

APPENDIX 2

Comments received on 'Options to strengthen community representation and civic governance in Bath'

56 responses have been received at 5pm on 26th August 2014 when the request for views closed. There are some questions that were not answered on all responses therefore each question has a different number of returns.

1. Of the three options set out above, which is your preferred option?

No Change	9
A "Voice for Bath" committee (to include co-opted stakeholders as well as B&NES elected members)	11
The parishing of Bath - either as a single parish for the City or multiple parishes for different parts of the City	30
No Response	6

2.1 For the “Voice for Bath” committee option, what should be its role and functions?"

1.	It should promote and review consultations on any topic that it votes upon to review.
2.	it shouldn't have any.
3.	This committee already exists in terms of the Charter Trustees.
4.	To recruit and resource under-represented groupings of people in the city such as young people, people on benefits, ethnic minorities so that the communities that make a city have a voice and are catered for.
5.	No role
6.	Largely the same powers as a parish, with those responsibilities delegated down by the Council Leader. Nothing strategic.
7.	Co-opted people are unelected and unaccountable and I think this option is a very bad idea. I'm certain that there are a few interested individuals who would be very keen to be involved in directing council for their own personal ends and this would allow them to do so entirely undemocratically.
8.	<p>Of the three options set out in the Interim Report (July 2014), my preferred option, as a resident and business owner, is Option C. To maintain the status quo by making no change (Option A) is to ignore an evident problem. While Option B is one solution to Bath’s lack of city-specific community representation and civic governance, it is a short-term easy ‘fix’ that adds a layer of ‘sticking plaster’ governance rather than addressing a fundamental Structural problem.</p> <p>Undoubtedly, Option C poses challenges to local residents, businesses and B&NES Council elected members and officers. But it also offers an opportunity to introduce an arrangement for Bath that will have lasting and beneficial effects on local democracy and prosperity. A Community Governance Review is a lengthy process that may take several years to complete and involve financial costs to B&NES Council tax-payers. Nonetheless, it’s the right choice for strengthening local representation and governance for future generations of Bath citizens.</p> <p>Bearing in mind current local elected representation in the B&NES Council area (65 elected councillors for 37 wards, and 48 directly elected parish and town councils, 3 parish meetings, plus an elected Member of Parliament), we should build on this democratic system. The 32 City of Bath Charter Trustees and civic Mayor were introduced as a temporary measure during Bath’s transition from borough council to B&NES unitary authority. Option C will resolve a consequent ‘democratic deficit’ and Bath’s lack of parity with other</p>

	<p>parishes and towns in the B&NES area. That is, abolish the anachronistic and mostly ceremonial Charter of Trustees group and, through a Community Governance Review, set up a directly elected, single City of Bath parish council.</p> <p>Option B ignores local people's dissatisfaction with the Charter of Trustees group and a ceremonial Mayor. Importantly, Option B if chosen would miss a timely opportunity to transform the city of Bath's political position vis-à-vis B&NES Council and wider West of England region. Many towns and cities across England are radically reforming their governance structures to take advantage of devolved powers introduced under the Localism Act (2012) and Community Infrastructure Levy. In Bath, we need the official status and coherence of a single parish council to use such powers - for influencing service delivery decisions, prioritising developments, and attracting inward investment. Furthermore, we need a strong parish council leader/ Mayor of Bath to promote the West of England's cultural capital, the economic powerhouse of B&NES and second most economically prosperous city in the West of England Local Enterprise Partnership, and a centre of world-renowned higher education research and learning. We do not need the 'talking shop' proposed in Option B's 'Voice of Bath' committee.</p> <p>In terms of Option C's value for money, abolition of the Charter of Trustees would release tax monies for Bath's parish council and more proactive mayoral activities. By contrast, Option B is a waste of tax-payers money because it proposes to maintain the Charter of Trustees and Mayor costs as well as those of a purely advisory 'Voice of Bath' committee."</p>
9.	None
10.	<p>MISSION AND ROLE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Champion the interests of the City of Bath by taking leadership of and accountability for addressing issues that are vital to the City • Lead the City of Bath towards its potential to be the 'leading micro city' • A virtual 'Bath City Council' <p>LEADERSHIP SUBCOMMITTEES: Urban matters crucial to Bath as a city Potential portfolios:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vision for Bath (framework policy document updated periodically) • Economic Development (Development and delivery of Bath Economic Strategy, a major component of the B&NES Economic Strategy) • Placemaking (Spatial planning, delivery of Bath Enterprise Area Masterplan, CIL within Bath, housing policy, commercial property portfolio management) • Transport (Development and delivery of Bath Transport Strategy and Plan) • Public Realm (Delivery of Public Realm and Movement Strategy, WHS Management Plan, Heritage Asset management)

	<p>ISSUES THAT SHOULD NOT BE ADDRESSED BY THE BATH COMMITTEE: Matters that apply equally throughout B&NES Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statutory and other council services • Connecting Communities • Local ward issues and initiatives <p>OPERATING PRINCIPLES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Plan with explicit Objectives and end of year Report • Subcommittee Chairs should become champions for, experts in and masters of their briefs • Strive to preclude party political behaviour • As members, all have a duty to act in the interests of the Bath Committee rather than their local wards or sponsor organisations • Every member is given at least one subcommittee job to do and is expected to do it • Expertise and resources from outside the council to be actively used where applicable <p>FUNDING:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allocation of current budgets to Subcommittees as applicable • Bath Committee to apply and compete for budget allocations in future budgets • Private sector funding participation to be actively developed where applicable"
11.	<p>"It should be consulted on all decisions which affect the city of Bath. Ideally, it should be a statutory consultee, but if it is not possible to make the requirement statutory, there should be a formal declaration of all political and independent groups in B&NES that they will work in this sense.</p>
12.	<p>The Committee should have particular oversight of transport, environmental and World Heritage Site issues in Bath.</p> <p>The committee should draw up a Vision for Bath, taking account of the views of stakeholders expressed through the Bath City Conference and other discussion fora. The Vision should be updated every 2-3 years, ie not on the same timetable as Council elections. The Vision should then guide the Committee's views and decisions."</p> <p>Lead on issues of key importance to the City - economic development in line with the BANES economic strategy., the quality of city management, standards of cleanliness, ease of movement, public spaces etc, to reflect WH designation, Bath city's most valuable asset; transport investment and traffic management to tackle congestion and air pollution,</p>
13.	<p>To address city of Bath specific issues and pursue solutions</p>

