

BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET COUNCIL

MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING

Thursday, 8th May, 2014

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

Apologies for absence: **Councillors** Douglas Deacon, Nathan Hartley and June Player

1 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

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

2 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN 2014/15

It was proposed by Councillor Tim Warren, seconded by Councillor Sarah Bevan and supported by Councillors Dave Laming and John Bull and

RESOLVED that Councillor Martin Veal be elected Chairman of the Council for the year 2014/15.

Councillor Veal made and signed his Declaration of Acceptance of Office and received the chain of office from Councillor Neil Butters and presented the consort's badge to his wife, Sarah.

Councillor Veal then addressed the Council.

FROM THIS STAGE OF THE PROCEEDINGS, COUNCILLOR MARTIN VEAL, AS CHAIRMAN, PRESIDED AT THE MEETING.

3 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN 2014/15

It was proposed by Councillor Katie Hall, seconded by Councillor Patrick Anketell-Jones and supported by Councillors Dave Laming and John Bull and

RESOLVED that Councillor Ian Gilchrist be elected Vice-Chairman for the Council year 2014/15.

Councillor Gilchrist made and signed his Declaration of Acceptance of Office, received the chain of office from Councillor Veal and thanked the Council for his appointment.

4 MINUTES - 18TH FEBRUARY 2014

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

RESOLVED that the minutes of 18th February 2014 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

5 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

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

Councillor Martin Veal presented Councillor Neil Butters with his past Chairman's badge. Councillor Butters then presented the past Chairman's Consort's badge to his wife, Charlotte.

It was proposed by Councillor Paul Crossley, seconded by Councillor Tim Warren and supported by Councillors Dave Laming and John Bull and

RESOLVED that the Council places on record its appreciation of the services performed by Councillor Neil Butters in the office of Chairman of the Council for 2013/14.

Councillor Butters addressed the Council and, in so doing, thanked Members and officers for their support during his year in office. He outlined some of the highlights of his year, made reference to the charities he would continue to support and paid tribute to the support which he had received from Councillor Martin Veal in his role as Vice Chairman over the previous Council year. He wished him well for his term of office as Chairman. Councillor Butters also thanked his wife Charlotte for her support throughout his year as Chairman.

The Chairman then asked the Council to stand in silence as a mark of respect following the deaths of Councillor Gabriel Batt, former deputy Mayor of Bath Sheila Sheppard, former Bath City Councillor Brian Roper and former Bath City Councillor and Group Leader Tony Clark.

7 REPORT OF CHIEF OFFICER URGENT DECISION

The Council noted the urgent decision which had been taken by the Chief Executive since the last meeting of Council to approve amendments to the Public Rights of Way delegation scheme to include new statutory duties relating to landowner deposits. The updated scheme was contained within Appendix 2 to the annual business report.

This decision was deemed as urgent and was taken following consultation with Political Group Leaders, Strategic and Divisional Directors and the Monitoring Officer, in accordance with constitutional rule Part 4G, rule 3.

8 APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES/PANELS ETC AND OTHER ANNUAL BUSINESS

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

RESOLVED to

1. Approve the structure for non-executive and regulatory decision making and Policy Development & Scrutiny working (set out in its current form in appendix 2 to the report);
2. Accordingly, appoint those bodies with membership, terms of reference and delegated powers as set out in the Constitution;
3. Note that the operation of the Parishes Liaison meeting (Terms of Reference attached as part of Appendix 2) will be reviewed if the outcome of the review of the Connecting Communities pilot project recommends rolling the programme out to other communities;
4. Approve the allocation of seats on those Committees and Panels (such seats to be filled in accordance with the nominations made by the political groups);
5. Note the current arrangements for chairing committees and panels (as set out in Appendix 1 to the report) and defer until the July Council meeting the review of such allocations;
6. Authorise the Monitoring Officer to fill any casual vacancies in membership of all the bodies constituted and vacancy in the office of Chair of such bodies in accordance with the wishes of the political groups;
7. Determine the bodies on which co-opted members are to have seats as either voting or non-voting members and appoint such members accordingly (as set out in Appendix 1 to the report);
8. Authorise the Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Chairs of the Policy Development & Scrutiny Panels, to constitute and support any required Panel joint working as outlined in section 7 of the report;
9. Authorise the Monitoring Officer, in consultation with Group Leaders, to make appointments on such outside bodies as are for the Council (rather than Cabinet) to fill;
10. Note the arrangements for the conduct of Cabinet business;

11. Note the calendar of meeting dates that has been prepared up to May 2015 which is available on the Council's website;
12. Note the changes that will be required to the Constitution with regard to voting at budget meetings, and filming at meetings, as set out in section 10 of the report;
13. Authorise the Monitoring Officer to make and publicise any amendment to the Council's Constitution required, or take any other necessary action, as a result of decisions taken at this meeting on this and other reports within the agenda, or otherwise as required by law;
14. Note that a formal review of political balance will take place at the July meeting; and
15. Agree that a cross-party working group (with a membership proportionate to the make-up of the Council) be established to consider, with officer support, options to strengthen community representation and civic governance within Bath, and to report back on these options, including a preferred option (with proposed Terms of Reference) to the July Council meeting, or if this is not possible than no later than the September Council meeting, for consideration.

