

BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET

CABINET

These minutes are draft until confirmed as a correct record at the next meeting.

Wednesday, 9th April, 2014

Present:

Councillor Paul Crossley	Leader of the Council
Councillor David Dixon	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods
Councillor Simon Allen	Cabinet Member for Wellbeing
Councillor Tim Ball	Cabinet Member for Homes and Planning
Councillor David Bellotti	Cabinet Member for Community Resources
Councillor Katie Hall	Cabinet Member for Community Integration
Councillor Caroline Roberts	Cabinet Member for Transport
Councillor Dine Romero	Cabinet Member for Early Years, Children and Youth
Councillor Ben Stevens	Cabinet Member for Sustainable Development

120 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Councillor Paul Crossley, Leader of the Council, took the Chair and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Before the meeting started, the Chair led a short period of contemplation in tribute to the late Gabriel Batt, a Councillor of this authority, and to Sheila Shepherd, who had once been a Mayor of Bath.

121 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

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

122 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

123 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

124 TO ANNOUNCE ANY URGENT BUSINESS AGREED BY THE CHAIR

There was none.

125 QUESTIONS FROM PUBLIC AND COUNCILLORS

There were 31 questions from the following Councillors: Nathan Hartley (2), Eleanor Jackson (3), John Bull, Brian Webber (3), Anthony Clarke (4), Colin Barrett, Geoff Ward (3), Patrick Anketell-Jones (3), Vic Pritchard (5), Liz Richardson (3), Charles Gerrish (3).

There were 9 questions from the following members of the public: Karen Walker (2), Lesley Mansell (2), Marian McNeir (4), Andy Stewart.

[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.]

126 STATEMENTS, DEPUTATIONS OR PETITIONS FROM PUBLIC OR COUNCILLORS

Duncan Hounsell (Liberal Democrat Organiser, Saltford) in a statement [*a copy of which is attached to the Minutes as Appendix 2 and on the Council's website*] highlighted the work of the volunteers who support the Saltford Brass Mill. He asked Cabinet to provide funds to repair the Mill so that it could be re-opened to the public.

Councillor David Bellotti asked Duncan Hounsell if he would be delighted to know that the Council had accepted the responsibility to repair the roof and rewire the Mill so that it would be safe, to enable the friends of the Mill to continue their work. Duncan Hounsell said that he was delighted to hear this.

Sue Hamilton (Councillor, Westfield Parish Council) in a statement [*a copy of which is attached to the Minutes as Appendix 3 and on the Council's website*] asked the Cabinet to ensure that Westfield would be provided with a supermarket following the recent rejection of a planning application. She presented a petition of 736 signatures in support.

Ron Hopkins (Resident, Westfield) in a statement [*a copy of which is attached to the Minutes as Appendix 4 and on the Council's website*] supported the call for a supermarket in Westfield.

The Chair referred both statements from Sue Hamilton and Ron Hopkins to Councillor Tim Ball and asked him to provide information relating to timescales and processes.

Robert Morgan in a statement [*a copy of which is attached to the Minutes as Appendix 5 and on the Council's website*] asked for issues which he had previously raised with the Council to be addressed.

Anna Morgan in a statement [*a copy of which is attached to the Minutes as Appendix 6 and on the Council's website*] supported her husband's appeal for fairness in the Council's dealings with them as Guildhall market stallholders and presented a petition of 69 signatures in support.

The Chair assured Robert and Anna Morgan that consideration was being given to their statements and that they would receive a response within 10 working days.

Cllr Lesley Mansell (Chair, Radstock Town Council) in a statement [*a copy of which is attached to the Minutes as Appendix 7 and on the Council's website*] asked for consultation to take place about the proposals to move Radstock Library into the Radco premises.

Councillor David Dixon asked Lesley Mansell whether she had heard his previous statement that he intended to consult Radstock Town Council over this matter. Lesley Mansell said that she had heard this but she felt that consultation should have been undertaken earlier.

Cllr Lesley Mansell (Chair, Radstock Town Council) in a statement [*a copy of which is attached to the Minutes as Appendix 8 and on the Council's website*] asked for the hydrotherapy pool in the Writhlington Connections Centre to be repaired and refurbished so that it could re-open.

Councillor Simon Allen asked whether Lesley Mansell was aware that the pool had been used inappropriately for hydrotherapy, for which it was never designed. Lesley Mansell agreed, and reminded the Cabinet that she had already observed that a roof would be required.

Elizabeth Derl-Davis in a statement [*a copy of which is attached to the Minutes as Appendix 9 and on the Council's website*] asked for information about the arrangements for funding the Bronze Band alarm system for Curo residents.