14.	To be responsible at first instance for matters affecting only the City of Bath (as opposed to subjects across B&NES such as education). The Committee should have devolved responsibility, including financial authority, for matters such as the WHS Management Plan, Bath aspects of the Placemaking Plan, the Bath Public Realm and Movement Strategy, the Bath Transport Strategy, the Bath Air Quality Action Plan, and the Enterprise Area. Without real responsibility this would be a pointless talking shop.
15.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Champion the interests of and the economic development of Bath. 2. Elect their own Committee Chair/Leader 3. Define the long term Vision for Bath 4. Set out an Economic Development Plan for Bath 5. Set out a Transport Strategy and Plan for Bath 6. Set out a Public Realm Strategy and Plan for Bath 7. Bid for resources to support the implementation of the above Plans
16.	To only include BathNES Councillors; to spend money on projects equivalent to a parish council.
17.	Same as any Parish or Town Council, I see no reason for the cost of a meeting to be so high, The members will act in the same way as Parish councils and not claim expenses , this is key to stopping Gravy train councillors sitting on committees to claim expenses from no or little involvement.
18.	Why should Bath be treated differently to the rest of BANES residents, have parish councils and then the people of Bath will be paying their way rather than taking money from the rest of us.
19.	I don't like this idea at all; we all pay a lot to B&NES & it should be used to pay directly for services and not meetings for meetings' sake! This is even worse if we as ratepayers from the rest of NE Somerset have to pay for these meetings relating to changes specific to Bath out of our general community tax contributions!
20.	It should have delegated powers of all functions which, applying the principle of subsidiarity, it is appropriate to delegate.
21.	To consider and decide on matters which relate to the City of Bath: proposals for re-routing traffic away from the centre, parking, developing the river Avon as an amenity, development of the Rec.
22.	Co-optees: The "Voice for Bath" option evidently envisages that non-elected persons would be co-opted to the committee. I have doubts whether that would be satisfactory. The documentation explains that they would not have power to vote on decisions other than on tourism promotion, which is to some extent reassuring, but not entirely so. It has been said to me that provided a majority of the committee are elected then the requirements of democratic accountability will be satisfied, but I think that this argument does not take account of the nature of adversarial party politics, especially in an

	<p>authority as nicely balanced between two parties as B&NES. I acknowledge that the officers of residents' associations are themselves technically elected; but in my observation such elections are rarely contested, the problem being more one of finding people willing to serve, and there is little external scrutiny of the processes; moreover, residents' associations collectively only cover a part of the City, and severally only a street or two. Although the political parties may themselves find it hard from time to time to field candidates for B&NES councillor roles, it does seem to me that their democratic credentials are much better than those of residents' associations' representatives. If a new group responsible for the city of Bath is to have power to make decisions, or even to exert significant influence over them, I would feel much more comfortable if it was subject to more robust governance requirements as a parish council. The CIL rules only reinforce this feeling.</p>
23.	<p>To provide a forum for debate in Bath and manage the CIL finances when they become available</p>
24.	<p>In the absence of other such Committees in other Unitary Authorities (lack of any real public belief in a democratic deficit in present arrangements?) the only model to base a Bath Committee upon is that of Winchester. Thus I would suggest that any such Committee should be based upon the Winchester model and my own views are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A Bath Committee cannot be and should not purport to be a Council for Bath. Its role would be to be a voice piece for the many particular interests of the City, to inform the Council and Cabinet Members (with whom final decisions must rest) in their forming strategy and setting budgets. 2. As far as legally permitted, the Council and its Cabinet members should delegate such powers as they think fit to the Committee, including spending within already-set budgets, in particular the CIL funds allocated to the City area. 3. To arrange public-consultation exercises and meetings and to formulate recommendations in advance of budget-setting to Council. 4. To act as a local sounding-board to convey to the Council the views and opinions of the population of the City on actions already taken or proposed. 5. In view of the closeness of both a General and Local Elections, either or both of which could bring profound changes, I do not consider it proper to engage in such a change in the local government arrangements at the present time, even as an experiment. The time and money spent on such a venture could well be wasted because of the differing views of those in office within 12 months.
25.	<p>To champion the interests of the city of Bath in BANES. Bath must be recognised and supported as the economic engine for the BANES unitary authority.</p> <p>To ensure the needs of Bath to develop as a thriving city are properly identified, developed, represented and implemented.</p> <p>Functional areas should include: trade and commerce, tourism, social and housing, transport, leisure.</p> <p>Bath must avoid at all costs being subsumed into a "greater Bristol" structure.</p>

26.	It is clear that in the proposed Voice for Bath option committee members would have a conflict of interest because as B&NES councillors they are involved in B&NES governance and B&NES decision-making processes. The role and functions of any body set up should be to represent the residents of Bath in the way parish councils in parts of B&NES outside Bath represent their constituents, most importantly in circumstances where the interests of the people of Bath are not the same as those of B&NES council and often not aligned with those of the B&NES area as a whole, so in the Voice for Bath option such a proper independent representation role and functions are absent.
27.	It shouldn't have one.
28.	The primary aim should be the protection of the World Heritage Site because the entire City of Bath is a WHS. It is regrettable that even when the UNESCO World Heritage Committee advised B&NES of what it was doing wrong, that advice has been ignored by all political parties. It follows therefore that the Voice for Bath should be able to be uninfluenced by political pressure.
29.	To have influence over issues related to Bath itself on behalf of the residents and, where necessary, at odds with the B&NES council. The proposal for an essentially appointed committee would not achieve this.

