

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

CABINET MEETING 9th April 2014

REGISTERED SPEAKERS

Where the intention is to speak about an item on the Agenda, the speaker will be offered the option to speak near the beginning of the meeting or just before the Agenda item.

Statements about issues NOT on the Agenda

- Duncan Hounsell (Liberal Democrat Organiser, Salford)
Re: Salford Brass Mill
- Sue Hamilton (Councillor, Westfield Parish Council)
Re: Petition: Significant retail development in Westfield community
- Ron Hopkins (Resident, Westfield)
Re: Significant retail development in Westfield community
- Robert Morgan
Re: Local Government Ombudsman Findings
- Anna Morgan
Re: Petition: Planning Department compliance with the law or Council Policy
- Cllr Lesley Mansell (Chair, Radstock TC)
Re: Radstock Library
- Cllr Lesley Mansell (Chair, Radstock TC)
Re: Hydrotherapy pool, Connections Centre, Writhlington
- Elizabeth Derl-Davis
Re: Bronze Band Alarm System
- Cllr Cherry Beath
Re: Support for the Arts

Re: Agenda Item 16 (Schools Organisation Plan)

- Andy Stewart (Chairman, Broadmoor Lane Residents' Association)

Re: Agenda Item 17 (WoE LEP Strategic Economic Plan)

- David Redgewell (South West Transport Network)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS - COUNCILLORS

M 01	Question from:	Councillor Nathan Hartley
<p>After much public consultation and liaison with user groups, Peasedown St John Parish Council is overseeing the spending of £210,000 in S106 money from the Wellow Lane housing development. This money shall be spent on a new skate park on the Recreation Field (£90,000) and a new play park on Beacon Field (£120,000). Unfortunately though, the total sum of funding for Parks and Open Spaces has been reduced by £14,023 because BANES Council believes this is money they are 'due', following administration costs.</p> <p>This is a high sum of money for a very small amount of work carried out by the council. All of the project work has been, or will be, carried out by the parish council. They are also expected to fund design and consultancy costs from the £210,000 total - meaning less can be spent on physical infrastructure improvements.</p> <p>With less money coming to Peasedown, and the council cutting spending on services in the village, will BANES Council waiver this fee to compensate for the lack of work done to warrant such money?</p> <p>The council waived the fee for the refurbishment of the changing rooms on the Recreation Field just a few years ago (paid for by S106 funding from the Sunnyside Housing development). Will it do the same again?</p>		
Answer from:		Councillor David Dixon
<p><i>It is good to hear of the investment going into the Recreation Field and Beacon Field from the s106 developer contribution. I am very pleased that Bath and North East Somerset Council managed to help secure this developer contribution for Peasedown. However as with all capital projects it sounds as though the Parish Council will want to allow for costs of the project.</i></p> <p><i>It would be highly unwise for the Council to set any precedent to start waiving fees for costs incurred, I would dread to think where Cllr Hartley expects such costs to come from.</i></p> <p><i>However if there is a point I have might have missed here, may be Cllr Hartley would like to do what almost every other councillor does when trying to justify why we might do something not in line with current practice, may be Cllr Hartley would like to set up a meeting to discuss further?</i></p> <p><i>This is what Cllr Sarah Bevan recently did, and since my visit to Peasedown she has managed to secure some extra bins, signage for Dorothy House and some funding for an exciting project. The details of which will be available soon.</i></p>		

M 02	Question from:	Councillor Nathan Hartley
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- a) Can Cabinet please give details and the full reason behind the closure of the hydrotherapy pool at Connections Day Centre, Writhlington, in December 2012?
- b) I understand the decision was taken on health and safety grounds. If this is correct, was funding not available to carry out necessary repairs?
- c) I've been contacted by residents in my ward, Peasedown St John, who are concerned about the lack of such facilities in the area. Hydrotherapy helps people with disabilities to mobilise more. With council and government cutting funding to services for disabled people, will the Cabinet consider allocating funding to this much needed facility so it can re-open?

Answer from:

Councillor Simon Allen

a) The pool at Connections Day Centre was not designed to be a hydrotherapy pool but a converted outdoor swimming pool, constructed in the 1960's. Sirona CIC had no choice but to close the pool on health and safety grounds after the discovery of infection risks such as pseudomonas. Although remedial action made some improvements, mould and algae were still present.

b) It is estimated that it would cost £500,000 to turn the 1960s pool into a fit-for-purpose hydrotherapy pool. Given that the Council is not responsible for commissioning hydrotherapy services, the reported low use of the Connections Pool and that there are hydrotherapy services already available in the area this would not be an appropriate use of Council funds. The responsibility for commissioning/ funding hydrotherapy services rests with the BaNES Clinical Commissioning Group.

c) The Council is not responsible for funding the provision of hydrotherapy services. The Senior Commissioning Manager for NHS BaNES CCG/B&NES Council has a pre-arranged meeting with all providers of hydrotherapy services on 30th April 2014. The purpose of this first meeting will be to accurately scope the current hydrotherapy provision across the authority with a view to establishing what capacity there might be for ensuring adequate access for individuals, particularly people with learning disabilities, with a need for a hydrotherapy service.

The Council has not cut funding to services for disabled people. Through Sirona, the Council supports 30-40 people a day at the Connections Day Centre to help improve their skills, offer therapies, build their confidence, self-esteem and, most importantly, access their community. Where individuals have been assessed as requiring Hydrotherapy they have been able to access the therapy at alternative venues across the authority area.

M 03

Question from:

Councillor Eleanor Jackson

How is it that staff in Radco, in children's services and in the library are convinced that Radstock library is moving into Radstock Co-operative Store, the first example of a library to be lodged in a superstore, but there has been no consultation with the public or their elected representatives?

Answer from:

Councillor David Dixon

Councillor Simon Allen and I met with Councillor Jackson on Monday to discuss this

issue. Last year we were able to make savings of £250K in the Library Service. We took one mobile library off the road, but maintained the same service with the remaining vehicles. I would like to thank Councillor John Bull and those members of the community who have so successfully made the hub a focal point. It proves that we can provide library services differently.

The Council was approached by Radco with the offer to accommodate the library in their premises. We have been considering the financial and community implications of this. I quite like it because it would offer longer opening hours and better access so, on the face of it, better all round. At the end of discussions with the community we will decide the best approach. The next stage would be for me to be invited to meet with Radstock Town Council and then to start a public consultation.

Supplementary Question:

Will the Cabinet member give a guarantee that the young and disabled users, and the medical clinics, will not suffer as a result of any decision?

Answer from: Councillor David Dixon

These issues are included in the discussions we are already having.

M 04 **Question from:** Councillor Eleanor Jackson

Do you have any plans to renovate the severely sub-standard toilets at the Connections Day Centre on the Frome Road, Writhlington, something promised over two years ago?

Answer from: Councillor David Bellotti

The plans will need to take into account the Equalities Act and be framed in consultation with Sirona and the Care Quality Commission. Therefore discussions are ongoing to prepare a proposal to renovate these toilets.

M 05 **Question from:** Councillor Eleanor Jackson

How is it that Curo have a contract to deliver silver, gold and platinum levels of security alarm systems in sheltered housing, but the £60,000 voted by Council in February to restore the bronze level of alarm to those who want it, as intended by council, is now to be lodged in a 'hardship fund', to which elderly clients will have to apply?

Answer from: Councillor Simon Allen

Curo is only one of a number of sheltered housing providers that have hard-wired alarm systems in their sheltered housing. The Alarm Support Fund, administered by the

Council's Welfare Support Team within Council Connect, can be accessed by all affected tenants, not just those receiving the service from Curo. Information gathered from providers indicates that costs being passed on vary widely and in some cases are as low as 45 pence per week. This is important to ensure equitable access to the Fund. All tenants living in relevant sheltered accommodation at 31 March 2014 have been contacted by letter to advise them of the Scheme and how to apply.

Help with applying can be obtained from any of the Council's One Stop Shops either in person or by telephone. Advice agencies have been briefed on the Fund and can also provide assistance. Housing Association staff have also been provided with the same information and should be able to assist.

The Council's Alarm Support Fund, funded from the £60,000 provision made by full Council at its meeting in February 2014, is in addition to the Hardship Fund put in place by Curo for affected Curo tenants. However, we support Curo's stated intention to replace hard-wired alarm systems with the safer, more flexible, community alarms on the evidence that this form of technology provides better protection and peace of mind for the most vulnerable in our community.

Supplementary Question:

Can the Cabinet member explain or comment on the fact that it is very difficult to apply for what was previously easily available?

Answer from:

Councillor Simon Allen

It is not a hardship fund – it is a support fund.

M 06

Question from:

Councillor John Bull

Bearing in mind the desirability of Superfast broadband being available to the employment units planned for the Polestar site in Paulton, what is the likely timetable for the availability of Superfast Broadband in those parts of Paulton covered by the exchanges at Timsbury and Clutton, i.e those not included in the BT roll- out but presumably to be provided through the Devon and Somerset Broadband Consortium?

Answer from:

Councillor Ben Stevens

The developer at Polestar needs to engage with the BT new sites team to discuss requirements to confirm the need for Next Generation Access (i.e. Fibre enabled as far as possible). Nationally the contact is www.openreach.co.uk/newsite, telephone 0800-616866

Supplementary Question:

I didn't ask the Cabinet member about Polestar alone – my question was about the whole site.

