

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
Last year the Council signed up to the Armed Forces Covenant. How has our support for this translated into reality?		
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 ongoing 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

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.

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

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.

M 29

Question from:

Councillor Charles Gerrish

What was the final outturn surplus generated by Heritage Services?

Answer from:

Councillor Ben Stevens

The final figures have not yet been completed, but the expectation is that once finalised the outturn surplus will total circa £5 million.

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

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)

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

I refer to my response to question M03 from Councillor Eleanor Jackson

P 04

Question from:

Lesley Mansell (Chair, Radstock TC)

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

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.