Councillor Simon Allen asked Elizabeth Derl-Davis whether she was aware that the £60K alarm fund was in addition to the existing Curo fund; and that where there was financial difficulty there would be nothing to pay. Elizabeth Derl-Davis said that Curo did not have a hardship fund. The Chair observed that he understood that they did have such a fund.

Cllr Cherry Beath, the Council's Champion for Culture, in a statement [*a copy of which is attached to the Minutes as Appendix 10 and on the Council's website*] welcomed the refresh of the Economic Strategy and the incorporation of Arts and Culture into the strategy. She felt however that key local arts organisations had been weakened as a result of the new commissioning process; and asked for the process to be put on hold while new funding and commissioning arrangements were created, in partnership with the cultural sector and other strategic partners. The Chair referred the statement to Councillor Ben Stevens for a response within 5 working days.

127 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 12th February 2014 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

128 CONSIDERATION OF SINGLE MEMBER ITEMS REQUISITIONED TO CABINET

There were none.

129 MATTERS REFERRED BY POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY BODIES

There were none.

130 SINGLE MEMBER CABINET DECISIONS TAKEN SINCE PREVIOUS CABINET MEETING

The Cabinet agreed to note the report.

131 HIGHWAY STRUCTURAL MAINTENANCE CAPITAL PROGRAMME FOR 2014/2015

David Redgewell (South West Transport Network) in an *ad hoc* statement observed that no Equality Impact Assessment had been published and asked for a copy to be provided to him. The Chair referred this matter to Councillor Caroline Roberts.

Councillor Caroline Roberts, in proposing the item, explained that the programme comprised a number of funding sources: the Department for Transport grant; an additional grant for severe weather repairs; a block of an extra £2.4M contributed by the Cabinet. She referred to the extra £200K allocated to flood mitigation, particularly in Chew valley. She reminded Cabinet members that the proposals did not include the cost of repairing the extensive flood damage to Kelston Road, which would need to be considered separately.

Councillor David Dixon seconded the proposal. He noted that it was proposed to spend £6.8M on repairing pot holes and felt that local taxi drivers would welcome this. He warmly welcomed the innovative use of micro-asphalt surfaces on existing concrete roads.

Councillor Ben Stevens welcomed the street lighting programme and was particularly pleased to see the Widcombe footbridge lighting included.

Councillor Dine Romero added that she too was delighted to see that Haycombe Drive resurfacing had been included in the programme.

Councillor Paul Crossley observed that Councils across the country were facing huge challenges because of the severe weather. In this authority's area, the Kelston landslip had presented a major challenge. But he welcomed the programme which would deliver great improvements across the area and he congratulated the highways team for their hard work in preparing the programme.

Councillor Caroline Roberts summed up by pointing out that the authority had now begun to catch up on the longstanding backlog of repairs and maintenance. She assured the Cabinet that if more funds were made available from government, they would be used to make further improvements.

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

RESOLVED (unanimously)

- (1) To AGREE the Funding Allocation breakdown across Highway Assets for 2014/15;
- (2) To NOTE the anticipated carry forward from 2013/14 to 2014/15;
- (3) To APPROVE the Highway Structural Maintenance Programme for 2014/15, for which provisional funding approval was included within the Council's February 2014 budget report; and
- (4) To DELEGATE authority to the Divisional Director, Environmental Services and the Service Manager, Highways, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Transport, to alter the programme as may prove necessary during 2014/15. Any alterations will be within the overall budget allocation and take into account any additional funding streams that become available.

132 LEISURE STRATEGY - 2013 TO 2038

Councillor David Dixon introduced the item by welcoming to the meeting Chris Scullion and Emma Savage, who had set up two teams to engage the community in healthy activity and who were examples of the thrust of the new leisure strategy. He felt that the emphasis should be on getting people to be a little active now and then. He referred to paragraph 5.19 of the report, which explained that the four main themes of being fit for life were active lifestyle, active travel, active design and active environment. He asked Cabinet to approve the strategy for further consultation.

Councillor Simon Allen seconded the proposal. He referred to paragraph 5.17 of the report which listed the challenges people face which might prevent them from becoming or staying fit for life. He reminded Cabinet that the strategy linked into the Health and Wellbeing Board and in the area of health inequalities there was a particular common interest.

Councillor Tim Ball supported the policy and agreed that sometimes planning policies can be unhelpful in this regard. He welcomed however the emerging design of the Fox Hill development, which would have ample open space planned into the area.