Answer from:	Councillor Ben Stevens
<p><i>In relation to Paulton only the following postcode areas are included in the CD&S roll-out : BS397AB, BS397AD, BS397AE, BS397AF, BS397AG and BS397AH. The CD&S roll-out programme in B&NES is still being finalised as survey work is completed.</i></p> <p><i>As Paulton is close to Midsomer Norton, which is a commercially enabled exchange, premises in other parts of the village should contact their service provider to establish what level of fibre enabled service is available.</i></p> <p><i>The developer at Polestar needs to engage with the BT new sites team to discuss the requirements for the provision of Next Generation (fibre enabled) Access. Nationally the contact is www.openreach.co.uk/newsite, telephone 0800-616866</i></p>	

M 07	Question from:	Councillor Brian Webber
<p>Does the Council regard streets (other than cul-de-sacs) in towns as primarily for the passage of traffic or primarily for the parking of vehicles? In those streets (other than cul-de-sacs) where vehicles are habitually parked on both sides, leaving only a single lane for moving vehicles, what professional advice has the Council received on the maximum reasonable distance which should be maintained between points at which vehicles travelling in opposite directions may pass each other?</p>		
Answer from:		Councillor Caroline Roberts
<p><i>The Council regards the public highway primarily for the passage of users, with vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians etc. having equal status.</i></p> <p><i>As in all local authorities the volumes of motor vehicles on our roads require the Authority to regulate parking arrangements to ensure the safe and expeditious movement of traffic.</i></p> <p><i>In the nationally applicable technical guidance available to officers there isn't a specified distance between parked vehicles, although there are differing road widths specified depending on traffic use.</i></p> <p><i>On behalf on any Ward Councillor, the traffic management engineers will investigate any road where parked vehicles are a concern.</i></p>		

M 08	Question from:	Councillor Brian Webber
<p>It is notorious that there are innumerable garages, integral or associated with dwellings, which are too small to accommodate modern cars. If there is no alternative space within the curtilage of the dwelling, the car is parked on the street, often aggravating congestion there. This can negate the Council's planning policy T26 that development should include an appropriate level of on-site parking. As there are no minimum dimensions for a garage for building control purposes, do the Council's highways officers take into account, when considering the parking provision in proposed new</p>		

residential developments, the dimensions of any proposed garage and its ability to accommodate a typical family car and any associated impedimenta?

Answer from:

Councillor Caroline Roberts

Yes we do consider the size of any proposed parking or garage in new developments. The minimum size sought is 3m x 6m for a garage. There is a standard condition that is applied to ensure the retention of this area for parking or storage in the future. Whether the space is actually used for parking of a car is of course up to the individual occupier to decide but we aim to ensure that it is of sufficient size to accommodate modern vehicles.

M 09

Question from:

Councillor Brian Webber

There are a number of recent housing developments in certain controlled parking zones where the development has been permitted with no onsite parking provision and the Council's parking policy is to deny the occupiers both residents parking permits and visitor permits.

(1) Since the vendor of such a dwelling cannot be obliged to warn an intending purchaser that the dwelling is ineligible for parking permits, the only warning currently available is on the Residents Parking Permits page of the Council's website – a warning only very recently 'beefed up'. Has the Council any discretion as to additional information which may be placed on the Local Land Charges Register? If so, could the restriction in question be included?

(2) The rationale for denying permits in certain controlled parking zones is that the ineligible dwelling is conveniently located in relation to public transport and other amenities. How does that reason necessarily apply to all visitors to that dwelling, because the visitor's home may not be well served by public transport and there may be no long-stay public car park within reasonable walking distance of the dwelling being visited? Would it not be fairer and/or less harsh if the ineligible dwelling were allowed at least a small ration of visitor permits?

Answer from:

Councillor Caroline Roberts

(1) The form submitted to Local Authorities by a solicitor or a licenced conveyancer for local land charge searches are known as CON29. Parking restrictions are not a charge that can be registered and would therefore not be declared by the Council unless the solicitor or licensed conveyancer specifically requested them from the Parking department. What is and isn't registrable is laid down in statute, and the Council has no discretion to change this. Ultimately it's the responsibility of the solicitor and/or buyer to obtain this information prior to purchasing the property.

(2) The primary rationale for denying a residents permit to a property within a controlled parking zone is due to parking supply and demand and not its location in relation to public transport and other amenities.

Where the existing demand for parking permits is near to, or exceeds, the capacity for the relevant controlled parking zone, new developments or properties which have been subject to redevelopment or sub division are not entitled to residents permits as this

would place additional pressure on the already high demand for parking spaces. On the basis of this rationale, as per the Single member decision by Sir Elgar Jenkins in Aug 2006 (E1176 - Allocation of Residents Parking Permits within Controlled Zones), these properties would also not be entitled to visitor permits.

Supplementary Question:

Has section (2) of Councillor Roberts' reply been superseded by paragraph 5.6 of the guidance on the purpose of residents' parking schemes, published yesterday, which states: "If visitors' permits are made available they should be available to all properties whether or not they are in receipt of a residents permit"?

Answer from:

Councillor Caroline Roberts

Guidance is not policy.

M 10

Question from:

Councillor Anthony Clarke

It was recently reported that over 8,000 vehicles have already been caught breaching the new bus gate restrictions on Dorchester Street. Can the Cabinet Member please confirm what the latest figure is, and, on these current trends, what the total level of fines would be from the Dorchester Street bus gate over a period of 12 months?

Answer from:

Councillor Caroline Roberts

The total number of PCNs issued to date is 942 (as of 28th March 2014). As behaviours are changing around the restriction very quickly due to the use of warning notices it is difficult to predict the likely level of fines for 12 months. The aim is that all vehicles abide by the restriction and therefore the level of fines reduces over time to 0. However if the levels of abuse of the restriction is similar to the other bus lanes within the centre of the city, the likely number of contraventions over a 12 period is between 12k and 15k.

M 11

Question from:

Councillor Anthony Clarke

Apart from buses and taxis, what commercial vehicles, if any, are permitted to use the Dorchester Street bus lane?

Answer from:

Councillor Caroline Roberts

The Traffic Regulation Order for Dorchester Street allows the following groups of vehicles to use the bus lane in line with all other bus lane TROs in Bath. The exemptions include vehicles to

- *remove obstructions of the carriageway,*

- to maintain improve or reconstruct a road,
- to lay, erect or repair any sewer main pipe or apparatus for the supply of water, gas, electricity, or electronic communications apparatus
- vehicles in the service of the Local authority, Environment Agency, water undertaker or sewerage whilst undertaking statutory duties
- to collect or remove refuse, waste or recycling
- in the service of a universal service provider to collect or deliver postal packets

Additionally it allows for

- to avoid an accident
- being used by an ambulance, fire or police authority
- being used by a doctor responding to an emergency call provided that the vehicle is displaying a green flashing light
- or under the direction of a police constable in uniform.

All other vehicles are not exempt and are not permitted to use Dorchester Street during the restricted hours.

Supplementary Question:

The listed exceptions form about 9% of the total traffic. Does it refer to their entire journey, or only to access the particular site?

Answer from:

Councillor Caroline Roberts

The following can be in the bus lane to carry out work within the restriction; they are not permitted to use it as a thoroughfare:

- remove obstructions of the carriageway,
- to maintain improve or reconstruct a road,
- to lay, erect or repair any sewer main pipe or apparatus for the supply of water, gas, electricity, or electronic communications apparatus
- vehicles in the service of the Local authority, Environment Agency, water undertaker or sewerage whilst undertaking statutory duties

The following can use the bus lane provided they are carrying out a service at the time:

- to collect or remove refuse, waste or recycling
- in the service of a universal service provider to collect or deliver postal packets

The order does not apply to the following:

- to avoid an accident
- being used by an ambulance, fire or police authority
- being used by a doctor responding to an emergency call provided that the vehicle is displaying a green flashing light
- or under the direction of a police constable in uniform.

M 12

Question from:

Councillor Anthony Clarke

Are bendy buses permitted to ignore Yellow Box junctions?

Answer from:	Councillor Caroline Roberts
<i>Obstruction by any moving vehicle is an offence that the Police enforce. Bendi Buses do not have any exemption that permits them to ignore or block a yellow box junction.</i>	

M 13	Question from:	Councillor Anthony Clarke
Does the Cabinet Member recognise the impact that the parking charges at Royal Victoria Park are having on those who wish to use the Council's Golf leisure facilities at the park, given that the new parking regime is supposedly designed to increase recreational activities at the park, and what does the Cabinet Member intend to do to rectify this?		
Answer from:	Councillor Caroline Roberts	
<p><i>The new parking regime is designed to allow park visitors to benefit from the amenities within Royal Victoria Park and relocate long stay users to the more appropriate facilities within car parks, particularly the adjacent Charlotte Street site.</i></p> <p><i>It was recognised that visitors to the adjacent golf course, located just outside the boundary of Royal Victoria Park, made use of the free parking within the park. Whilst the majority of the parking was designated as two hour maximum stay to reduce the amount of parking within the park in line with Heritage Lottery Funding, the north western corner was designated as four hours maximum stay, to provide for longer visits to the park and to provide some further short stay parking for user so the surrounding area. These four hour bays are situated just 300m west of park exit onto Weston Lane, directly opposite the entrance to the gold course.</i></p> <p><i>The recent review of the scheme six months after its implementation has resulted in the two hour parking in the south west corner being increased to four hours. The result is that the entire western edge of the park now provides additional short stay parking for up to four hours, an increase of approximately 60 spaces.</i></p>		

M 14	Question from:	Councillor Colin Barrett
Since the implementation of the 20 MPH how many RTAs have there been in those wards affected for each year since, and how many RTAs were there for two years prior to the implementation of the 20MPH in those wards covered by the new limit?		
Answer from:	Councillor Caroline Roberts	
<p><i>The Council only receives statistics from the Police relating to personal injury. As the roll out of 20 MPH zones has not been completed yet it is not possible to provide a summary of the number of collisions that have occurred.</i></p> <p><i>Collision/casualty statistics are usually based on comparison of the three years prior to and three years post implementation.</i></p>		

Any Member who wants to know about casualty records for a particular street can obtain statistics direct from the Road Safety team.

