

COUNCIL EXECUTIVE MEETING 10th Jan 2007

The following Statements and Questions had been registered by the time of publication.

REGISTERED SPEAKERS

The speakers listed below registered their intention to make a statement or present a petition at the meeting. The time allowed for statements is 3 minutes.

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. Following the statement, Executive members have the option of asking factual questions of the speaker. Members of Council, but not other speakers, have a right to ask a supplementary question.

- Gavin Douglas, Director of The Silver Shop
Re: Parking Charges (Agenda Item 14)
- Councillor Gitte Dawson
Re: Sustainability

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1 **Question from:** Ian Thorn

Does Cllr Jenkins appreciate how delighted I was to receive his full support for my request for dropped kerbs at named locations in Abbey ward at the December meeting of the Executive?
What is his proposed timetable and the completion date for the works?

Answer from: Councillor Sir Elgar Jenkins OBE

If Mr Thorn re-reads my answer to his question on 6th December he will note that I said "Yes" in reply to a question which asked if I would "confirm" my "willingness to consider dropped kerbs and pedestrian crossings". That is not saying, as he suggests, that I give my "full support" to his proposals but simply that they would be considered. In due course of time they will be. There cannot be therefore at this stage a timetable or a completion date.

2 **Question from:** Nicholas Coombes

Pedestrian road safety:
Does the Council agree that, in order to improve safety, there is a need for

improvements to the pedestrian crossing over the A36 at the roundabout at the foot of Bathwick Hill and also to the crossing opposite Bathwick Parade on Bathwick Hill? Can the Council outline what finance has been allocated for the works and when we can expect completion? We hope that the Council is able to deliver on the walking strategy pledge to prioritise pedestrians above all other road users.

To improve the safety of pedestrians and other road users, the Council needs to take action to reduce speeding. I would urge the installation of a Speed Interactive Device (SID) on Bathwick Hill to warn drivers when they exceed the speed limit. Will the council be doing so?

Answer from: Councillor Sir Elgar Jenkins OBE

I recognised the need for a pedestrian crossing at the bottom of Bathwick Hill across Pulteney Road in 2006 and the sum of £55,000 was put in the Capital Programme to pay for this. This will be completed by May 2007.

We are working year in and year out to ensure that measures are in place to improve safety of pedestrians and other road users. A variable message sign has been placed in Bathwick Hill opposite the junction with Cleveland Walk.

I am satisfied that the pedestrian crossings around the Holburne are working well but we keep the situation under constant review.

3 Question from: Armand Edwards

Cycling

The 'climb line' proposed by Councillor Symonds for Ralph Allen Drive is intended to improve the safety of cyclists ascending the hill. Could a similar scheme be implemented on Bathwick Hill or North Road?

For cyclists not prepared to climb the hills, but wish to cycle on the flat through the city, improved lock-up facilities at the bottom of Bathwick Hill would be useful. The current cycle parking hoops leave them vulnerable to theft, vandalism and the elements. As part of its strategy to promote cycling, will the Council provide secure and dry cycle parking facilities at the foot of Bathwick Hill?

Finally, now that most of the traffic management scheme at the Holburne end of Great Pulteney Street has been implemented, what is being done about the cycling consultation promised in the original decision and now several years old?

Answer from: Councillor Sir Elgar Jenkins OBE

The possibility of a cycle lane up Bathwick Hill and North Road will be investigated. However, it will be dependent on how much road width is available. A cycle lane on Ralph Allen Drive is not currently agreed. This also needs more investigation.

It would not be possible to consider cycle lockers at the bottom of Bathwick Hill. However, a more prominent position, and therefore safer location, can be considered for some additional 'Sheffield' type cycle parking stands.