2.2 Which stakeholders should be co-opted onto the "Voice for Bath" committee option?"

1.	Those who can provide expert advice to support the Council
2.	They should all be elected.
3.	None
4.	Those who don't currently have a voice.
5.	None. The danger with co-opting is that it becomes undemocratic and we end up with the likes of FOBRA having a disproportionate voice compared to their actual constituency. FOBRA for example claims to represent residents but has a mainly central focused membership which is itself self-selecting as its unlikely for example that the young residents of say Abbey ward who enjoy going out clubbing feel welcome within the residents association seeking to clamp down on night time noise.
6.	Elect

7.	Business Community, Residents Associations, Schools, Faith Groups.
8.	There is already the opportunity to ask for outside individuals to inform council on items of their interest or expertise but not to be involved in voting or co-opted permanently. This is a poor idea.
9.	None
10.	<p>SELECTION CRITERIA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-optee selection should be based on relevant expertise and independence from special interests rather than on stakeholder representation • Voters are already represented democratically by their ward councillors • Other stakeholders inherently have special interests and are able to pursue their special interests through lobbying • Potentially useful areas of expertise for co-optees: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Leadership ➤ Economic Development ➤ Urban design and planning ➤ Urban Transport ➤ Finance and capital raising ➤ Property development ➤ Project management ➤ Heritage management ➤ Architecture ➤ Higher education
11.	I am not convinced that stakeholders should be co-opted. But if they are, the principal stakeholder should be the residents of Bath, nominated through FoBRA.
12.	Stakeholders who can bring expertise and dedication to the issues identified above; not those who will simply pursue special interests. Expertise of particular importance would include economic development based on a knowledge economy, the universities, and cutting edge technologies, as reflected in the West of England LEP; City design for a WH site: finance raising in a period of austerity to support public services; Urban transport.
13.	Residents, mainly if not exclusively through FOBRA, whose members have interest, experience and expertise in many of the areas listed above; the Chamber of Commerce.
14.	<p>Representatives of the following:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. City Chamber of Commerce 2. The BID 3. The Small Business Association 4. FOBRA

	5. The Universities
15.	None
16.	Councillors of the wards included.
17.	The committee should be made up of one representative from new Bath parishes plus all Councillors of BANES that are elected in Bath.
18.	Local Residents' Associations, FOBRA
19.	No.Councillors are the elected representatives, must be responsible for their actions/decisions/votes and accountable back to the electorate.
20.	The option to co-opt stakeholders is meaningless to the extent that real local representatives (i.e. residents) are co-opted because it is clear from the note on voting rights they would have no effective power to vote except in rare circumstances where in any event it will be meaningless. If the unsatisfactory Voice for Bath option is adopted, those co-opted must not have vested interests, and in particular it is vital that those co-opted do not have interests in the development or retail sectors but are truly representative of residents.
21.	If it must exist then only residents of Bath on the electoral roll.
22.	The World heritage Manager should lead the group which should be visibly a non-party organisation, so comprised of Heritage groups and all Independent Councillors. It should not be a platform to further business interests.
23.	Representatives of genuine local residents/voters only.

2.3 Should the stakeholders have voting rights for the “Voice for Bath” committee option?"

1.	No.
2.	No.
3.	No, don't be ridiculous.
4.	Absolutely
5.	None elected members only
6.	No, this is consultive, but they shouldn't vote if they haven't been elected.
7.	Absolutely undermines the democracy. To give unelected individuals the chance of voting is appalling and I wonder if you would leave yourselves open to further challenges on that basis.
8.	No.
9.	Yes
10.	Democratic legitimacy would not be lost, as elected ward councillors would comprise the vast majority of members in any case.
11.	Co-optee members would have more 'soft' authority and effectiveness within the Bath Committee if they had votes rather than being mere 'advisors'"
12.	No. The Committee will have more authority if only elected members can vote.
13.	Yes, to recognise their important contribution and on the basis that they would always be a small minority
14.	No.
15.	Ideally yes, although that might be difficult where taxpayers money was being committed.
16.	Yes -If stakeholders do not have voting rights the Committee is likely to be seen as 2 camps, instead of being a body united in championing the interests of the City
17.	No.
18.	No.

19.	All committee members should have voting rights.
20.	Yes.
21.	<p>Very difficult to specify, as all "stakeholders" would of necessity represent only a narrow group of people and could not claim to represent a full sector of the population of the City (no democratic mandate). The number of such groups is so large that inevitably not all could be included and friction might ensue.</p> <p>Established groups, such as those covering Commerce and Tourism would be obvious choices, as would students and disabled persons. Additionally, representatives of local groups should be included when matters relating to a particular area are considered.</p>
22.	All of them - it should be a main part of their purpose.
23.	Only if they are genuinely local residents - not if they are co-opted as representing businesses or other organisations.
24.	No
25.	It should certainly have lobbying rights and a right of access to discuss with policy makers. Unless it has a right of veto or a casting vote, voting rights would merely be window dressing, to be outvoted if they take what is considered to be an inconvenient stance, so I see little value in voting rights.
26.	Yes if - representatives of genuine local residents/voters only.