M 15	Question from:	Councillor Geoff Ward
<p>Last year the Council signed up to the Armed Forces Covenant. How has our support for this translated into reality?</p>		
Answer from:		Councillor Paul Crossley
<p><i>The Council's signing of the Community Covenant has provided a catalyst for a wide range of projects. The British Legion now has a fortnightly presence in our One Stop Shop in Bath. The aim is to raise their profile and encourage wider numbers of the local armed forces community to access their funding and services, as well as to help them work more closely with the Council and other agencies in the building. The Council is working with them to increase awareness of this service.</i></p> <p><i>Bath Spa University is an accredited MoD learning provider and are involved in a number of projects that help deliver the Covenant and which the council is helping develop. These include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• Troops to Teachers - working with ex-servicemen undertaking a two-year, work-based degree with Qualified Teacher Status. One is currently placed with Weston-All-Saints Primary School and there is the potential to promote placements with further schools in the district.</i> <i>• The Service Children Support Network- this supports children of armed forces families, and encourages those who may not traditionally go onto higher education to consider this.</i> <i>• Learning to Lead - an MOD funded project with the potential to be extended to our area.</i> <p><i>Royal British Legion Industries in Aylesford will produce the New Gateway Signage for Radstock. This charity was established in 1919 to provide treatment, training and support to the Armed Forces community. Radstock Town Council has been consulted and agreement has been reached on the wording and images to be used. A visit to the Royal British Legion Village in Aylesford by the Radstock Ward Councillors is also being planned to view the facilities, including the signage production plant.</i></p> <p><i>As part of the "Involve" scheme, BMT Isis is working with the Council and Volunteer Centre and local cadets on volunteering projects.</i></p> <p><i>We have invited our military-civilian contacts including 43 Wessex Brigade, Tidworth and to let us know how the Council and its partners can support them more fully and their role in potential joint projects. We have suggested that they identify people from the Armed Forces community that we can talk to about this.</i></p> <p><i>This year's Flag Raising Ceremony will take place on Monday 23rd June and the following partner organisations have been advised that they are welcome to sign the Covenant if they wish to, as we have been working with them on Covenant projects</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• Bath Spa University</i> <i>• Julian House</i> <i>• B&NES Volunteer Centre</i> 		

- *Somer Valley FM*

Keynsham Field Hospital representatives have expressed a desire to sign in their own right. The Council has also received an approach from BMT Isis which has signed the national Corporate Covenant and would like to sign the local Community Covenant, although the MoD have indicated that businesses should not sign Community Covenants.

M 16	Question from:	Councillor Geoff Ward
<p>After the Urban Gull conference last autumn it was agreed that clear information would be provided to building owners/ residents as to what they could legally do to control gulls nesting on their roofs. What information has been provided and how has it been promulgated?</p>		
Answer from:		Councillor David Dixon
<p><i>This was a recommendation from the Gull Scrutiny Day which was accepted by Cllr Dixon. A wide ranging communications strategy relating to urban gulls has been drafted which contains a specific action to provide information to residents/building owners on what they are able to do to mitigate the impacts of gulls. This information will be available on the website and in leaflet form in the One Stop Shops.</i></p> <p><i>In addition over 400 letters have been issued to businesses located in and around Locksbrook which has been identified as an experiencing an increase in the number of breeding pairs. The letter raises awareness of the gull issue and urges business owners to take appropriate measures to proof their premises. This letter drop has elicited a number of responses to the Council for further advice and requests for egg replacement treatments.</i></p>		

M 17	Question from:	Councillor Geoff Ward
<p>What is the total cost of the Batheaston foot/cycle bridge and what, if any, has been the Council's own financial contribution? Is the Council having to pay for the additional trackway upgrade between the bridge and Mill Lane, Bathampton? What is this work costing and when will the project be complete?</p>		
Answer from:		Councillor Caroline Roberts
<p><i>The total estimated cost of the project is £940k. This has been jointly by funded by the DfT grant (£500k) and the Council's own capital programme for cycling making up the remainder of the costs.</i></p> <p><i>Due to the severe winter weather it has not been possible to finish the link across to Mill Lane. Now that the weather is improving the Contractor is programmed to return to site and complete the works before summer.</i></p>		

M 18	Question from:	Councillor Patrick Anketell-Jones
<p>The previous Cabinet Member for Transport promised that monitoring would be undertaken in areas covered by new 20mph zones to monitor average speeds in these areas, compared to average speeds before the 20mph zone was implemented. Can the Cabinet Member please confirm what monitoring has been undertaken and what the results have revealed?</p>		
Answer from:		Councillor Caroline Roberts
<p><i>Selective speed monitoring was undertaken prior to implementation. However, the overall programme is still being implemented with post implementation speed surveys commencing later this year. The results will be made available after the study is complete.</i></p>		
Supplementary Question:		
<p>Will we have speed survey results before the next local election?</p>		
Answer from:		Councillor Caroline Roberts
<p><i>Due to the time required to complete consultation prior to the implementation of each zone, there will not be sufficient time to provide results (post implementation) prior to the next election. Members can however view the latest accident statistics for any given area at any time.</i></p>		

M 19	Question from:	Councillor Patrick Anketell-Jones
<p>The Cabinet Member for Community Resources has previously stated that revenue at the Council's car parks is lower than expected due to the popularity of the Council's Park & Rides. As such, can the Cabinet Member please confirm what the Council's long-term plans are for its city centre car parks?</p>		
Answer from:		Councillor Caroline Roberts
<p><i>The Council's city centre car parks provide an essential facility for those who still need to drive into the city. Our long term plans are to continue to maintain an appropriate supply of car parking while encouraging, where we can, visitors and residents onto more sustainable forms of transport be that bus (including P&R), train or cycling. Over time we will want to reduce the amount of car parking but we will do this in a measured and sensitive way which does not undermine the economic attractiveness of the city. The car parking income has achieved the set budget this financial year. However, the car parking income will always be affected by encouraging a modal shift away from</i></p>		

single occupancy car journeys into the centre of the city but the benefits are clear with reduced CO2 levels, reduced congestion and improved public realm for all.

M 20	Question from:	Councillor Patrick Anketell-Jones
<p>Since the riverside footpath had its grass verge dug out and tarmacked, the path is blocked by very large and deep puddles of water every time it rains. Pedestrians can be seen holding on to the fence and walking along the narrow parapet to get around the obstruction. Will the cabinet member please sanction the necessary remediation to ensure this busy footpath has proper drainage?</p>		
Answer from:		Councillor Caroline Roberts
<p><i>Officers have been requested to investigate this matter and arrange for the necessary remedial works to be undertaken.</i></p>		

M 21	Question from:	Councillor Vic Pritchard
<p>At the last meeting, the Cabinet Member stated that he would ask the Leader of Council to write to the Stowey Sutton Action Group acknowledging their success. To my knowledge, this has not yet happened. Can the Cabinet Member please explain whether such a letter has been written, and if not, why not?</p>		
Answer from:		Councillor Tim Ball
<p><i>Following your question to Cabinet on 12th February and my response in connection with Stowey Quarry I am pleased to say that the Leader of the Council has written to Stowey Sutton Action Group expressing his appreciation of the efforts of the Group, and other local residents, in presenting a case that no doubt influenced the Planning Inspector in reaching his decision to refuse planning permission for the land filling of Stowey Quarry with asbestos and non-hazardous waste.</i></p>		

M 22	Question from:	Councillor Vic Pritchard
<p>At the February Full Council Budget Meeting, Council resolved to allocate an additional £100,000 to support the delivery of the Council's Advice Services Strategy, over and above the level of funding proposed by Cabinet, with the express aim of protecting as far as possible the universal advice services currently provided under contract for the Council by the CAB. Can the Cabinet Member please confirm whether the Council will now maintain this universal service when awarding its Advice Service contract?</p>		

Answer from:	Councillor Simon Allen
<p><i>The actual wording of the Council resolution was to “support the delivery of the Council’s Advice Services Strategy and protect as far as possible the universal advice services currently provided under contract for the Council”. It is agreed that the resolution cannot be applicable to only the CAB as the Council has other contracts for Advice and Information Services provided by other bodies that will also be impacted by the proposed Advice and Information Strategy. The Council passed a budget which removed £118k per year recurrently from the advice and information section of Supporting People and Communities budget. Therefore, the CAB have been asked by the Council and have agreed to work within a reduced budget until the advice and information contract is re-commissioned with a new contract in place from 1 September 2015. This new contract will be for the final reduced amount which recognises that the Council agreed to re-instate an additional £107k (to reduce the planned reduction from £225k to £118k) for the 2014-15 and 2015-16 financial years. The CAB are aware of this final reduced figure. Officers will continue their contact with colleagues from the CAB over the coming weeks to agree a variation to the current contract. The Council have agreed transitional funding (£24k) to support the CAB in adjusting its model of operation to accommodate the reduced budget from 1 April 2014 and the remaining funds (£76k) will be made available to all advice and information providers, including the CAB, as part of an Advice and Information Transformation Fund.</i></p>	

M 23	Question from:	Councillor Vic Pritchard
<p>Who decides upon and sanctions new road signs and are Parish Councils and Ward Councillors informed of their introduction prior to being installed, and what is the standard cost of installing a single advisory road sign?</p>		
Answer from:	Councillor Caroline Roberts	
<p><i>The traffic signs are approved by the Development Control team on newly constructed roads. The Traffic team approve signs on the existing highway. Members would be consulted on proposals where signage forms part of a bigger traffic management scheme. However, resources do not enable consultation on single signs or replacement of existing damaged sign plates. Costs vary depending on whether new post(s) are required, the size and location of the sign. A typical cost for a post and traffic sign is £300 including installation.</i></p>		
Supplementary Question:		
<p>The response suggests that local members would be consulted. What is the relevance of the new signs in Stowey? There are 8 signs to mark 2 fords. Since the fords have not required signage since 1700, why now?</p>		
Answer from:	Councillor Caroline Roberts	

I am astounded that the member takes such a view since people have died because of flooding in your area. We will however look again at the consultation and will get back to you.