Councillor Paul Crossley welcomed this very important paper, including the working with the NHS. He regretted that 26% of reception children were overweight but felt that the Council and its partners had begun to take some very positive steps to design in safety, access and facilities which would encourage healthy living.

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

RESOLVED (unanimously)

(1) To APPROVE the draft 'Fit for Life' strategy for further public consultation.

133 MENDIP HILLS AND COTSWOLDS AREAS OF OUTSTANDING BEAUTY MANAGEMENT PLANS

Councillor Tim Ball, in proposing the item, welcomed the two very good management plans for the Mendips and Cotswolds areas. He said that management plans were required to protect public rights of way, landscape and habitat. He warmly recommended the plans to Cabinet.

Councillor Paul Crossley seconded the proposal and agreed that the management plans would be critically important to protect the two important local assets.

Councillor Ben Stevens observed that the outstanding surroundings were part of Bath's appeal to tourists and visitors.

Councillor Tim Ball summed up by warning however that the beauty of the area might be threatened by shale gas extraction and the Council would robustly defend its local landscape and habitats.

On a motion from Councillor Tim Ball, seconded by Councillor Paul Crossley, it was

RESOLVED (unanimously)

(1) To APPROVE the Mendip Hills AONB Management Plan 2014 – 2019 as the basis for safeguarding and managing the unique beauty and distinctive character of the AONB and to be taken into account in the preparation of the Council's Local Development documents and in the determination of planning applications; and

(2) To ENDORSE the Cotswolds AONB Management Plan 2013 – 2018 as the basis for safeguarding and managing the unique beauty and distinctive character of the AONB and to be taken into account in the preparation of the Council's Local Development documents and in the determination of planning applications.

134 SCHOOLS CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2014 -2017

Councillor Michael Evans in an *ad hoc* statement [*a copy of which is attached to the Minutes as Appendix 12 and on the Council's website*] asked Councillor Dine Romero to explain whether she was concerned about anticipated development outside of that envisaged in the Core Strategy. He also observed that there had

been an independent assessment of the Place Making process, and asked what this would cost local residents.

Councillor Dine Romero in proposing the item, promised to respond to the points raised by Councillor Evans after the meeting. She explained the points of the programme in turn and asked the Cabinet to support the 6 capital investments, including the allocation of £500K for priority improvements which might arise without notice during the year.

Councillor David Bellotti seconded the proposal. He welcomed the proposals for 3 main reasons: the £500K extra for school repairs; the £987 being held in reserve for emergencies (such as roof repairs) as they become known; and the funding from government to upgrade school kitchens to enable to provision of free hot meals to every infant child.

He responded to the question posed by Councillor Evans about the consultancy report by assuring Cabinet that consultants were only used by the Council when the skills and experience were not available from within the Council. He further observed that the number of consultants had been declining and that it was monitored by means of a regular report from Strategic Directors of all the consultants they had used.

Councillor Paul Crossley supported the programme which he felt met the dual needs to upgrade buildings in a poor condition and to accommodate rising numbers. He explained that the concern expressed by Councillor Evans about development outside the Core Strategy was not relevant because the programme was about existing school buildings; new schools were being planned to accommodate new communities but were not included in the current proposals.

Councillor Crossley felt that the provision of free hot meals to infants was a landmark policy change and he warmly welcomed it.

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

RESOLVED (unanimously)

- (1) To APPROVE for inclusion in the 2014/15 Capital Programme DfE funding of £353,269 for works to school kitchens required to enable the provision of free school meals for all infant pupils from September 2014;
- (2) To APPROVE for inclusion in the 2014/15 Capital Programme Basic Need development funding of £150,000 to enable feasibility studies and option appraisal for adding capacity at the schools identified in Section 5;
- (3) To APPROVE for inclusion in the 2014/15 Capital Programme Basic Need funding of £400k for the provision of additional classrooms at Saltford Primary School required by September 2014;
- (4) To APPROVE provisionally the principle of the allocation of Basic Need funding for school places and land as required on the MOD sites at Ensleigh and Warminster Rd subject to a further report to Cabinet when the level of contribution is identified;
- (5) To AGREE an additional allocation of £500,000 from 2014/15 Capital Maintenance funding for the 2014/15 Schools Capital Maintenance Programme; and
- (6) To APPROVE the allocation of £500,000 from 2014/15 Capital Maintenance funding for improvement projects in schools with priorities to be agreed with the Cabinet Member and brought forward for full approval.

135 PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL ORGANISATION PLAN 2013-2017

Andy Stewart (Chair, Broadmoor Lane Residents Association) in a statement [*a copy of which is attached to the Minutes as Appendix 13 and on the Council's website*] expressed concern about plans to expand Weston All Saints Primary School. His group felt that there was no need for more places; a number of traffic issues would be created; and there was no call from parents for expansion. He felt that a better solution would be to make the new Ensleigh school a 2-form intake.