The cycle route from Sydney Place end of Great Pulteney Street will be reviewed again but finding a workable solution is proving to be very difficult

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Question from:	Councillor Gitte Dawson
<p>I understand that the search for sites for the urban extension the Government is asking us to build has now been extended to include the AONB - although the Government had specifically excluded the AONB. Why has this been changed? Who made the decision, and when, and why were affected members not informed?</p>	
Answer from:	Councillor Gerry Curran
<p><i>The Council has stated that an urban extension should not be developed in the AONB and that the area of search shown in the draft RSS should be extended northwards to the river Avon at Newbridge (i.e. land not in the AONB). The Council's position is supported by environmental appraisal studies and a Strategic Sustainability Assessment (SSA) of the area. The South West Regional Assembly has suggested that an SSA of the entire urban periphery of Bath - including AONB land - should be undertaken. After the SSA has been done the issue of AONB status and weight to be applied to that status should be determined and justified. The SWRA considers that the RSS Examination in Public Panel will want to address this issue and satisfy itself that, if an urban extension is needed, it is in the most sustainable location. The Council will therefore need to be in a position to defend its non-AONB stance and will be unable to do so if it does not undertake an SSA of the relevant land. Moreover, a Trust with landholdings between Bath and South Stoke in the AONB has objected to the RSS proposals. This objection is likely to be heard at the RSS Examination in Public. It is therefore desirable for the Council, in appearing at the RSS EIP, to have evidence that challenges this objection and maintains our stated position against development in the AONB</i></p>	
Supplementary Question from:	Councillor Gitte Dawson
<p>The official enquiry allows some people to make representations to the Examination In Public (EIP) but not others. This is not reasonable. Can the Executive member ensure that the Parish Council is given details of the EIP?</p>	
Answer from:	Councillor Gerry Curran
<p><i>I will enquire why it is that the Parish was prevented from being represented but the Land Trust was able to be present at the EIP.</i></p>	

5

Question from:	Councillor Caroline Roberts
<p>What is been done to combat the problem of people parking on pavements? What is the estimated cost to the Council of repairs due to this problem?</p>	
Answer from:	Councillor Sir Elgar Jenkins OBE

<i>Liaison with the police and Police Community wardens has resulted in increased enforcement. Vehicles are ticketed with an advice leaflet which if ineffective is followed up by a formal ticket for obstruction. The identification of damage from parked vehicles is difficult to identify and figures are not available.</i>	
Supplementary Question from:	Councillor Caroline Roberts
Does the Executive member share my disappointment that people continue to park on the newly repaired pavements in my ward? Can he give an estimate of the cost to the Council of repairs to damage caused by pavement parking?	
Answer from:	Councillor Sir Elgar Jenkins OBE
<i>It is not possible to give an estimate of the additional costs of repair because it is not possible to quantify what extra wear and tear is caused by parking on pavements. Yes, all must be disappointed about the phenomenon. Only the Police have powers to act but if the offence is committed on double yellow lines, then a parking attendant has powers to issue a fixed penalty notice.</i>	

6

Question from:	Councillor Caroline Roberts
What action is being taken to enforce speed limits in Bath and North East Somerset?	
Answer from:	Councillor Sir Elgar Jenkins OBE
<i>It is the duty of the police to enforce speed limits. It is also the responsibility of the Avon & Somerset Safety Camera Partnership. The Councils are now part of this partnership and with effect from 1st April 2007 there will be additional funding available.</i>	
Supplementary Question from:	Councillor Caroline Roberts
Thanks to the Executive member for his response. Will he be pressing the Police to enforce speed limits? Why are the positions of cameras no longer advertised on the Council's website as was once the case?	
Answer from:	Councillor Sir Elgar Jenkins OBE
<i>Yes, I continue to press the Police to enforce speed limits and will ask why the sites are no longer advertised on the website.</i>	
<i>Councillor Paul Crossley invited Councillor Dawson to speak after the meeting with Councillor Vic Pritchard who would he said be able to provide further information.</i>	

7	Question from: Councillor Roger Symonds
In December last year I asked Cllr Jenkins to investigate the possibility of a 'Climb Line' (cycle lane) to go up Ralph Allen Drive. Can he tell me the result of those investigations, please?	
Answer from:	Councillor Sir Elgar Jenkins OBE
<i>There is a concern that Ralph Allen Drive is too narrow to accommodate a cycle lane, but officers are looking further into this issue.</i>	
Supplementary Question from:	Councillor Roger Symonds
Thanks to the Executive member for his response. Would he ensure that when officers conduct their investigation into Ralph Allen Drive that they take note that the connecting road is so narrow that it forces drivers to move to the wrong side of the road?	
Answer from:	Councillor Sir Elgar Jenkins OBE
<i>There is always a balance between demand for parking spaces and demand for cycling lanes. We should be aware that when cars are parked on the road, drivers drive more carefully past that point.</i>	