M 24	Question from:	Councillor Vic Pritchard
Bishop Sutton experiences flooding annually, with the past two years being extreme. Can the Council liaise with the Environment Agency to reclassify its zoning from '1 – Low Risk' to a more appropriate classification?		
Answer from:		Councillor Caroline Roberts
<i>It is important that all property flooding incidents are reported to the Drainage & Flooding Team for investigation in accordance with our duties as the Lead local Flood Authority. If the Member is able to provide the Council's Flood Risk Manager, Jim Collings, with the details of the properties that suffered internal flooding the owners will be contacted and the surface water flooding investigated. We are the responsible "Flood Risk Authority" for surface water flooding. The EA are the "Flood Risk Authority" for flooding from main rivers. The classifications used by the EA were changed in December to High, Medium, Low & Very Low. Bishop Sutton is at Very Low risk from Main River flooding. (The insurance implications of altering flood zones are huge).</i>		
Supplementary Question:		
Would you consider, in the light of recent flooding, that zone 1 is not an adequate rating for my ward?		
Answer from:		Councillor Caroline Roberts
<i>I am not aware of the rating of your ward. It is being monitored and will be considered as part of that.</i>		

M 25	Question from:	Councillor Vic Pritchard
What has been the total cost so far of implementing the Dorchester Street Bus Gate, including both the capital cost of introducing the bus gate, as well as the on-going revenue cost in terms of officer time, issuing of warning letters to drivers who have breached the bus gate etc?		
Answer from:		Councillor Caroline Roberts
<i>The total capital costs for implementing the Dorchester Street bus lane are estimated at £50k. The cost of the camera for enforcement is £18k. Officer time to date for</i>		

processing the warning notices is estimated at £1.2k and postage costs £6k. The on-going revenue costs are dependent on the level of contravention but all processing is expected to be undertaken within the current resource levels within Parking Services.

M 26	Question from:	Councillor Liz Richardson
Can the cabinet member indicate who/which organisation will take responsibility to check and sign off the work for the new flood protection devices that are being fitted to properties in the Chew Valley that are being funded by EA grants (these are properties that previously did not have any flood protection)?		
Answer from:		Councillor Caroline Roberts
<i>Unlike the PLP pilot, the procurement contract will be through the Council's civil engineering teams. The technical sign off will be by the Council's engineers with independent specialist approval if required. The properties and scope of further works has not been agreed yet, but the works are in the approved 2014/15 capital programme.</i>		

M 27	Question from:	Councillor Liz Richardson
The new independent jba report that is due to be published very soon includes information on the exact number of domestic flood barriers fitted during the 2011/12 protection round that did not perform as expected, some have certainly been identified as being defective. As these products were defective while under the manufacturers warrantee can the cabinet member assure the public that they will insist that the manufacturer rectify those indicated as defective while under warrantee at the manufacturers own cost?		
Answer from:		Councillor Caroline Roberts
<i>Officers have been requested to pass the contractual information to Legal Services in order that this matter can be considered and an approach agreed. I am aware that there were a number of reasons why the PLP equipment didn't fully protect the properties. In some cases the depth of flood water was greater than height of flood barriers. The Council could take action to insist on repairs if it was possible to prove that the system was defective and the damage has not been caused during storage of the barriers or resident installation. The information contained in the latest report will help officers identify the appropriate course of action to be taken with the supplier. The supplier has indicated a willingness to meet with the Chew Valley Flood Forum and discuss the best way forward. The Council remains committed to supporting the community and provided additional funding in the 14/15 budget.</i>		
Supplementary Question:		

Please will the Cabinet member give timescales?	
Answer from:	Councillor Caroline Roberts
<i>The additional survey has already been completed and officers are currently evaluating the reports. The follow up meeting with the CVFF is scheduled for the 8th May 2014 and the outcome of the legal review should be known by the end of May 2014.</i>	

M 28	Question from:	Councillor Liz Richardson
When will the final project cost of delivering the Lower Bristol Road Traveller Site be known and when will it be possible to confirm whether the Council will be able to access the HCA grant?		
Answer from:		Councillor Tim Ball
<i>The scheme is being developed using a “design & build” approach with a Registered Provider (RP) partner. As such confirmed build costs will not be available until the development partner has obtained competitive build quotes. This is expected to be late June. However, for scheme management purposes we have appointed a cost engineering consultant whose recent advice can be shared during the cross-party meeting that has been scheduled for 17th April. In addition the Cabinet have indicated a capped budget of £1.8 million for this project that includes HCA funding. The Council and our development partner will be able to access the HCA if grant conditions are met, including design standards and scheme delivery by March 2015.</i>		

M 29	Question from:	Councillor Charles Gerrish
What was the final outturn surplus generated by Heritage Services?		
Answer from:		Councillor Ben Stevens
<i>The final figures have not yet been completed, but the expectation is that once finalised the outturn surplus will total circa £5 million.</i>		

M 30	Question from:	Councillor Charles Gerrish
What was the final figure for the Collection Fund Surplus at the end of the 2013/14 financial year?		

Answer from:	Councillor David Bellotti
<p><i>The Council Tax Collection Fund forms part of the annual accounts for the Council. Officers are currently working to close the end of year accounts in accordance with the normal annual process to meet the statutory deadline of 30 June for the un-audited accounts to be published. As such the final figures for the Collection Fund Surplus for 2013/14 will be reported to Cabinet in July.</i></p>	

M 31	Question from:	Councillor Charles Gerrish
<p>Excluding any transfers to reserves, what was the Council's final underspend for the 2013/14 financial year?</p>		
Answer from:	Councillor David Bellotti	
<p><i>Officers are currently working to close the end of year accounts for the Council in accordance with normal annual process to meet the statutory deadline of 30 June for the un-audited accounts to be published. As such the Final Outturn position will be reported to Cabinet in July.</i></p>		

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS - PUBLIC

P 01	Question from:	Karen Walker (Vice Chair, PSJ Parish Council)
<p>Thanks to the popular Somerbus bus service through Peasedown St John, more and more people are making use of the bus stops in Orchard Way. With an hourly service, in all weather conditions, will the Cabinet Member for Transport allocate finding for bus shelters to be erected at all bus stops on this route?</p>		
Answer from:	Councillor Caroline Roberts	
<p><i>There are some residual developer contributions set aside for improvements to bus stop facilities in the Orchard Way area. This matter will be followed up in the new financial year. We will consult the Parish Council on proposals.</i></p>		

P 02	Question from:	Karen Walker (Vice Chair, PSJ Parish Council)
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In 2010 a Vehicle Activated Sign was erected in Ashgrove, Peasedown St John, following a contribution of £3,500 in S106 from a nearby housing development. The funding was provided by the housing developer purely for, as is the case with s106 money, use in Peasedown St John.

The sign was removed in February 2014 following the change in the speed limit from 30mph - 20mph and placed elsewhere in the district.

Recognising the removal was due to the limit change, will BANES Council compensate this loss to our village by providing another piece of traffic and safety equipment, worth at least £3,500, for use in Peasedown St John?

If not, can Peasedown residents assume that (as has been heavily indicated with examples in recent months) the council isn't interest in investing in our village?

Answer from:	Councillor Caroline Roberts
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There is no intention to replace the VAS with alternative traffic management measures. However, officers of the Council have recently inspected a number of traffic related issues raised by the Parish, which will be formulated into a possible traffic scheme for inclusion in a future works programme.

The Council does have an interest in investing in Peasedown St John and doesn't make decisions based on geography. To make the most of the available funding officers are asked to bring forward the schemes that offer the best value for money and prioritise projects that achieve Joint Local Transport Plan priorities

P 03	Question from:	Lesley Mansell (Chair, Radstock TC)
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Considering the discussions over the last few months why has B&NES not consulted on the proposal to move the library from its present accessible site into the Co-op at Radstock?

Answer from:	Councillor David Dixon
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I refer to my response to question M03 from Councillor Eleanor Jackson

P 04	Question from:	Lesley Mansell (Chair, Radstock TC)
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Considering that disabled people should be treated more favourably why has B&NES allowed the closure of the hydrotherapy pool at the Connections centre at Writhlington, Radstock?

Will the council now identify funding in order that this facility may be re-instated as soon as possible?

Answer from:	Councillor Simon Allen
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The pool at Connections Day Centre was not designed to be a hydrotherapy pool but is a converted outdoor swimming pool, constructed in the 1960's. Sirona CIC had no choice but to close the pool on health and safety grounds after the discovery of infection risks such as pseudomonas. Although remedial action made some improvements, mould and algae were still present.

It is estimated that it would cost £500,000 to turn the 1960s pool into a fit-for-purpose hydrotherapy pool. Given that the Council is not responsible for commissioning hydrotherapy services, the reported low use of the Connections Pool and the fact that there are hydrotherapy services already available in the area this would not be an appropriate use of Council funds. The responsibility for commissioning/ funding hydrotherapy services rests with the BaNES Clinical Commissioning Group

The Senior Commissioning Manager for NHS BaNES CCG/B&NES Council has a pre-arranged meeting with all providers of hydrotherapy services on 30th April 2014. The purpose of this first meeting will be to accurately scope the current hydrotherapy provision across the authority with a view to establishing what capacity there might be for ensuring adequate access for individuals, particularly people with learning disabilities, with a need for a hydrotherapy service.