2.4 How many of the 32 Bath elected members of Bath & North East Somerset should serve on the "Voice for Bath" committee?"

1.	No more than 16
2.	Preferably none
3.	None, they sit on charter Trustees and Bath&NES already
4.	They all already sit on it at the Charter Trustees meetings.
5.	A small amount, they already are in a position to affect change. They should be outnumbered by stakeholders to ensure that those people are getting what they want and the real voice of Bath is dominant rather than a council dictated one.
6.	If it exists then all of them.
7.	14
8.	Half. 1 from each ward, but maintaining political proportionality. With quorum being 2/3 of that number.
9.	One from each ward
10.	All of them and no one else.
11.	None
12.	<p>ALL OF THEM: Otherwise, constituents of any Bath ward that is not represented from time to time could feel disenfranchised, thus defeating the whole purpose of the initiative. The real work of the Bath Committee should be conducted through its subcommittees, each of which should have easily manageable numbers of members. The Bath Committee itself should convene only to receive reports and to consider initiatives from its subcommittees." Ideally all Bath Councillors should serve. But it may be practical to have a committee with fewer than 32 members, in which case only one elected member per B&NES ward should serve.</p>
13.	All - so that every part of the City is represented.
14.	<p>One per ward All of them. We cannot afford 'haves' and 'have-nots', a situation which would be highly divisive.</p>
15.	All of them. We cannot afford 'haves' and 'have-nots', a situation which would

	be highly divisive.
16.	<p>All of them</p> <p>For the Committee to be effective it will need to agree to establish sub committees with limited memberships to work on the responsibilities listed</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Champion the interests of and the economic development of Bath. 2. Elect their own Committee Chair/Leader 3. Define the long term Vision for Bath 4. Set out an Economic Development Plan for Bath 5. Set out a Transport Strategy and Plan for Bath 6. Set out a Public Realm Strategy and Plan for Bath 7. Bid for resources to support the implementation of the above Plans
17.	32.
18.	None, They only be co-opted and the committee made up of newly elected non-political members
19.	The committee should be made up of one representative from new Bath parishes plus all Councillors of BAENS that are elected in Bath.
20.	All those representing the City of Bath and its immediate surroundings.
21.	In consultative matters, stakeholders should have a vote. In decisions, particularly involving finance, only elected members should vote. The legal position is set out in the Appendix.
22.	16, which is one for each Bath Ward. Co-opted members of the Committee, appropriate to the matters under discussion...say 8 regulars plus 4 when particular local matters are considered. Sub-Committees to be kept to a minimum to reduce time taken to arrive at recommendations and decisions.
23.	None - as already indicated above it is inappropriate for any elected member of B&NES to serve on a Voice for Bath committee as they would have a conflict of interests.
24.	None.
25.	Less than half of the total Voice of Bath membership. Councillors should not be able to control by weight of numbers the output from the committee.
26.	None.

3.1 Should consideration be given to multiple parishes for Bath or a single parish (for Bath as a whole?)

Multiple	19
Single	21
No Response	16

3.2 If there were to be multiple parishes, how should Bath be parished?

1.	Not keen on the parish option but would prefer to see Bath's interests looked after as a whole rather than split up.
2.	<p>Consultation in Bath is a travesty. When did we have a consultation on the development of the markets or the vaults below?</p> <p>Your consultations for traffic and transport were so poorly advertised, I heard through a BBC Bristol interviewer. Your consultation form did not even give the closing date for the receipt of the completed forms.</p> <p>You really need an officer and a councillor with executive power relating to responsibility for consultation.</p>
3.	Don't really care but parishing is only way to make it work.
4.	Already exists in the form of the Charter Trustees who raise a precept.
5.	<p>We need greater representation of views and more detailed. local consultation and involvement.</p> <p>At present there is little or no representation of local residents in many areas but particularly in the city central areas. i.e Only one or two councillors actually live in the city.</p>
6.	<p>Whilst I wouldn't go as far as to recommend the use of the old church parishes there are clear disparities between different areas of the city. The perception at present is that money is spent in LibDem controlled wards and not in Conservative controlled wards - or that more is currently spent on infrastructure south of the river than in the north. (examples being the cycle track at Odd Down, further subsidy on the sports centre, Rossiter Road scheme, park work in Oldfield Park etc - compared to virtually nothing north of the river (closed toilets in Weston and Larkhall). Maybe 2 parishes - one for north of the river and one for the south with council discretionary spending monitored across the two parishes to ensure reasonable fairness might be worthwhile.</p>
7.	No extra money should be spent and we definitely do not want a Mayor - Bristol style.
8.	<p>NO MAYOR. If council can't afford to keep the much-needed toilets in Weston, Larkhall etc. open, definitely do not want money spent on having a mayor. By the way, the new toilets where in place are truly awful. Deeply claustrophobic & you could not let a child under 10 use one alone, which takes away the child's dignity & independence once they have started going to the toilet on their own. Whoever idea this is should be voted out of office. I blame Don Foster who started closing toilets many years ago. Whenever I called Foster's office to complain, his secretary said, "He is looking into it"!</p>
9.	Difficult maybe several covering a few wards in each.