8	Question from: Councillor Roger Symonds
Can Cllr Jenkins explain why, despite my repeated requests the small environmental Highways jobs outstanding in Combe Down, mostly requested by local residents some going back 2 years, have still not been done. Some of these are as follows:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • signage in Combe Down - particularly connected with the new Firs one way system – no right turn into the Firs from North Road sign needed - remove cul de sac sign at the shops end of the Avenue and move the no entry signs in its place • remove 'heavy vehicles sign' pointing towards closed part of Combe Road • remove old oil drum 'pinch point' in Combe Road – now lying on its side in the gutter • repair of bus shelter glass panel at MoD • repair plastic panel in bus shelter at Southstoke Road (on 'showcase' route) • install temporary and permanent bus stops with timetables in North Road • repair broken water stopcock at entrance to the Firs Field work site • clean out blocked gullies • re seed and protect churned up grass verge at bottom of The Firs • remove temporary double yellow lines in the Avenue and in Church Road • remove unnecessary and out of date signage relating to weight limits • repair potholes in Exmoor Road 	
Two tasks have been completed following our requests to B&NES:	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • straighten up light standard at crossing in North Road • fill deep pothole in Ralph Allen Drive <p>When can local residents expect these simple jobs to be completed?</p>	
Answer from:	Councillor Sir Elgar Jenkins OBE
<p><i>There are a number of issues raised in this question that relate to ongoing management of the area which is complicated by the work on the Stone Mines. Additional resources have been employed to assess the signing across the Stone Mines area and a rationalisation study of the signage has been undertaken and is about to be implemented.</i></p> <p><i>In reply to the detailed points:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The broken stop cock box has been repaired</i> • <i>The new bus stop locations on North Road have been agreed and will be installed shortly</i> • <i>The repairs to the two bus shelters are awaiting action from Adshell - they were damaged in December</i> • <i>A number of double yellow lines were put down as a temporary measure given the concerns about the state of the mine beneath the roads in question. These are to be reassessed as part of the rationalisation.</i> • <i>The verge on The Firs will now be looked at following the introduction of the temporary one - way traffic order.</i> • <i>Councillor Symonds has been advised that the defects on Exmoor Road are not deep enough to be repaired</i> 	
Supplementary Question from:	Councillor Roger Symonds
<p>Could the Executive member check the facts of his response? Some of the requests are over 2 years old, and one of the bus shelters was damaged in June, not December. I am concerned about the impact of the mine works on the area.</p>	
Answer from:	Councillor Sir Elgar Jenkins OBE
<p><i>Councillor Symonds' point about the mines is fair. I will follow up his enquiry about the bus shelter. The yellow lines work has been delayed because of the underground working.</i></p>	

9

Question from:	Councillor Roger Symonds
<p>Can Cllr Curran tell me the number of objections, received during the recent consultation period, to the inclusion of St Martins Garden School as part of a development site on Odd Down by the Local Plan Inspector?</p>	
Answer from:	Councillor Gerry Curran
<p><i>The deadline for comments on the modifications to the Local Plan closed on 14th December 2006. All the representations received are currently being catalogued</i></p>	

and recorded and this process is nearly complete. At 8th January 2007, it is estimated that a total of 1390 representations were received on St Martin's Garden Primary School Playing Fields/ Hayesfield School modification. Of these, 9 are in support of the proposed modification, and 1381 are objecting. The final figure may differ slightly from this once the task of inputting the data is complete. The representations are scheduled to be reported to Council Exec in March 2007 when a comprehensive figure for the number of duly made representations will be available.

Supplementary Question from: Councillor Roger Symonds

Would the Executive member agree that 1381 objections on a single part of the Local Plan is a convincing and significant objection by local people?

Answer from: Councillor Sir Elgar Jenkins OBE

Yes – it is a significant number.