Through Sirona, the Council supports 30-40 people a day at the Connections Day Centre to help improve their skills, offer therapies and build their confidence and self-esteem. Where individuals have been assessed as requiring Hydrotherapy they have been able to access the therapy at other venues across the authority area.

P 05	Question from:	Marian McNeir MBE (Co Director, Cultural Forum Bath Area)
<p>a) Are the Cabinet members for Children's Services (Cllr Dine Romero) and Economic Development and Culture (Cllr Ben Stevens) aware of the " Bath as a Child Friendly City " major initiative, lead by myself from the Cultural Forum and by Penny Hay from BSU and Kate Cross from the egg?</p> <p>b) Would you be able to support our events including the Forest of the Imagination event, involving many B&NES schools and hopefully held in Queen Square, from 11 to 14 July?</p> <p>c) Would you also be able to support the CF led conference at the egg on 1 October with national speakers? Would any funding be available for this event?</p>		
Answer from:		Councillors Dine Romero and Ben Stevens
<p>a) <i>Yes we are aware - Bath and North East Somerset Council undertakes a significant range of work to promote the rights of children, to seek their views and secure their participation. We fund a participation service and have recently undertaken extensive consultation with children, young people and their families and carers about their priorities for the next CYP Plan which will run from 2014 until 2017. We are also in the midst of planning for the Primary and Young People's Parliaments to be held in June 2014. Councillor Stevens has attended a meeting of the Cultural Forum to discuss the Child Friendly City initiative and both Cabinet Members are supportive of these developments.</i></p> <p>b) <i>We are already supporting it – they have an Events grant of £4,000 (By the way the</i></p>		

precise location of the event is pending confirmation from Parks)
c) They are eligible to apply for an Events grant when the new scheme opens (target date 1 June) – currently the Events grants scheme is closed whilst we revise the application process and guidance notes.

P 06	Question from:	Marian McNeir MBE (Co Director, Cultural Forum Bath Area)
<p>Are Cllrs Romero and Stevens aware that the Cultural Forum is seeking a Unicef award and Unicef accreditation for “Bath as a Child Friendly City” initiative. Did you know that this would count in Bath’s favour if the Council were to go for City of Culture at some future date?</p>		
Answer from:		Councillors Ben Stevens and Dine Romero
<p><i>Yes we are aware. Discussions are in their infancy, therefore as yet there has been no formal consideration of a City of Culture bid.</i></p>		

P 07	Question from:	Marian McNeir MBE (Co Director, Cultural Forum Bath Area)
<p>Is the Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Culture aware of the concern of the Cultural Forum and many of its 80 members about the process and outcome of recent funding decisions? Does Cllr Stevens know that, given that money is tight for B&NES funding initiatives, we had been led to believe that local Arts organisations would be supported, the Arts being a significant driver in the local economy?</p>		
Answer from:		Councillor Ben Stevens
<p><i>Bath & North East Somerset Council continues to support arts development activities across the district. Details of the 37 arts organisations and arts projects funded by the Council are available on the Council’s Website. http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/services/sport-leisure-and-parks/arts-development/arts-organisations-funded-bath-and-north-east-some This Council has very clear and transparent processes for commissioning contracts to meet key corporate objectives and the wider support of organisations and projects through grants. More organisations will be funded with Micro Grants throughout the coming year. An estimated 50 arts organisations and projects will be funded in 2014/15.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• In 2014/15 the Council will be investing more than £264,000 (this is the same as the previous year) to support and develop the arts across the district</i> <i>• The sums invested range from £500 to £50,000</i> 		

- *Investment supports a variety of arts and health projects with charities including Action on Hearing Loss, Arts at the Heart of the RUH, B&NES Carer's Centre and SWALLOW (South West Learning and Living Our Way)*
- *Funded projects are taking place with communities in villages and towns across the whole district, as well as in central Bath*
- *Organisations will use the Council's investment to draw down additional funding from Arts Council England, Trusts, Foundations and the National Lottery.*
- *Projects and activities supported will deliver not only arts development but economic development as well as education and health outcomes that will contribute to building stronger local communities.*

Of the 37 arts organisations and arts projects funded to date, 30 are based in Bath and North East Somerset This reflect their importance to the local economy. The remaining 7 are with South West based organisations, in most cases in neighbouring authorities (North Somerset, Somerset and Wiltshire for example). All funded activity takes place in Bath and North East Somerset area and benefit Bath and North East Somerset residents.

P 08	Question from:	Marian McNeir MBE (Co Director, Cultural Forum Bath Area)
<p>Is the Cabinet Member aware how devastating the news has been that the major B&NES funding award of £50,000 has been given to a Bristol based company when there was also an application from a first rate, tried and tested Bath based consortium? Does the Cabinet member share our desire to support local Arts organisations and would he therefore look again at the system of Arts funding?</p>		
Answer from:		Councillor Ben Stevens
<p><i>The contract specifically referred to has been awarded to B-Creative, a consortium led by an organisation based in neighbouring North Somerset that will considerably benefit the Bath-based Natural Theatre Company as a key partner in this consortium. As you will be aware the Natural Theatre Company struggled following the loss of its core funding by Arts Council England during 2011. During the same funding round, Arts Council England also ceased funding two other B&NES arts organisations, Media Arts Bath and the Creative Learning Agency, both of which subsequently closed for business with the direct loss of local jobs. As This commission will support the sustainability of the Natural Theatre Company, helping to retain them as an asset to the district. Feedback has been given to the unsuccessful bidders who were given the opportunity to seek further clarifications. I hope they will take the feedback on board for future bids. I will ask officers to provide further feedback if required.</i></p>		

P 09	Question from:	Andy Stewart (Chairman, Broadmoor Lane Residents' Association)
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(1): The Cabinet is considering the Primary and Secondary School Organisation Plan 2013-2017. There is much concern amongst the residents of Weston generally and especially in the roads surrounding Weston All Saints Primary School (WASPS) about the implications of the Cabinet's earlier decision to expand this school. It is claimed that the school is required to expand to meet existing local need. The Plan then shows however that the resident population of North West Bath is now levelling out to pre-bulge years numbers (the bulge years were R2010-2012). What specific evidence has been used therefore to demonstrate and justify the local need to expand WASPS from 2014?

(2): There is a discrepancy in the School Organisation Plan between (i) the 'pupil places' projection (pg 10) which predicts an increase in places in North West Bath by over 13% between 2012-2017 and (ii) the data on the preceding page of the School Organisation Plan (pg 9) which shows that resident population and birth rate for reception children in North West Bath are roughly falling over this same period. Why should pupil places in North West Bath be increasing when resident population is predicted to be falling?

(3): Related to our (1). It is stated that the school is required to expand to meet "local need". WASPS is rightly rated as an Outstanding school, and it has a fantastic reputation. Parents from across Bath want their children to attend the school. We are concerned that parents and children from outside of the local area, and indeed from across Bath, are travelling to the school exacerbating existing traffic safety concerns. We have requested to be provided with data to demonstrate where the current pupils at the school live but this has not been able to be provided. We appreciate that the Council is not able to provide detailed information that could be used to identify individual families but could the Council at least provide us with detailed information to demonstrate where existing pupils live, by postcode area at least. Specifically, could the Council confirm how many pupils at WASPS live in each of the BA1 and BA2 postcode areas?

(4): Our primary concern is the need to ensure the safety of children travelling to and from school. WASPS is located on a narrow country lane, with no pavement along much of its length, and it is the very nature of the Lane which limits the possibility of safe routes to school. The Council has recently submitted three separate planning applications seeking permission to build new accommodation at WASPS. All three applications attracted a fundamental objection in principle from the Council's own Highways Officer who said that any expansion at the school would "result in an increase in vehicular, pedestrian and cycle movements on the surrounding highways where congestion associated with the school already causes highway safety hazards and would be further exacerbated by the proposal, to the detriment of the safety of all highway users', contrary to Policy T.24 of the B&NES Local Plan". We note that the Highways Officer's objection has been maintained despite the extensive mitigation measures proposed. We further note that this fundamental issue – traffic safety – is not properly considered in the School Organisation plan with respect to which schools are suitable for expansion. The Council has an overriding statutory duty as Highways Authority to address road safety concerns and issues, particularly for vulnerable groups such as school children. Why therefore can WASPS be considered suitable for expansion when the view of the Highways Officer is that any expansion would present unacceptable traffic safety risks?

(5): The Primary and Secondary Schools Organisation Plan 2013-2017 is supposed to set out the Council's strategy for the provision of school places over the plan period and in the longer term, reflecting both general population growth and pupils generated from new housing developments. At the Core Strategy Examination (Public Hearing) held on

2nd April 2014, the School Organisation Manager told the Inspector that the Council intended to expand Newbridge School to provide the additional school places that would be required. One of the Ward Councillors for Weston, Councillor Colin Barrett, who is a Governor at WASPS, said that the WASPS governing body had only agreed to expansion of WASPS because they had specifically been told that Newbridge could not expand. The Schools Organisation Plan does not consider or present the Cabinet with any other option for an increase in pupil places for North West Bath other than to agree to the expansion of WASPS. Why are no other options put forward? Specifically, why does the Plan not include expanding Newbridge School as an option, if, as was stated at the Core Strategy Hearing, this is an option?

(6). The Plan states that a new school will be required to be built at the former MoD site at Ensleigh in the very early stages and negotiations continue with the developer. We understand that the developer has stated most recently that there is not sufficient space within the site to build a school and it would have to be built outside the site (within the green belt). Could the Council confirm, is a school planned to be built at Ensleigh and how many form entry is it planned to be (one or two)?

