PROJECTS POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL - 29TH JULY 2014				
29 Jul 2014	HMP PDS	Council Strategic River Group	Cllr Ben Stevens, Mark Minkley	Louise Fradd
29 Jul 2014	HMP PDS	Midsomer Norton - Projects Update	Tim Hewitt Tel: 01225 477552	Louise Fradd
29 Jul 2014	HMP PDS	Annual Housing Report	Graham Sabourn Tel: 01225 477949	Louise Fradd
HOUSING & MAJOR PROJECTS POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL - 23RD SEPTEMBER 2014				
23 Sep 2014	HMP PDS	Registered Providers Presentation	Graham Sabourn Tel: 01225 477949	Louise Fradd
18 Nov 2014	HMP PDS			
20 Jan 2015	HMP PDS			
23 Sep 2014	HMP PDS	Empty Property Initiative Update	Graham Sabourn Tel: 01225 477949	Louise Fradd
HOUSING & MAJOR PROJECTS POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL - 18TH NOVEMBER 2014				

Ref Date	Decision Maker/s	Title	Report Author Contact	Strategic Director Lead
18 Nov 2014	HMP PDS	Additional HMO Licensing Update	Graham Sabourn Tel: 01225 477949	Louise Fradd
18 Nov 2014	HMP PDS	Medium Term Plan and 2015/16 Budget Update	Graham Sabourn Tel: 01225 477949	Louise Fradd
FUTURE ITEMS				
21 Jan 2014	HMP PDS	Former MoD Sites	John Wilkinson Tel: 01225 396593	Louise Fradd
	HMP PDS			
Page 73				
The Forward Plan is administered by DEMOCRATIC SERVICES : Mark Durnford 01225 394458 Democratic_Services@bathnes.gov.uk				

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