10 Question from: Councillor Gitte Dawson

I was disappointed - when I put this question to the Executive as a whole last time - that only one member of the Executive felt called up on to answer. I therefore ask it again this time, of all of the Executive members:

Fourteen months ago the Council unanimously resolved to raise the profile of sustainability in all decision-making and specifically instructed Executive Members and Heads of Service to consider aspects of sustainability in every decision they make, documenting such considerations in their decision reports, and consulting the Sustainability Manager in case of doubt what sustainability issues might be involved in a particular decision.

Do you feel you have implemented this resolution? Please could you give examples?

Answer from: Councillor Paul Crossley

Sustainability is a key issue for the Council and is included in the decision making process in many ways.

- *The decision making template which covers all decisions of the Executive includes in section 8 of the decision-making template, 'Issues to consider in reaching the decision', which requires report-writers and decision-makers to consider sustainability issues.*
- *The LSP under BE:Sustainable. The production of this document was my responsibility. Under the LSP banner we are now engaged in a pioneering project on energy reduction across the public sector working with health, education and police institutions across the authority area.*
- *The Council's commitment to the Nottingham Declaration which is again my responsibility. In December 2005 I signed the Council up to the Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change. In November 2006, the Council approved the*

Bath Western Riverside SPD, which sets clear targets on sustainability for the development, particularly on energy, requiring 10% renewable energy on site and at least one carbon neutral building, for example. As Leader I am promoting this not only within our authority area but also across the sub-region (speaker at a recent conference in Bristol) and nationally (speaker at the national launch in the presence of Government Minister at Westminster).

- *The Council is also developing its LAA submission which contains a very large sustainability agenda. Outcome 9 under Safer and Stronger Communities in the LAA is:*

"9. Tackling climate change through reduced greenhouse gas emissions". The LAA is enabling us to "align" the budget for climate change (ie bring together all the resources to help deliver it): at the moment there is over £860,000 identified in this way. The main relevant stretch target is to increase public and community transport, eg through introducing individualised travel planning initiatives.

And finally I have raised with the Chief Executive the point about continuing with a sustainability section in the monthly core briefing to Council. Sustainability issues have been raised through Core Brief during the last year. In addition, in August 2006, the centre-page spread of Inside Out featured a detailed article on the Council's developing energy efficiency work, including the Treasury-funded Invest to Save Budget project. This project, which will deliver a 10% cut in energy use and carbon emissions by 2009 across the Local Strategic Partnership has now commenced and will include a programme of energy efficiency awareness-raising under the title 'Our Big Energy Challenge'. During Zero Waste week, CIS carried a feature for staff.

Answer from:

Councillor Francine Haerberling

Green housekeeping measures such as recycling, office energy and paper efficiency and green travel, which will be tackled through the CharterMark process referred to above for this area.

The new Older People's provision being built in Bath, Midsomer Norton and Keynsham have all been designed to a high standard of energy efficiency with an excellent "BREAM" rating for each. This is particularly important given the need to maintain higher than average temperatures within the homes and should show a marked difference in energy consumption over the next 18 months as each comes on line and the old inefficient homes close.

Answer from:

Councillor Gerry Curran

Through the Charter Mark process, services have to consider sustainability. All services have to undertake this process by the end of 2008.

'Our Big Energy Challenge', the Treasury funded LSP wide energy efficiency project has started and will tackle energy efficiency at the technical level in key buildings, as well as deliver energy training to key staff across the Council and energy efficiency awareness training to staff at all levels. A 10% cut in energy consumption and carbon emissions is expected as a minimum.

Work is ongoing to develop further action to reduce carbon emissions through the LAA, for example through exploiting the area's waste wood resource for biomass heating in public buildings (the Guildhall is being investigated) and schools and

increasing the market for local food by activity to be coordinated by the recently formed Bath Local Food Group.

We are taking action under the Council's corporate priority of minimising landfill - which we are achieving with increasing recycling rates. Our Civic amenity sites are now recycling between 70 and 80% of materials.

And under the Zero Waste strategy, we held a Zero Waste week which was so successful that it created a large national press coverage and will now be an annual event.

Answer from:

Councillor Malcolm Hanney

I take Sustainability issues into account on all my decisions. I seek to ensure that my decisions reflect the right balance of environmental, social and economic considerations and that therefore they are truly sustainable.