(7). Related to (6), if the new School at Ensleigh is planned to be a one form entry then why could it not be expanded and made two form entry to accommodate the forecast increase in pupils in the North West Bath Area?

(8). Related to (7), if it is not considered possible to build a new two form entry school at Ensleigh because it would not be sustainable in terms of pupils travelling to and from school then how can it be considered sustainable to expand WASPS given the Traffic Safety concerns that already exist around the site?

(9): We are grateful to the Cabinet Member, Councillor Dine Romero for meeting with the Broadmoor Lane Residents' Association once already to discuss the proposed expansion of WASPS. We are also grateful to the Schools Capital and Organisation Team Leader who we have been in correspondence with. Will the Cabinet Member agree to meet with us again, this time together with Officers from the Schools Capital and Organisation Team to discuss these detailed questions and our concerns prior to any further planning application being submitted? (And if appropriate with other Stakeholders such as the Ward Councillors, the Headteacher and Chair of Governors)

Answer from:

Councillor Dine Romero

Your questions relate to three main areas and so I have grouped these together using your numbering.

Pupil numbers (Q.1 / 2/ 3)

Your chief concerns are that the expansion of the school is not to meet a local need and that numbers in the School Organisation Plan (SOP) for births and resident population do not support growth.

As set out in the Plan (pg.6) each planning area contains a grouping of Lower Super Output Areas (LSOA) which are used as a measure nationally. This divides wards into smaller areas to allow a range of data to be recorded on a more local basis. Each planning area has been designed to group as closely as possible the child population living within that area with the school places that could reasonably be said to serve that planning area.

Shown below is relevant LSOA data for births (B) and resident population (RP) for the whole of Weston ward:

B / RP

Year R in 2011 - 63 / 72 (RP at Reception age in 2011)

Year R in 2012 - 71 / 75 (RP at Reception age in 2012)

Year R in 2013 - 50 / 78 (RP at Reception age in 2013)

Year R in 2014 - 68 / 81 (Current RP as at September 2013)

Year R in 2015 - 65 / 68 (Current RP as at September 2013)

Year R in 2016 - 65 / 75 (Current RP as at September 2013)

Year R in 2017 - 61 / 65 (Current RP as at September 2013)

It can be seen from the LSOA data for Weston ward that the resident population (RP) at Reception age for the last three years has been 72, 75 and 78 against a Planned Admission Number (PAN) for WASP of 60 and this PAN was exceeded in each of these years. In addition, the B /RP figures for the years 2014 to 2017 are also all above 60. Based on past patterns, the current RP figure for these years would be expected to increase between now and when the children go into Year R, so that by the time the children reach Reception age the RP will be at a similar level to that seen in the last three years, if not higher.

Although the places at WASP will predominately meet a very local need they are also to serve the slightly wider NW area more generally – e.g. children living in the northern part of Newbridge ward just to the south of WASP - and although you say the SOP shows that the resident population and birth rate for Reception children in NW Bath are ‘roughly falling’ over the period 2012-2017, in fact births which would reach Year R admissions in the years 2014 – 2017 do not fall below 209, whereas in previous years there were fluctuations e.g. Year R 2007 197, 2008 - 215, 2009 - 187 and as stated above, the RP would be expected to increase over this period. I hope you will now be reassured that the expansion of WASP is primarily to meet a need local to the school but also reflects a need for more places in NW Bath.

Highways safety (Q.4)

Your concerns about the impact of increasing pupil numbers on traffic safety are understandable and of course I also wish to ensure the safety of children travelling to and from school. However, issues of highway safety are a matter for the planning process and cannot be considered as a factor in an assessment of suitability of schools for expansion as part of pupil place planning. Issues such as location and site size and conditions will be taken into account to identify the scope for expansion before proposals are put forward in the School Organisation Plan, but ultimately any proposal will have to satisfy planning requirements as plans for expanding the school are brought forward.

The objections of the Highways Officer will be considered by the Development Control Committee together with the proposed mitigation measures. The Committee will also consider the school’s travel plan which through a range of initiatives seeks to minimise the impact of school traffic on the local community by encouraging parents to walk their children to school. This has had some success with the most recent surveys showing that a higher proportion of pupils walk to school than previously. As the expansion of the school is to meet a local need with increasing numbers of children living closer to the school, it is hoped that this trend will continue with more children opting to walk or cycle.

Core Strategy and Newbridge Primary school (Q.5)

I have asked officers to clarify the position following the statements made at the Core Strategy hearing. They have confirmed that when they met with the WASP governing body to discuss expansion, the issue of Newbridge was discussed. It was made clear to the governors that WASP was the first priority for expansion as it was a larger site, better suited to expansion to a 630 place school and located close to the area of population growth, but that it was also possible that Newbridge would need to be expanded at some future stage. In fact the SOP 2013 -2017 does state (pg.10) that in

addition to the WASP expansion a small number of additional places are projected to be required in NW Bath within the plan period and this will include consideration of Newbridge. In the longer term a more substantial expansion of Newbridge may be required as the impact of new housing in the Core Strategy is felt and this explains the comments of the School Organisation Manager at the hearing.

Former MOD site Ensleigh (Q.6/7/8)

I can confirm that in line with the Council's Concept Statement for the development of the MOD Ensleigh site a one form of entry (210 places) school on the development site is required and discussions with the developer are continuing. The possibility of expanding this to a two form entry school would however not offer an alternative to the expansion of WASP for a number of reasons. Additional places have been required from 2011 onwards and can be seen to be extending to at least admissions in 2017, whereas the timescale for the delivery of the Ensleigh school has still not been confirmed and will be tied to a certain extent to the programme for the delivery of the housing. The number of houses does not justify the need for a two form entry school and it would not be possible to require land from the developer for this and perhaps most importantly the location of the school is not where places are needed i.e. primarily in Weston, requiring children to travel out of their local area, which due to the topography and road links separating Weston from Ensleigh, would result in journeys in excess of two miles for most pupils.

Finally (**Question 9**), you may be aware that the latest WASPS application has just been resubmitted, see 14/01667/reg. I am willing to meet you, residents, and any other stakeholders to discuss this, and will also ask relevant officers so that any technical questions can be addressed immediately.

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I am Duncan Hounsell of the Salford Liberal Democrats. **Salford Brass Mill** in The Shallows, Salford, is a gem of 18th century industrial heritage and is of international interest among academics and researchers. It has a “European” dimension with the technology, once cutting-edge, and manpower coming at one time from the German and Belgian borders. The building, a listed building and a scheduled ancient monument, is held on a long lease by B&NES Council. There is a small band of volunteers who put up interpretation displays, open the building for visitors, do routine husbandry, and provide educational talks on the history of the Brass Mill.

This B&NES administration has shown commendable interest in the Salford Brass Mill. Council Leader, Cllr Paul Crossley, visited in 2012. This led to important surveys being undertaken on the structure, asbestos, and the electrical system. Deficiencies in the electrical system were identified and the Mill was closed to casual visitors as a consequence. Cllr Bellotti and Cllr Stevens visited the Brass Mill last Summer and were impressed by the potential of the site. The volunteers were delighted to hear from Sir Graham Watson MEP on his tour of the Brass Mill in January this year that Cllr Bellotti was committed to the repair of the damaged roof making it watertight **and** a re-wiring of the electrics with a May target.

I and the volunteer team would welcome an update from Cllr Bellotti with information about the extent of the works, the likely completion date, the size of the investment by B&NES Council, and whether the work will be sufficient for the re-opening of the Mill to visitors. The volunteers are willing to undertake any Health and Safety work within their capacity if required. It is the opening of the Mill to visitors that motivates and galvanises the volunteer team. Their continued presence and dedication are crucial to the longer term management of the Brass Mill.

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Chairman, Councillors,

Three minutes is a relatively short time to express myself on a matter that has become very, very important to the majority of Westfield residents and which has become a significant talking point amongst them.....

This petition represents a significant cross section of residents, but the overwhelming response has even taken me by surprise...

It is not a plea to reverse historic decisions, because the Sainsbury's project at St Peter's Factory, Wells Road, Westfield – otherwise known as 'Continuform', must now be considered as lost following the rejection of the planning permission at the end of last year....

It is a plea for Bath & NES to reconsider the basis of that decision and to formulate a policy that will actively encourage the creation of a significant retail opportunity that will form the basis of a centre for our community.

Unlike its neighbouring parishes Westfield has no point of focus for its community and the residents had assumed that a major supermarket would introduce a source of employment, and create a new stratum of energy into the community, and on that basis become the base line from which a vibrant community could develop.

Residents were stunned when that opportunity was taken away please let's all learn from this, and decide how this simple and rather fundamental wish can be achieved.....

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Chairman, Councillors,

Cllr Sue Hamilton asked me to support her this evening whilst she presented her petition and her vision of the future for Westfield.

I was happy to do that because as a resident I was in one mind with many of the residents of this relatively new parish in that we want to see a vibrant community allowing the residents to meet and interface with each other in a non-formal setting, rather like it would have been in the times when it was a thriving mining community..

A romantic view.....?

Yes possibly, but one that was becoming to be seen as a reality by the community until it was rather unfortunately and some say cruelly snatched away...

I would ask you to remember the existing CFH (Continuform) employment on the proposed development site was never going to be lost, it was to be transferred to a brand new purpose built facility less than a mile away, and this huge commitment to the area by the company would have been a significant endorsement for Westfield.

On the same basis please accept that the supermarket would have created new jobs in a community reaching out in every direction for opportunities.

What is done, is done, and the opportunities presented by the original proposals are sadly lost, but we appeal to the cabinet to learn from this and move forward by preparing a strategy that will opening up the possibility of a similar retail proposal somewhere in Westfield to be considered with an open mind, and indeed please don't just slam the door in favour of building another retail superstore in a nearby town that already has an oversupply of those.