Councillor Dine Romero in proposing the item, thanked Andy Stewart and promised a response within 5 working days. She reminded Cabinet that it was only possible to forecast with any certainty those children who were within 4 years of entry; but there were many other factors which must be taken into account. She was aware that if there was no need for expansion, that would be a valid reason for refusal of the application. She felt however that Weston All Saints Primary School had already needed to take a bulge class for the previous 3 years so a case could be made for enlargement and the highways issues would be part of the considerations.

Councillor Romero referred to the plans for a new 210-place school at Ensleigh, whose timing was still uncertain. As a result, she felt that expanding Weston All Saints might prove to be the optimum solution but that this was still being considered and would be fully consulted before any decision was taken.

She moved the Primary and Secondary School Organisation Plan for adoption by Cabinet.

Councillor Katie Hall seconded the proposal. She felt that the Strategic Plan would give the majority of parents their first or second choice school. She warned against too much over-supply of places but acknowledged that school intakes would always be an imprecise science. She was however convinced that the numbers quoted in the report were sound.

Councillor Paul Crossley said the Cabinet believed passionately that children should be able to go to their local school if they wished - it was safer and better for community. The Cabinet had been very successful in meeting first and second preferences. He was confident that the Plan would meet the educational needs of families into the future.

On a motion from Councillor Dine Romero, seconded by Councillor Katie Hall, it was **RESOLVED** (unanimously)

(1) To APPROVE the proposed strategy for the provision of school places within the 2013 – 2017 plan period; and

(2) To APPROVE the proposed strategy for the provision of school places over the longer term within the Core Strategy plan period.

136 WEST OF ENGLAND LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP STRATEGIC ECONOMIC PLAN 2013-2030

David Redgewell (South West Transport Network) in a statement [*a copy of which is attached to the Minutes as Appendix 11 and on the Council's website*] referred to governance issues and the openness and transparency of the decision making process of the Local Economic Partnership. He emphasised the importance of Phase I of Metro West and appealed to Cabinet to ensure that it would be properly funded. He also asked Cabinet to ensure the funding for Saltford and Corsham Stations by asking the government to secure Phase II of Metro West without delay.

Councillor Patrick Anketell-Jones in an *ad hoc* statement said that the huge investment being made was impressive. He observed that the bulk of the growth and expansion in Bath would be in the enterprise zones and asked if consideration had been given to developing a management plan to avoid gridlock.

Councillor Ben Stevens, in proposing the item, said that the economic plan asked for government investment to drive it forward. He referred to paragraph 5.7 of the report, which listed the 9 priority interventions which would directly benefit Bath & NE Somerset residents. He drew attention in particular to the £34.7M intervention being requested to enable the Bath Innovation Campus.

Councillor Stevens responded to a point made by David Redgewell by saying that scrutiny of the LEP was very important, but that during the early phases of some plans businesses can only speak confidentially. He observed that the plan made little reference to tourism but assured the Cabinet that it would remain as a very important element of Council's the economic plans.

Councillor Paul Crossley seconded the proposal and observed that the Plan was a continuation of the economic powerhouse of the region. He laid great importance on ensuring a balanced community in which to live, work and play. He particularly welcomed the emphasis on superfast broadband. He responded to David Redgewell's point about accelerating Phase II by assuring the meeting that the Council was committed to re-opening Salford station if this could be made feasible and if local people would support it. The same would apply to Corsham station.

Councillor David Bellotti was very happy with the plan. The aim was to seek to give added value by working together – not to combine Councils into some sort of combined authority. He agreed that the LEP must be transparent in its dealings and pointed out that all the financial details, including the complete record of decisions taken, were already in the public domain. He assured Cabinet that he would not ask for seed funds which the Council could not repay. He emphasised that all decision making came back to Cabinet before being agreed at the LEP. He observed that this was the only Strategic Economic Plan so far which had been agreed by all its MPs and all its constituent authorities.

On a motion from Councillor Ben Stevens, seconded by Councillor Paul Crossley, it was

RESOLVED (unanimously)

(1) To AGREE the aspirations set out in the Strategic Economic Plan and endorse the submission of the document to Government; and

(2) To DELEGATE authority to the Chief Executive and Strategic Director Place, in consultation with the Cabinet member for Sustainable Development, to agree any minor amendments to the document.

The meeting ended at 8.45 pm

Chair _____

Date Confirmed and Signed _____

Prepared by Democratic Services