Cllr. Dawson was at the last Executive. I gave a specific example at that meeting - i.e. Transfer of IT Equipment Disposal Service. However a number of other items on that agenda also required consideration of sustainability issues in preparing reports and the decisions taken:-

- 2012 Olympics
- West of England Waste Management and Planning Strategy
- B&NES Local Area Agreement
- Financial Plan Update Report
- Etc etc'

Additionally with regard to specific areas within my portfolio and related to procurement, I have the following observations:-

Procurement

- Procurement - local food in school catering contracts

The supply of foodstuffs from local producers was prioritised as part of the recently tendered catering supplies contracts. Now 75% of contracts have been placed with local suppliers boosting the local economy and reducing the number of food miles.

- Sustainable Procurement Code

The Sustainable Procurement Code was approved by a representative panel of Service Areas (Procurement Steering Group) in May 2006 and this guidance is available to officers undertaking procurement projects. A recommendation on how to increase awareness of the code and embed its recommendations into future procurement projects is due to be presented to The Procurement Steering Group by the Corporate Sustainability Manager in February.

Answer from:

Councillor Vic Pritchard

I appreciate the directive given by the Council some 14 months ago and can be categoric in saying that services in my portfolio have been compliant. Sustainability has been practised to positive effect long before this resolution.

Considerable attention has been given to the provision of alternative sources of power. Through operating within the Affordable Warmth Partnership housing has sought to increase the number of properties that are insulated thus not only conserving heat but also decreasing the levels of energy required.

It should be acknowledged that the Housing Renewal Policy has a theme of sustainability throughout. It actively encourages the use of local contractors, the

use of sustainable building materials, promotes energy efficiency (as demonstrated above), and maintains the condition of properties.

Answer from: Councillor Sir Elgar Jenkins OBE

I take account of sustainability when considering Transportation issues.

Answer from: Councillor Jonathan Gay

The Council has funded projects in schools on sustainability, delivered by the Bath based charity, Envolve. In 2005/6 this was a project designed to increase pupil and parent awareness of the sustainability issues around food (eg food miles and waste issues), complementing the Food For Life work on healthy eating. This work has been expanded in 2006/7 with a bigger pilot supporting schools to achieve Eco-schools accreditation, with a priority focus on energy and waste issues.

One of the objectives of the programme of area reviews of schools being undertaken by the EYCL Overview and Scrutiny Panel is to ensure that the choice of a local school is a natural and easy choice for parents and that the school is within reasonable walking or cycling distance of home or is reasonably accessible by public transport thus reducing the need for car journeys.

Our new schools are being built and operated in accordance with principles of sustainability set out under the Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) for Schools. which is supported by the DfES. The design will accrue credits under a set number of headings which will determine the energy rating for the building. We are aiming at a minimum of a 'very good' rating for all new schools including the Writhlington School One School Pathfinder. The new St Keyna Primary School in Keynsham will have a biomass boiler and a wind turbine.

The planned maintenance programme for schools seeks wherever possible to upgrade insulation to latest building regulation standards e.g. windows, roof insulation etc and also ensure that fuel efficient boilers with controls to optimise efficient energy use are installed.

Answer from: Councillor Nicole O'Flaherty

Heritage Services Facilities Manager, Iain Johnstone has undertaken a very successful project to reduce energy consumption. We can supply facts and figures later this week – he has documented evidence of reduction in energy consumption.

Environmental Services have replaced the cremators at Haycombe cemetery with state of the art equipment utilizing filtration systems that remove emissions. This was a deliberate decision to opt for the most sustainable technology on the market. We are the only local authority to do this so far.

Environmental Services also have a rolling programme of seasonal bedding with perennial plants (where aesthetically acceptable). This reduces the use of precious resources in our parks, such as growing media, water and energy in the greenhouses. We are also looking at the potential to install a biomass (using waste wood) heating boiler at the nursery as part of the biomass development work.

Answer from:

Councillor Colin Darracott

All major developments are negotiated with very substantial emphasis on environmental sustainability issues. Various responses to O&S questions document my high ranking of this in terms of priority, for example on Western Riverside. Most embedding of sustainability issues in my portfolio are achieved during negotiations with third parties and less so in formal decision making. I am satisfied that progress is being made, but would like things to move faster, particularly with regard to the Council's corporate estate. However, more resources would be needed to be found from other services to deal, for example, with inefficient buildings more quickly than currently programmed.