Thanks for your time and patience; please find the time to consider our proposals they are put before you in genuine concern.

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Statement to Cabinet by Mr Robert Morgan 9th April 2014

I spoke to you at the cabinet meeting in December. The issues I raised then have not been properly addressed. I have been trying to achieve justice from the Council for the last 3 years in respect of my stall in the Guildhall Market.

I do not ask for special treatment, or for your intervention in the legitimate decision-making processes of the Council. I do ask you to do what you can to ensure that those processes are fair, legal and in line with published Council policies and procedures.

Since December, Property Services officers have confirmed that they have now completely and unequivocally withdrawn all threats of action under Section 146 of the Law of Property Act, but planning officers, including the Director of Planning, still refuse to provide any explanation as to why listed building consent is required for the stall.

No officer from either department has attempted to apologise or explain the actions that were found to be at fault by the Ombudsman.

Councillors Gilchrist and Rigby asked the Director of Planning to meet with them and me in an attempt to resolve this issue, but he refused, and made further accusations that I was being vexatious.

He still refuses to provide valid evidence that the stall requires listed building consent. This is not an issue of interpretation of complex precedent or case law, but a simple straightforward interpretation of the relevant Act, supported by English Heritage and central government published guidance, and by local precedent. If he has a case that the stall requires listed building consent, then he should by now have been able to set it out, and to explain why my stall requires consent when other stalls do not.

It seems that no-one holds the Director to account for compliance with clear published Council policies, or for compliance with the law. I state again, for the record, that I am willing to meet with him or his officers, or with any relevant elected member to resolve these issues.

The director and his officers have repeatedly accused me of committing a criminal offence, but they have brought no evidence of this. This itself is an offence under Section 6 of the Human Rights Act, which is the right to a timely and fair trial. For the purpose of the Act, using the Council's Planning Enforcement Policy to test the accusations could be considered a fair trial, but The Council has refused to take this action, despite requests to do so by Councillor Rigby and MP Don Foster.

This refusal to comply with the basic provisions of the Human Rights Act amounts to another criminal offence, that of Misconduct in Public Office, and the bullying and discrimination against us are also misconduct under the Council's Disciplinary Procedure.

You might ask why I have put myself to all this trouble. That brings up another problem. At no time have officers ever explained what the policy is, or what I would need to do to my stall to bring it into compliance. The Code of Conduct requires officers to follow best practice. In this case, best practice, according to English Heritage, is to analyse the value of both the Historic Asset and the Conservation Area in which it stands, and to produce area appraisals and management plans setting out what are the key characteristics that need to be preserved, and how that preservation is to be achieved. This has not been done, so there is no agreed baseline against which any proposals for development can be assessed.

Officers have wasted hundreds of hours, and hence thousands of pounds of Council money, in pursuing this vendetta against me, without ever addressing the true issues. The case has highlighted multiple problems with the way that the Council works, and I look to you for suitable remedies.

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Good evening

I know that decisions on planning applications are not subject to oversight or review by cabinet. I am not here to ask you to intervene in that process. What I am asking for is fair and equal treatment under the law.

We run a small local artisan business, making and selling products from our market stall in the Guildhall Market. This is exactly the kind of business that markets are historically for.

The intransigence of council officers has caused us three years of stress, inconvenience, and wasted time. All the time we have spent on fighting this case is time we have not been able to invest in our business.

All the time that Council officers have put into persecuting us is a waste of public money. How can it be expedient or in the public interest for council officers to expend in excess of 50,000 pounds in pursuing us?

The stall is located just inside the Grand parade entrance. The universal reaction when people come into the market from that direction is to say how nice the stall looks. When we explain to them that planning officers object to it because in their view, it is too enclosed they are shocked, and immediately draw comparisons with other stalls close by. They are even more shocked when we explain that stalls that are more enclosed than ours are deemed by planning officers to be perfectly acceptable.

All officers, including those in Planning and Property Services, are first and foremost employees of the Local Authority, public servants bound by the law and by all the authority's own policies and procedures. One key feature of all of these policies is the commitment to fairness. It is found in the Code of Conduct, itself the Council's statement of the seven principles of the Nolan Committee on Standards in public Life, and in the Planning Enforcement Policy, which is in turn, compliant with the government's enforcement concordat.

Fairness is a key freedom in any democratic society, and it is the role of those elected to hold to account those employed as public servants.

We have been singled out by planning officers, treated unfairly in comparison to other traders, and held to different standards than the council applies to itself. For example, it has not applied for Listed Building consent for the 500,000 pound project to create the Guild co-working hub from the former one stop shop in the Grade 1 Listed Guildhall. How is it fair or reasonable to pursue us when the Council itself refuses to comply with the law?

This petition calls upon you to ensure that Council Officers comply with the law, published council policy, and good practice, in particular by

investigating why we have been treated differently to other stallholders

investigating why the council would not follow its own complaints procedures

and investigating why the council will not take enforcement action in accordance with its own policy.

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Radstock Library proposed move

B&NES intends to move the Radstock library from its purpose built and accessible building into a space in the Co-op.

Despite the Parish charter which says B&NES will consult this has not been done in relation to the library - with Staff, Service users or Radstock Town Council. In his reply to my question Cllr Dixon said he wanted to know what could be done better. Well B&NES could consult in the first place and not 7 months after the fact.

The small petition the Labour party carried out shows this is an unpopular move by B&NES. Very few people refused to sign and most are saying it is a "daft idea." This is not something that came out of any request from the numerous surveys of residents.

The response I had is that the move is being done on the basis of costs savings, which is estimated at £10k and the potential to be open for longer. Why can't it be kept open for longer where it is? If it is open for the same hours as the Co-op what is the cost of this?

Considering the lack of services in Radstock already how is this small saving justified? Why must Radstock people take the brunt of this?

I have asked for an Equality Impact Assessment and I am told this will be done when the decision is made. This is not the proper process for EIAs as these are to determine if there is a negative impact before the decision is taken.

Once again B&NES have not discussed with the Town Council an overall plan for Radstock. This is just another piecemeal approach which mainly seems to be about saving £10k. Yet B&NES Spent £33 million in Keynsham!

We are tired of seeing Radstock carved into ever smaller pieces to suit Bath.

Cllr Dixon in his response said he did not know the Children's Service used the library. He did not know because he did not ask.

What this move needs to take into account is that:

There are few services in Radstock

You can't compare Radstock library with Paulton as this is not comparing like with like.

The library acts as a focal point for information including tourism and visitors researching their family history

Radstock is to be a hub for children's services.

The library already provides space for Children's Centre activities like the single young mums group which needs privacy.

Mobile Library bus – parks in the car park at the back of the building – it can't do that on Co-op site.

The proposal is to build 1000's of houses in Radstock but there is no plan to strengthen or develop the infrastructure

This is not the approach of a council who cares about Radstock.

We would like to see:

Consultation with relevant parties before the deal is done

A full EIA

A report of the predicted cost savings and the future costs.

An holistic approach to any changes in Radstock in consultation with relevant people.

Connections Centre Writhlington, Radstock – Hydrotherapy pool statement

Until January 2013 the Connections Centre at Radstock offered hydrotherapy sessions for disabled people, this affects people across NES.

There are several service users with Learning Disabilities and very high physical mobility needs that attend the day service and who need hydro therapy as a method of creating supported movement of limbs.

This was provided with the support of a physiotherapist and support staff with excellent results. These service users are now having to travel, accompanied by staff to the RUH in order to access hydro therapy. This is the nearest available facility and this is not an efficient use of funding or of staff time.

The building is owned by B&NES and leased to Sirona Care and Health.

The current pool was built in the 1960's as a swimming pool, consequently heating the water for hydrotherapy use has resulted in condensation and bacteria which caused Sirona to close it on health and safety grounds.

A quote was given of £125k to put a proper roof on, improve the ventilation and filtration systems and repair the condensation damage. However B&NES have quoted £500k for this work. Consequently the pool has remained closed.

There is no EIA of the decision not to refurbish the pool and B&NES could be looking at costs in excess of £500k if a legal case is taken for failure to provide a service to disabled people as set out in the Equality Act 2010.

I am told that there is a meeting at the end of April to look at this but I am also told that the facility will remain closed, irrespective of this and with no consultation.

It appears that this was swept under the carpet as no one seemed to know about this service. Although I understand that hydrotherapy was not commissioned I struggle with the time it has taken to make a decision – or not as the case may be regarding the upgrade of this pool.

Meanwhile the usual counter argument has been put that it is not well used. So what has been done to increase the demand for the service?

What a shame to let this go – another service lost in Radstock. Another facility thrown away.

Why can't the pool be refurbished and used for hydrotherapy which I am sure Writhlington residents would also like to use and gain much benefit from? It could also be used as a swimming pool at weekends

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When the Council restored the £60,000.00 to the 2014-15 budget to pay the support fees for pensioners on the Bronze Band—Alarm System Only--sheltered housing service, I thought that the issue had been successfully resolved. Then I received notice that the £60,000.00 was insufficient to pay this charge for all affected sheltered housing tenants and beginning the 1st of April they will all be expected to pay this weekly charge. For Curo tenants this charge is £3.60 rising to £187.20 a year.

An Alarm Subsidy Fund has been hastily set up for pensioners in “financial difficulty”. What exactly will it cover?

According to information I received on 25th of March—5 days before the 1st of April charge date—
And I Quote;

“The fund will cover the annual cost of your hard-wired alarm for 2014-15. The actual amount will vary depending on where you live. In some cases, you may find that, even with the Subsidy Fund payment, you have a charge to pay.”

In other words there is no guarantee that some pensioners will not fall through the net.