10.	No. This is expensive and unnecessary.
11.	There should be a council for Bath and an Executive Mayor, in the hope that the undue influence of employed Council officials (e.g. in relation to the Widcombe Scheme), and the bureaucratic confusion which is endemic in Bath (e.g. in relation to the closures and resurfacing of Widcombe Hill) can be reduced or eliminated completely. Perhaps an Executive Mayor can put a stop to unreal salaries being paid to Council officials of low competence.
12.	Bath should be parished as a whole (with one Parish Council for the City of Bath). Multiple parishes would be unnecessarily bureaucratic and parochial, and might negatively impact on people's willingness to engage in elections and membership.
13.	Local parishes give local people a vote and there is a strong case for replicating the existing outer city PC structure within Bath. A single PC for Bath is too distant and there will be problems in establishing acceptable stakeholders. There is no point in having councillors as members, they have their own forum.
14.	<p>BATH SHOULD NOT BE PARISHED:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is very expensive to implement (Bath Committee would have almost no set up costs) • A CGR would be distracting and controversial (Bath Committee can be created by the council with a simple vote) • Powers would be statutorily prescribed and quite limited (Bath Committee can be delegated functions and responsibilities flexibly by the cabinet and council) • A Bath precept would be resisted by the electorate (Bath Committee can simply take over reallocated existing budgets without a Bath precept) <p>IF PARISHED, BATH SHOULD BE PARISHED AS A WHOLE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple parishes would fragment Bath and discourage vital civic cohesiveness • There are no natural boundaries for defining multiple parishes within Bath, making them as arbitrary and artificial as ward boundaries • Multiple parishes would simply replicate groups of the existing Bath wards as political units
15.	I am against parishing the city. Residents do not want or need an additional layer of representatives.
16.	But parishing would not be satisfactory. It would be costly and time consuming and would only provide the extremely limited powers available to parish councils. Quite inadequate to do the job required.
17.	The present system does not represent the true Bath. Only residents that lives in BA1 1 and BA1 2 postcode benefits the most like street cleaning and

	gully cleaning etc. It is about time that all residents benefits not just the inner centre only and the only way to do this is to have multiple parishes to tackle their problems. At the present moment I feel that majority of the residents are subsidizing the services that ba1 1 and ba1 2 gets so therefore in having multiple parishes might mean having different rates apply and paid for.
18.	Separate localities should have their own non-political parish representatives with a Cllr supporting in an advisory and non-decision making capacity only having no political influence over the parish representatives. Parish e.g's Odd Down: Combe Down: Englishcombe: Oldfield Park: Twerton: Southdown: Kingsway: Bathwick: Bathampton: Fairfield Park: Cambden: Larkhall: plus other localities which have their own identity. The people of Bath need to have their say freely and openly and any other scheme would be manipulated by politicians and business leaders.
19.	The best option would be a single parish, i.e. a City Council like Salisbury, albeit it would have only the powers of a parish which is why an effective 'Voice for Bath' would be better provided it was given real responsibilities.
20.	But I definitely favour the Voice of Bath Committee option, as this incurs much less cost and hassle to implement.
21.	Central, North-west, north, north-east, South-west, south, south-east, east.
22.	Preferably by existing council wards, in order to maintain continuity with B&NES decisions and policies and ward councillors.
23.	4 to 6.
24.	Parishes could follow the lines of preexisting areas, e.g. Odd Down.
25.	I don't like the idea of a Community Governance Review if this is going to cost a lot. Why should the rest of the council area have to fund something specifically relevant to Bath? However if the parish option is chosen then perhaps as the eventual result the rate payers of Bath will pay as much for their particular services (by extra precept) as the rest of us do already in rural NE Somerset for ours. Yours truly etc! Ratepayer, Midsomer Norton
26.	One rep from each parish plus all elected Councillors from Bath city to form a "voice for Bath committee of BANES council with delegated powers
27.	Size of parishes: At the time of the Localism Bill, FoBRA had extensive discussions with residents' associations, B&NES officers and councillors and parish councils about neighbourhood forums. It was clear that B&NES councillors had a preference for neighbourhood forums based on B&NES Council wards (perhaps out of familiarity), but that in many cases these

	<p>wards had no meaning for their residents in terms of community boundaries. Indeed, though residents' associations – which grow organically out of community interests – tend to cover very small areas, often just one street, if one looks at the boundaries of residents' associations not a few run happily across ward boundaries, such as the Greenway Lane Area one. In my view most people in Bath feel a link both to the whole city and to a very small area within it, but not to an intermediate area which would be suitable as a parish.</p> <p>The whole city would be the largest area in England to serve as a parish, but not out of scale with towns which work well as parishes: many between 30,000 and 40,000 in population; Folkestone (>40,000); Hereford, Leamington Spa or Banbury (50,000); Keighley or Bracknell or Aylesbury (60,000); Weston-super-Mare (80,000). An issue would be the fact that the majority of the residents in B&NES would live within the parish of Bath, which would make some political judgements rather more tricky for B&NES councillors; but given clarity of responsibilities and goodwill I doubt that B&NES would find Bath any more difficult as a parish than North Somerset finds Weston. Hence I believe that if Bath were parished it ought to be as the whole city. I do not see the small delay involved in a Community Governance Review as a barrier.</p>
28.	<p>YES multiple. Residents should be included in these parish meetings and they should have the right to vote. If someone takes the time to be involved with matters in their area then they should have a 'voice'. Bath should be divided in to 5 parishes = one for the City centre and the other 4 being North South East and West of the City. This consultation needs to be far more detailed and informative and go out to every household/property.</p> <p>Each member of the Parish Council should be elected by the residents so that there would be more local representation and local issues would be decided upon.</p> <p>It will only be fair to inform residents that there will be a cost to this Option OR Option B. I realise we have no idea what the cost would be at this stage but obviously it will depend on the Option chosen.</p> <p>I feel this questionnaire has been slanted for Option 2 because there were no specific questions asked of Option 3. To make this a fair consultation, options should be given equal measure.</p> <p>I feel the way forward for Bath should not be decided on JUST by councillors - all residents should have their say and for this to happen everybody should have the full facts first.</p> <p>We cannot rush this decision through.</p>
29.	<p>Bath should be parished in line with council election wards. Other options would also be acceptable. A single parish would also be much better than the Voice for Bath option.</p>