There are 2 recent formal decisions by way of example of embedding sustainability:

- E1539 Dec 06 Combe Down Stone Mines Framework: All successful bidders to be on our framework of possible companies for consideration for work on the main scheme had to pass environmental management quality tests under the OJEU tender. This was checked.*
- E1537 Dec 06 MCTI bid for Keynsham: This bid for money will lead to work under which sustainability issues will be addressed and was part of the consideration.'*

Other examples of proposed sustainability include:-

- On BWR, Biomass Combined heat & power plant, Eco Homes very good with many achieving excellent, Bream very good to non domestic properties, rainwater conservation / recycling, SUDS, Rapid Transport bus and Car sharing club. The list is far more extensive. B&NES, Crest & the designers have been jointly working together over the last 18 months to achieve this position.*
- St Keyna School. The importance of sustainability was highlighted in the brief for the new primary school to be built in Keynsham. The school will have a BREEAM rating of very good as a minimum and steps are being taken to improve upon this through the incorporation of a wind turbine. In selecting the contractor, specific regard has been had to sustainability in the construction period, e.g. in waste recycling.*

There are a number of ways in which sustainability and energy management have been considered by Property Services:

- Energy Management
Energy Manager appointed mid 06 and software now installed, data being entered. Central management of billing in place by end of March, with the ability to produce energy management reports and develop targets and action plans now in development.*
- Biomass Boilers
A more detailed feasibility scheme has been developed for the proposal to replace the Guildhall boiler with a wood burning (aka biomass) boiler, which would be carbon neutral. Outline design currently being progressed, prior to consultations with Listed Buildings.*
- Wind Turbine to Roof of Hollies (see also article in Somerset Guardian 21/12)
Planning decision expected on Wed 10 Jan, following positive recommendation by the planning officer. Briefing session to be held at Hollies for staff / public prior to installation.*

And further Corporate Facilities in Property Services and the Waste Management

Team are working together to roll-out the in-house recycling scheme. Here is an update:

- **Internal Recycling – briefing notes**

Currently, the primary objective is to ensure that an efficient cardboard and paper recycling scheme is available to 70% of Council employees by April 2007. The following buildings are being tackled first:

Guildhall; Trimbridge House; Plymouth House; Northgate House; The Hollies; Keynsham Town Hall; Riverside ; Abbey Chambers; 9 – 10 Bath Street; Charlotte Street; Lewis House; 10 Palace Yard Mews

The remaining Council office buildings will also be contacted over the next few weeks to build baseline data and identify key people as contacts. These buildings will then be tackled on individual basis after recycling is successfully established at the principle buildings listed above.

NB An Energy and Green Housekeeping Project Team has been set up, with key staff from Property Services (Energy and Facilities), Waste Management and Sustainability tackle implementation of energy efficiency and waste reduction measures across the Council.

Supplementary Question from:

Councillor Gitte Dawson

I should like to ask Cllr Malcolm Hanney whether he has considered discontinuing the use of sachets for refreshments at all meetings and their replacement by other more sustainable means such as milk jugs and coffee jars?

Answer from:

Councillor Malcolm Hanney

I note that in the spirit of sustainability Cllr. Dawson has decided to recycle a question that was asked previously some years ago by Cllr. Todd. In similar recycling mode, I quote the answer previously provided:-

'We would also like to do away with individually packaged tea, coffee, milk and sugar. We did in fact trial this several months ago, spearheaded by the tireless environmental efforts of Cllr Dawson. Unfortunately, however, we have had to return to our current arrangements based on the fact that supplying these items from crockery led to significant wastage (not only the comestibles but the crockery and cutlery were 'going walking!') In addition, and perhaps more importantly, we had hygiene concerns about the milk being left uncovered and in ambient conditions and the other items becoming contaminated.'

As an update, Mary Rozmus-West has reaffirmed the position:-

Since 2002 the Council's Catering Services has been implementing changes in its service delivery, to encompass wherever possible: fair trade, sustainability and environmentally friendly procedures. We have trialled serving tea, coffee, milk and sugar from crockery rather than packets but determined that this presents health risks, increases wastage and adds labour costs.

I agree.