I rang the Welfare Support Team on 3rd of April to find out how this service was being implemented. I was told that they had only just heard that they were expected to administer this fund on 1st April, the same day it started. Already they’ve received over 100 applications, which they plan to process within the next 2 weeks, or by 21st April. That’s 3 weeks late.

I was told that this wouldn’t matter because once the applications were processed, the full yearly amount would be sent. Really?

I would like to remind the Council, that the pensioners involved are all of advancing years with increasing vulnerability. Already on a low income, their rent is paid by Housing Benefit and they are already struggling with rising food and energy costs.

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Statement on The Arts

I am speaking as the Council Champion for Culture, and from my experience as previous cabinet member for sustainable development.

The refresh of the Economic Strategy is welcomed, and has been in the pipeline for sometime. Welcomed also is the recognition and incorporation of the Arts and Culture into the strategy. The arts and culture sectors contribute substantially to our economy and play a vital part in making Bath & NES a leading Cultural destination.

A Paper entitled Arts Strategy was provisionally put forward to Cabinet in the Autumn, but subsequently withdrawn. It outlined amongst other things a commissioning basis for arts projects and training, and other initiatives, and was perhaps more about process than any strategy. The cultural sector was told there would be an interim period to await the development of the economic Strategy. The Cabinet Member vocalised publicly that the Previous Paper "was not worth the paper it was written on, and even stronger words to that effect.

However the actions in that paper are continuing to be implemented, without the endorsement of Cabinet, and it would seem without the support of the Cabinet Member given his public statements.

To be rolling out the Arts Commissions without the proper basis and understanding of a Strategy has caused a great deal of difficulty for the cultural sector locally, and there is a lack of clear direction and strategy. Indeed the process of these commissions has added administrative costs, and is complicated. The process has not been conducive to fostering good relationships between local Arts Organisations and the LA. Additionally large commissions have been awarded away from local Organisations to outside area operators, which runs in the face of our preferred local procurement policy.

In the face of the growing dismay and uncertainty felt in our excellent local arts sectors, this Administration must work with

renewed focus and energy to facilitate and strengthen our Cultural Sector. Whilst it is not my intention to question professional judgement in the recent allocation of Arts Commissions, Cabinet should note that the effects have been to weaken key local organisations, to place a strain on relationship with the LA and importantly to have a negative impact on partnerships with key funders - Arts Council England for one.

Experience elsewhere shows that when arts organisations work together and have a positive relationship with their local authority, everyone benefits - it's possible to raise more money, to attract big grants, to do ambitious in depth projects that have high profile and involve thousands of local people, and the sector becomes more healthy overall which has long-term impact. Short term contracts let for 3 years to companies from outside B&NES may achieve the service goals in the commissions, but they won't form long term relationships with local communities or create jobs in the local area.

The current commissioning process should be put on hold, whilst this Administration commits to working with Partners to create a thoughtful, well researched overall cultural strategy, working with the cultural sector and strategic partners (universities, ACE, other agencies to form a framework for the arts development strategy, and to develop a funding/commissioning regime that will help to support the delivery of this new strategy.

While welcoming the Council's fulfilment of its statutory obligation to ensure that sufficient school places will be available for the anticipated resident population, I would like to raise two points of possible concern. One is the cost of the independent assessments that the council has apparently commissioned, bearing in mind that we always need to be sure that outside expertise is only bought when seriously necessary. Secondly, I would seek assurance that it will be possible to adapt the plans to take account of the housing developments which go ahead despite the plans of the Draft Core Strategy, such as at Monger Lane in Midsomer Norton recently allowed on appeal.

Michael Evans 9/4/2014

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The Broadmoor Lane Residents' Association in Weston represents not just those who live in Broadmoor Lane but also the wider area. Cabinet is being asked to approve the Primary and Secondary School Organisation Plan. This includes the proposed expansion of Weston All Saints Primary School and it is this which is causing much concern locally.

We feel that the case has not been properly made, as there is no increasing local need for school places, and expanding WASPS is not the only or best option – especially given the existing traffic safety concerns around the school. Only last week at the Core Strategy Hearing we were told that Newbridge School could expand; a new school is also planned to be built at Ensleigh and that could potentially accommodate some of these pupils. None of these options are properly set out or considered in the plan before you.

I should emphasise that we absolutely support the school which is properly rated as outstanding by Ofsted and is led by an excellent Headteacher. Also that we support the Council in its aim to provide places for children in their local school.

A planning application for six new classrooms was recently withdrawn because of our concern. Broadmoor Lane is a narrow country lane which is already beyond capacity. There is no footpath or pavement along much of it. It is not a safe route to school. The Council's own Highways Officer recommended that the application should be refused. She maintained her objection despite the extensive mitigation measures that were proposed.

The traffic safety issue should be the limiting factor that prevents the school being expanded any further.

The Council has a paramount statutory duty to ensure roads are safe. Who would be held accountable if a child is killed or seriously injured trying to get to or from school?

You are told that the school needs to expand to accommodate population growth in north west Bath, but this claim is not backed up by data. There is no evidence of a sustained baby boom or future growth in resident population for the north west area of Bath, and there is no explicit evidence given for a future need for extra pupil places at WASPS, beyond the popularity of the school. In the School Plan data, it is shown that demand peaked in 2010-2012, and resident population in north west Bath now levelling out. In spite of this, pupil places are proposed to expand by 13%. Where is the evidence to demonstrate the local need to expand this school?

As we said, WASPS is an outstanding school with a fantastic reputation and understandably parents from across the City want their children to come here. We met the School Governors recently, and one of them commented that if a parent of a child living in Timbuktu applied to come to the school and it had a place for them, they would be obliged to accept them. How can it be sustainable and safe to encourage parents to drive across the City past their local school to come to WASPS?

We would like to thank the Cabinet Member and Officers for listening to our concerns.

West of England Partnership Scrutiny Commission Wed 5 March

West of England Partnership Board Thurs 13 March

Bristol City Council Transport Committee Wed 19 March

Bristol City Council Full Council Tues 18 March

South Gloucestershire Council Full Council Wed 19 March

South Gloucestershire Council Transport Scrutiny Wed 26 March

BaNES Transport Committee next meeting

The South West Rail Plan— an Opportunity for the West

In view of the continuing dislocation of the mail rail artery to the South West of England, we need to know if the WEP and the Bristol Mayor are directly involved in pushing the Secretary of State and the Department for Transport along with the Prime Minister for the speedy reopening of the railway between Bridgwater and Penzance, without long-term line speed restrictions or other kinds of austerity planning. Are WEP working with the South West Councils, Cornwall LEP, Dorset and Somerset LEP, the Heart of the West LEP, Network Rail and the train operating companies as part of the South West Peninsula Rail Task Force?

We would also like to know how active the WEP have been in promoting the current and future infrastructure requirements of the local rail network as part of the plans for resilience and redesigning of the route with the South West Peninsula Rail Task Force. We need to ensure that suitable turnbacks, signalling options, track and station layout are included to ensure the speedy and straightforward implementation of the MetroWest plans.

Whilst, on the face of it, the majority of the Task Force's brief lies outside the WEP boundaries, the rebuilding of this line is nonetheless of vital and pressing concern to the economy of the local area, both in terms of the mainline access and the tourism which this generates, and of local rail

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services across the Bristol conurbation which provides access to employment and social mobility.

There are significant issues about planning the MetroWest project into the redesign of the South West Mainline as track layout and signalling systems cannot be easily adapted once the plans are approved by the Secretary of State.

This may well be the best opportunity the WEP and the Mayor will get to see electrification extended to Weston, Taunton, Exeter and Plymouth, with the obvious implications for local services in the future, such as an electrified operation between Taunton and Swindon or Weston-super-Mare to Bristol Parkway. Indeed, electrification of the route between Parkway and Gloucester/Cheltenham is already built into the 2019-2024 Network Rail Control Period.

To date, there has not been the same kind of impetus to electrify the local rail network in the Bristol travel-to-work area as we have seen in the South Wales Valley Lines. This is an example of how the West and the South West Region are not being taken seriously in terms of major infrastructure development and in building a coherent local transport network. Ironically the current crisis may provide a little leverage to help redress this apparently endemic imbalance.

Electrification of local services between Portishead, Taunton, Weston-super-Mare, Severn Beach, Henbury, Gloucester/Cheltenham, Yate,

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Bath, Westbury, Frome, Warminster and Bristol, along with the rest of the MetroWest project would bring enormous economic benefit to the Greater Bristol area. The infrastructure project itself would create a significant employment boost, and the provision of a fast, efficient local rail network would not only improve journey to work times and the journey to work experience, but would of course attract new investment by employers to whom the quality and scope of local commuter access is often a deciding factor.

If the DfT and the Secretary of State are making a decision about the potential electrification of the South West Mainline as a core element in the upgrade, this will mean that the issue of electrified rolling stock for local services will certainly need to be addressed and it is very important that WEP and the Mayor are prepared for this eventuality. The local services on the Swindon—Bath—Bristol—Newport—Cardiff route are already being proposed for electrified operation using cascaded 319 units from ThamesLink. This will have implications for Chippenham, Corsham, Bathampton, Bath, Oldfield Park, Saltford, Keynsham, Bristol Temple Meads, Lawrence Hill, Stapleton Road, Ashley Hill, Horfield, Filton Abbey Wood, Patchway and Pilning stations in terms of remodelling the platforms and other facilities to meet the requirements of electrified stock.

As a final caveat, WEP and the Mayor need to be very clear that funding for restoration and remodelling of rail services to the South West must not be done at the expense of the existing plans for MetroWest and other aspects of the Greater Bristol rail network. We need to be very vigilant

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that funding for these measures involves new money and not diverted capital from currently programmed projects within the region.

David Redgewell

South West Transport Network – Tel 07814 794953