30.	By electoral wards or something even closer to the communities.
31.	I am wholly opposed to the parishing of Bath. It is too big and too important as a WHS site to be considered a parish, and it is too important as a whole to be fragmented into several parishes. Also, I am wholly opposed to anything that could remove the current Charter Trustee arrangements. The fact that the Mayor has a ceremonial role and the Chairman of the Council has a representational role is an important distinction and it needs to be retained.
32.	But single would be better than "Voice for Bath" idea. Parishing along election ward lines would seem logical.
33.	Bath already has established areas, Oldfield Park, Larkhall etc and these could easily become parishes. Presumably there are already electoral wards which relate to areas of Bath. I am concerned that the decision appears to have already been made as the options in this consultation feedback nearly all relate to The voice for Bath option. There are no general comments boxes for any of the options, which suggests you don't want proper feedback.

Additional Responses

1. City Centre Action Group's response to Governance Questions

<http://www.ccagbath.org/>

Our overall reaction is one of disappointment about how little determination or imagination the working group appears to have shown in addressing their brief. Their output is merely a restatement of the existing ideas promulgated at previous meetings.

None of the proposals goes very far to address the democratic deficit in Bath. We note that none of the options as presented is fully costed only indicative figures being provided.

The creation of parish councils that will have little power and then only in local areas of Bath, will do little to address the systemic problems of the city and will, we understand, cost council tax payers a lot of money to create and maintain as well as adding extra levels of bureaucracy.

The committee idea has the virtue of probably being cheaper but would have little actual power. It seems unlikely that any serious residents' groups would join it as it would give them very little influence in the decision-making process but would ensure they shared more than their fair share of the blame for any bad decisions.

This leaves us with the status quo which while unsatisfactory appears to be better than the other options on offer.

If the BANES is really serious about addressing this issue we would urge that they look at researching more options, a process with which we would be happy to engage.

2. Via Facebook

Controlled immigration, abolished 20mph limits, improved traffic flow, and low taxes = happy citizen.

3. FoBRA

Options to Strengthen Community Representation & Civic Governance in Bath - FoBRA Response

FoBRA has 28 full members, spread across the city, and has been considering the subject of adequate representation for at least two years. On this specific consultation, FoBRA opinion is divided between the three options, with a slight preference for Option B, but with well-argued reasons for the other ones (12 members responded, of which 6 wanted Option B, while Options A and C attracted 3 each). Justifications and reasoning from the various contributors are set out below, including, where practical, the questions posed in the consultation:

Option B (Committee):

2.1 What should be its role and functions?

Mission & role:

- Champion the interests of the City of Bath by taking leadership of and accountability for addressing issues that are vital to the City.
- Lead Bath towards potential to be the 'leading micro city'
- Possibly a virtual 'Bath City Council', or else a sounding-board for the many interests of the City, to inform the Council and Cabinet Members (with whom final decisions must rest) in their forming strategy and setting budgets.
- Mayor of Bath functions

Leadership sub-committees:

- Urban matters crucial to Bath as a city

- Potential portfolios:
- Vision for Bath (framework policy document updated periodically)
- Economic Development (Development and delivery of Bath Economic Strategy, a major component of B&NES Economic Strategy)
- Placemaking (Spatial planning, delivery of Bath Enterprise Area Masterplan, CIL within Bath, housing policy, commercial property portfolio management)
- Transport (Development and delivery of Bath Transport Strategy and Plan)
- Public Realm (Delivery of Public Realm and Movement Strategy, WHS Management Plan, Heritage Asset management, and Air Quality Action Plan as this is entirely within Bath)

Operating principles:

- Annual Plan with explicit Objectives and end of year Report, along Winchester model
- Sub-committee Chairs should become champions for, experts in, their briefs
- Strive to preclude party political behaviour
- As members, all to have a duty to act in the interests of the Bath Committee rather than their local wards or sponsor organisations
- Every member to be given at least one sub-committee job to do.
- Expertise/resources from outside the council to be actively used where applicable
- Arrange public consultation exercises and meetings; and formulate recommendations in advance of budget-setting to Council.

Funding:

- Allocation of current budgets to Subcommittees as applicable, including Bath CIL.
- Bath Committee to apply and compete for budget allocations in future budgets
- Private sector funding participation to be actively developed where applicable

Drawbacks:

- This would miss the opportunity to transform the city of Bath's political & legal position *vis-à-vis* B&NES Council
- Official status and coherence of a single parish council is needed to use recently created powers under the Localism Act: eg for influencing service delivery decisions, prioritising developments, and attracting inward investment.

- Need for strong parish leader (Mayor?) to promote West's cultural capital, world-renowned educational centre, economic powerhouse of B&NES and 2nd most prosperous city in West's LEP
- Too much like Connecting Communities committees. The democratic deficit exists largely because Bath does not have the parish structure that the rest of B&NES and most of the country has.