[Note - the underlined wording in resolution 15 above was moved as an amendment by Councillor Ben Stevens, seconded by Councillor Tim Warren, and then accepted by the mover and seconder of the motion.]

9 QUESTIONS, STATEMENTS, PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

Statements were made by the following people;

- David Redgewell made a statement urging delivery of the Bath Transport Strategy and expressing concern about the removal of the Bus Gate which he said had taken place with no consultation. He described the city as being gridlocked – an unsustainable situation which needed addressing. A copy of the statement has been placed on the Council's Minute book and is attached electronically to the minutes. The statement was referred to the Cabinet Member for Transport.
- Lesley Mansell, Chair of Radstock Town Council, made a statement regarding the hydrotherapy pool at the Connections Centre, Writhlington, Radstock. She called on the Council to take responsibility for the refurbishment of this valuable facility following its closure by Sirona Care and Health on health and safety grounds. In response to a question from Councillor Simon Allen asking if Ms Mansell was aware that he had met the Chief Executive of Sirona on site the previous day and had been told the nearest pool offering a similar service was 2.5 miles away. Ms Mansell responded that she hadn't known about the meeting but the pool to which Councillor Allen referred was fully booked. In response to a question from Councillor Eleanor Jackson enquiring whether

the pool could be used not only for those with a severe disability but also for the wider community with conditions such as arthritis, Ms Mansell responded that it would be a great idea as the pool was only used during the day and it would make sense to open it up more widely. The full statement can be viewed on the Council's Minute book and is attached electronically to the minutes. The statement was referred to the Cabinet Member for Wellbeing.

The meeting ended at 7.40 pm

Chairman

Date Confirmed and Signed

Prepared by Democratic Services

This page is intentionally left blank

Transport Infrastructure for Rail and Bus Metros and Public Involvement in the Planning Process

We would like to cite a number of examples in the city region where passenger groups and stakeholders have not been consulted about the decision processes in transport planning and bus routing. An obvious example of this is Dorchester Street in Bath where the busgate was summarily removed and the first that stakeholders knew about the decision was when they heard about it on the BBC local news. This was despite publication of the Bath Transport Strategy which talks about bus priority measures and interchanges, as well as far greater use of bus transport in Bath, investment in a modern bus fleet with wifi and realtime information, and integration between bus and rail at Bath Spa, with a new station and Park and Ride at Bathampton. Sadly the documents fail to mention the proposed MetroWest stations at Saltford and Corsham, despite the fact that BaNES has endorsed these at Cabinet.

Dorchester Street was always shown as a bus/rail interchange, not as a through route for cars. The volt-face on this plan has created a sense of disillusion and disengagement amongst public transport users.

South West Transport Network **Statement** for

South Gloucestershire PTC on 7 May and next Full Council

BaNES Full Council on 8 May

BaNES Cabinet on 14 May

BaNES PTSE on 19 May

BaNES Major Projects at end of May

Bristol City Council next Cabinet and Full Council (probably in June)

The Avon Ring Road/M32 junction cycleway scheme seems to have disintegrated cycling and public transport use in a way that is contrary to the planning principles of encouraging greater use of both buses and bike routes. More needs to be done to integrate walking, cycling and disabled access to the bus network here, particularly in view of the MetroBus proposals which fall far short of any kind of integrated strategy. We will be making more detailed comments on this in response to the published planning application.

The reconfiguration of the local bus network in support of the new Southmead Hospital development has brought many benefits to bus users across the Greater Bristol and Bath city region. However, there have also been rail and bus network casualties arising directly and indirectly from the changes. In particular, the loss of bus services from Filton Abbey Wood rail station (other than at peak times) has isolated the hospital from its most obvious railhead. The alternative bus (the rerouted 501/502) Bristol Parkway to Westbury, Shirehampton and Avonmouth sails past Filton Abbey Wood without stopping (just as it does in Filton town centre). This makes disabled access very difficult (particularly bearing in mind the lack of disabled taxi services from Bristol Parkway station).