2.2 Which stakeholders should be co-opted onto the committee option?

- Co-optee selection based on relevant expertise and independence from special interests rather than on stakeholder representation
- Voters are already represented democratically by their ward councillors
Potentially useful areas of expertise for co-optees: Leadership, Economic Development, Urban design and planning, Urban Transport, Finance and capital raising, Property development, Project management, Heritage management, Architecture, Higher education, Commerce, Students, Disabled persons, Tourism, and possibly Residents' Groups.

2.3 Should the stakeholders have voting rights for the committee option?

This is tricky, though not all democratic legitimacy would be lost if they did have some kind of voting rights (see Appendix to discussion paper), as elected ward councillors should comprise the vast majority of members. Moreover, co-optee members would have more 'soft' authority and effectiveness within the Committee if they had votes rather than simply as 'advisors'. Notwithstanding, the chance to influence the Committee would be excellent, and make a real difference, as shown in the current constitution of the Transport Commission.

2.4 How many of the 32 Bath elected members of Bath & North East Somerset should serve on the "Voice for Bath" committee?

- All elected members (ie either one (=16) or both (=32) from each of the Bath Wards):
- Otherwise, constituents of any Bath ward that is not represented from time to time could feel disenfranchised, thus defeating the whole purpose of the initiative.
- The real work of the Bath Committee should be conducted through its sub-committees, the number of which should be kept to a minimum to promote efficiency. Each sub-committee should have an easily manageable number of members (eg not more than 10). The Bath Committee itself should convene only to receive reports and to consider initiatives from its subcommittees.

Option C (Parishing):

3.1 Should consideration be given to multiple parishes for Bath or a single parish (for Bath as a whole)

There is much to be said for parishing Bath – ideally as a single City Council¹, and especially if the City Committee (see above) turns out to be toothless. At least it would be an elected body with a voice and real, if limited, powers. Undoubtedly, Option C poses challenges to local residents, businesses and B&NES Council elected members and officers, but it also offers an opportunity to introduce an arrangement for Bath that could have lasting and beneficial effects on local democracy and prosperity, while recognising that a Community Governance Review is a lengthy process that may take several years to complete, and involve financial costs to B&NES Council tax-payers. Nonetheless, a significant minority of FoBRA members believes it is the right choice to strengthen local representation and governance for future generations of Bath citizens. Current local elected representation in the B&NES Council area consists of 65 elected councillors for 37 wards, 45 directly elected parish and town councils, and an elected Member of Parliament (for Bath). Parishing of Bath would build on this. The 32 City of Bath Charter Trustees and civic Mayor were introduced as a temporary measure during Bath's transition from borough council to B&NES unitary authority. Option C would resolve the current „democratic deficit“ and Bath's lack of parity with other parishes and towns in the B&NES area. The anachronistic and mostly ceremonial Charter Trustees of the City of Bath would be abolished and, through a Community Governance Review, a directly elected single City of Bath parish council would be set up, absorbing the Mayoral function. Multiple parishes would be unnecessarily bureaucratic and parochial, costly and might negatively impact on people's willingness to engage in elections and membership, as well as eliminating the ceremonial Mayoral function. Drawbacks are the expense, compared to the Committee approach, the limitation in powers and the need to persuade Bath's citizens to accept a Bath Parish precept.

3.2 If there were to be multiple parishes, how should Bath be parished? While no FoBRA member recommended multiple parishes, feeling that they would simply replicate groups of the existing Bath wards as political units, but with no greater logic, it was thought that one for the centre including the Pulteney Estate, one for the remainder of the city to the south of the river (as it were, „Greater Widcombe“), and one for the remainder of the city to the north of the river (as it were, "Greater Lansdown“) could work, if forced, and generate that cohesiveness which would be so necessary. Many, however, would oppose loss of the ceremonial Mayoral function. Multiple parishes would also be more expensive than single.

1 The whole city would be the largest area in England to serve as a parish, but not out of scale with towns which work well as parishes: many between 30,000 and

40,000 in population; Folkestone (>40,000); Hereford, Leamington Spa or Banbury (50,000); Keighley or Bracknell or Aylesbury (60,000); Weston-super-Mare (80,000).

Option A (No change):

The 3 members who opted for no change noted that Bath had no statutory existence as matters stood, and there was no body to consider and represent the interests of the city. This really was unsatisfactory given the city's unique heritage status and its traffic problems.

However, their overall reaction was one of disappointment about how little determination or imagination the working group appeared to have shown in addressing their brief. Their output was merely a restatement of existing ideas promulgated at previous meetings. None of the proposals went far in addressing the democratic deficit in Bath. They noted that none of the options as presented was fully costed: only indicative costings being given.

Creation of parish councils that would have little power, and then only in local areas of Bath, would do little to address the systemic problems of the city and would, they understood, cost council tax payers a lot of money to create and maintain, as well as adding extra levels of bureaucracy.

The Committee idea had the virtue of probably being cheaper but would have little actual power. They felt it was unlikely that any serious residents' groups would join it as it would give them very little power in the decision-making process but would ensure they shared more than their fair share of the blame.

This left the status quo which, while unsatisfactory, appeared to be better than the other options on offer. If B&NES were really serious about addressing this issue, the 3 members urged that they (a) took more time to analyse the costs and benefits of various proposals, and (b) looked at researching options with more imagination and determination than those shown to date.

Robin Kerr, Chairman

22nd Aug 14

4. Brian Lawrence - Midsomer Norton Town Councillor and resident

Dear Mark Hayward,

I am emailing as I don't feel the online options form provides any proper feedback and the form is more than a little skewed for the "Voice for Bath" option.

As a Midsomer Norton Town Councillor and resident, I think that B&NES is far too Bath centric and does not consider the outlying districts sufficiently. As we pay

additional Council Tax on top of that Bath residents pay it appears that Bath residents get “free” what we have to pay extra for. In practice we pay for our own green spaces etc. whereas we also have to pay for the upkeep of Bath’s as well. Bath also gets our commercial rates.

If Bath was parished, it would mean that Bath residents could contribute more equally to their own areas and perhaps feel more engaged with their own areas problems and solutions. It may even help other areas of B&NES as there would be more of the main pot to be spread around.

As Bath has many more councillors than the North East Somerset area they have a bigger voice and are unlikely to vote for something that will cost their electors more money but the present system is unfair on the wider B&NES community.

5. Nicolette Boater – Resident

I write as an informed resident of an unparished Bath ward and contributor to what I see as my natural local community. Although I'm justifiably proud of my city and the contribution it can make to the wider B&NES district, I share the concern about the impact its lack of bespoke governance might be having on maintaining and improving its distinctive standing as a leading small city. I'm thus pleased that a cross party Working Group of Members is now beginning to assess whether the popular and political will exists to overcome the seemingly formidable obstacles in the way of improving its governance and/or at least the representation of its communities.

I thus attach my preliminary thoughts as to the merits of the three broad options for addressing these perceived problems. I have based my evaluation of the two options for change on my preferred variant for each one, namely :

- For the Bath committee option, a committee comprising about 8 of the 32 Bath elected members of Bath & North East Somerset (elected at the outset of a new B&NES administration by the 32 Bath members) and about 8 non Councillor members drawn from organisations representing the diversity of businesses in Bath, Associations of residents in the Bath area as well as individuals with social or business standing in the Bath community. (I have not yet had the time to inform a view as to whether the co-opted members could or should have voting rights.) I envisage that either the 32 or 8 Bath councillors would then elect a Mayor who would also chair the Bath Committee Forum for a 4 year term. I would envisage that the roles and functions of the Bath Committee Forum would be to input into, influence and perhaps be responsible for implementing such as the Bath Economic Development plan, Bath transport Strategy and public Realm issues.

- For the Bath District Council option, a single Parish Council for the City of Bath so as to ensure that Bath has a profile and influence greater than the sum of its parts, as the community to which Bathonions naturally feel they belong and to enable a powerful and influential Mayor to be elected, preferably on a different electoral cycle and for a longer term than that of B&NES Council.

At this stage I am not expressing a preference for either approach as I do not yet have sufficient information on their feasibility, costings and likely benefits. This is particularly true of the Bath District Council approach. However I do think the Council is right to prioritise the use of some scarce resource on addressing this particular problem.

Potential Impact on	No change	Bath Committee or forum	Bath District Council
Democratic Deficit in the city of Bath:	<p>Continuing erosion of the distinctiveness of the communities comprising the B&NES area and the vitality of local democracy. For me, this matters as</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The needs and interest of Bath, as a compact urban area with a rich cultural offering, natural and built environment differs from the collection of much smaller and rural communities making up the other half of the B&NES area; • It constrains the potential of Bath 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negligible improvement in democratic representativeness and accountability; • Little change in formal power or legitimacy, as the Committee will be reliant on powers and budgets delegated to it by B&NES Council. <i>Given the political fragility of B&NES Council and the concentration of LibDems in the Bath area and Conservatives in the more rural areas such delegations are unlikely to be significant or reliable;</i> • Somewhat more visible leadership role as the mayor will have a chairing as well as 	<p>Difficult to predict on basis of information in the Interim Report but would hope that this option would lead to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater democratic representativeness for the people of Bath; • Clearer accountability for decisions relating to Bath; • Some but unlikely to be a large transfer of power from B&NES to Bath District Council; • Profile, leadership focus for Bath as a result of a directly elected Mayor; • May raise participation in civic life amongst those alienated from party domination of larger government

	to maintain and improve its standing nationally and internationally, from which all B&NES residents benefit.	ceremonial role, and although still a party politician, s/he may have been elected for her or his Bath credentials rather than purely as a party nominee.	institutions.
Ease with which Bath residents and stakeholders can influence decisions on issues that matter to them:	Bath residents and stakeholders can already have their views heard on issues that matter to them via B&NES Council, Cabinet, PDS meetings or via their Ward councillor. However in practice more substantive Bath specific issues are rarely prioritised on these agendas and can get short shrift from the non-Bath councillors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having a committee dedicated to Bath issues would probably make it easier for well organised Bath stakeholders to have their views heard and prioritised on issues that matter to them, relative to using more general B&NES Council, Cabinet or PDS meetings; • The improved profile and awareness of Bath issues will facilitate council-community partnership formation; • Remains a committee and so still difficult for time-poor individuals without an organisation to have their voice heard. 	Difficult to predict on basis of information in the Interim Report but would hope that this option would make it easier for Bath residents and stakeholders to influence decisions on issues that matter to them.
Delivery of local services:	Potential efficiency gains arising from delivering or procuring services for B&NES area as a whole	If it leads to strong and effective B&NES Council-Bath community and stakeholder partnerships and cooperation arrangements, it could result in more effective,	Equally if not more likely than the Committee options to improve local service delivery by focusing better on local priorities or by attracting new resources such CIL

		better-targeted and more convenient delivery of Bath services.	funds.
Costs of change relative to community benefits	n/a	The set up costs of these could be minimised by making it an integral part of setting up a new B&NES administration. The running costs required over and above the funding available from the Charter percept, could for example be deemed a better use of public money than running the relatively large number of PDS Panels.	As the set up costs are high relative to those of the Committee option and the long-term benefits are uncertain and difficult to quantify, this is the high risk but potentially highest return option in terms of addressing the democratic deficit and community representation problems.