As an aside, attention needs to be drawn to the outdated and incorrect bus timetables, service numbers and map plans around Southmead, Bristol Parkway (and all the other stations across Greater Bristol), Cribbs Causeway, the UWE bus station and Cossham Hospital. These need to be updated urgently to reflect the new routes and service patterns.

South West Transport Network **Statement** for

South Gloucestershire PTC on 7 May and next Full Council

BaNES Full Council on 8 May

BaNES Cabinet on 14 May

BaNES PTSE on 19 May

BaNES Major Projects at end of May

Bristol City Council next Cabinet and Full Council (probably in June)

Another major casualty has been the loss of the 25 route through St Pauls to Lockleaze and Horfield via the Eastgate Interchange. Whilst we accept that there are plans to reinstate this service over the Romney Avenue bus link, we believe that this example disjointed transport planning has resulted in people losing their bus service (on however temporary a basis, but with the inevitable consequence that passengers seek other means of transport). The other part of the route provided important bus links from St Pauls and Montpelier to Bedminster, Southville and Ashton Gate (and onwards) which has now been cut off, leaving only an inconvenient change in the city centre for any cross-town travel (without a good weatherproof interchange or through ticketing).

It would appear that a small minority of vociferous residents in both Romney Avenue and Creswicke have so far defeated the will of public transport passenger groups such as TfGB, South West Transport Network and Rail Futures as well as the bus operators to develop a bus-only link between the city and the north fringe involving UWE, the railway stations and Southmead Hospital.

There is also a question about the future of Ikea at Eastgate. Congestion and the lack of a proper bus and coach interchange here is hampering retail development and investment. Just like at Creswicke, there is also a need for road remodelling at Eastgate to facilitate a proper and functional interchange which should also include the MetroBus project (currently unconnected from Eastgate).

South West Transport Network **Statement** for

South Gloucestershire PTC on 7 May and next Full Council

BaNES Full Council on 8 May

BaNES Cabinet on 14 May

BaNES PTSE on 19 May

BaNES Major Projects at end of May

Bristol City Council next Cabinet and Full Council (probably in June)

At Weston-super-Mare there needs to be better intermodal integration at the railway station particularly with links to the Airport, Cheddar, Wells and Clevedon.

We hope the lessons learned from the Southmead reorganisation will be picked up in the consultation paper on bus service regulation and competition and will result in closer more joined up co-operation between the local authorities, the bus industry and the health authorities.

David Redgewell

South West Transport Network – Tel 07814 794953

B&NES Council 8th May 2014

Connections Centre Writhlington, Radstock – Hydrotherapy pool statement

Chairman - councillors

Speaking today to ask you all to carefully consider the situation regarding the pool at the Connections Building, Writhlington in Radstock and that you support this call to refurbish it.

The building is owned by B&NES and leased to Sirona Care and Health and is used as a centre for disabled people, mainly with learning disabilities and Down's syndrome.

Until January 2013 hydrotherapy sessions were offered to people with very high physical mobility needs as a method of creating supported movement of limbs. With fantastic results.

It was available to all disabled people across North East Somerset. This affects disabled people in many of your wards. People who can't necessarily stand up for themselves at meetings like this.

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

The next nearest facility is in the RUH. Service users now have to travel, accompanied by a physiotherapist and support staff, which is not an efficient use of time or resources as it adds to the cost.

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

When I raised this at cabinet I was told that this service had not been provided by B&NES – so a further question has to be - why not?

I am told that a meeting is to look at this - but I am also told that the facility will remain closed, irrespective. Yet there was no consultation with service users or potential users. This is in contravention of the parish charter and in fact the new Connecting Communities initiative. There is also no Equality Impact Assessment of this decision when there is a clear impact on disabled people.

There is a huge risk here as the law states, quite clearly that services should not be refused to disabled people. But that is what seems to be happening.

B&NES could be looking at costs in excess of £500k if a legal case is taken for failure to provide a service.

Surely, after waiting nearly 18 months the refurbishment can be agreed and the service can be commissioned?

I am very concerned that once again a service is being removed irrespective of the cost either economically or socially. No consideration is being given to the cost of leaving it unused. This is a huge waste of resources. What a shame to let this go – another service lost in Radstock. Another facility thrown away – Is that because it is not based in Bath?

Use of this service could be increased especially if it is opened up to other people in the community, who would welcome the use of a hydrotherapy pool.

Cllr Crossley said at a meeting last night that he was most proud of the support B&NES has given to Threeways School for disabled children. Well I am asking you all now to support the call to refurbish and upgrade the pool - so you can all be proud of providing a much needed service to adult disabled people. Who don't want charity – they want services.

Lesley Mansell

Chair Radstock Town Council

8th May 2014