

## CABINET MEETING 4<sup>th</sup> November 2009

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

### REGISTERED SPEAKERS

There was 1 notice of intention to make a statement at the meeting. 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.

- Mike Mapstone  
Re: The proposal for homeless facilities/ a wet house at James St West/Avon Street

### QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS - COUNCILLORS

01

<b>Question from:</b>	Councillor Nigel Roberts
With no cycle racks in Odd Down please could the cabinet member responsible arrange for them to be installed. Suggestion would be Noad's Corner?	
<b>Answer from:</b>	Councillor Charles Gerrish
<i>Funding is available to install cycle parking where suitable sites exist and where a demand for parking has been identified. Officers will investigate the Noad's Corner site and consider installation of cycle stands if appropriate. Cycle stands are also currently being considered outside the Co-op in Upper Bloomfield Road.</i>	

02

<b>Question from:</b>	Councillor John Bull
What steps does Cllr Gerrish plan to take to remedy the various faults in the new bus station eg inability of passengers inside the building to see their bus arriving because of the angle of the windows; no toilets open in the evening; lack of litter bins?	
<b>Answer from:</b>	Councillor Terry Gazzard
<b><i>Toilet Access.</i></b> <i>The opening times of the toilets are currently restricted to the opening times of the ticket sales desks as both are accessed from within the ticket lobby. This is a temporary restriction until the café/snack unit is let with the intention that the hours for the toilet opening can be extended to the opening times for the retail</i>	

unit. The Council has discussed with First Group the possibility of providing extended staff coverage to keep the toilets open until 7pm and we are awaiting First Group's confirmation when this will be implemented. The design of the new bus facilities did not incorporate the provision for toilets to be 24hr access as this presents greater security and management problems.

**Bus arrival visibility.**

The specific concern regards visibility of bus arrivals needs to be clarified. The operation of the station is designed to enable users to view and clearly see departures from within the concourse from the fixed signage and also on the bus itself. Visibility of arriving buses is not perceived as critical as a number of arriving services either terminate their routes within the station or go out of services briefly for driver changes, so the bus arrival does not always reflect the onward route.

**Bins.**

The new bins are now available and will be being installed by Multi for the 4th November opening.

**Supplementary Question:**

I welcome the Cabinet member's explanations of the litter bins and toilets, although my question referred to "evening" opening, not "24-hr". Does he not agree that the angle of the windows is wrong, which prevents passengers from seeing their bus arrive? And will he say whether the introduction of a display board would be possible?

**Answer from:** Councillor Terry Gazzard

*The issues raised by Cllr Bull are all under consideration with the Southgate Board*

03

**Question from:** Councillors Cherry Beath and Roger Symonds

Can the cabinet member give us a definite time schedule for the necessary highways works needed to be completed as a result of the severe impact of the mine stabilisation project work on Combe Down. We have met with officers in previous months, and a list has been made which includes 1) the removal of redundant signs and posts 2) Repairs and resurfacing to footpaths and highways 3) agreed improvement works 4) drain and gully repairs damage, caused by the project work?

**Answer from:** Councillor Charles Gerrish

*The work is presently being "scoped" and then a rolling programme of repairs will be undertaken commencing from Spring 2010 through to the end of the year*

04

<b>Question from:</b>	Councillor Nathan Hartley
<p>In recent weeks there has been uncertainty as to whether or not the UK Youth Parliament elections will take place in January here in B&amp;NES.</p> <p>Now in its ninth year, the Youth Democracy Project is one of the most successful initiatives this Council has ever undertaken. It would be a huge shame if the elections do not go ahead, resulting in the first set of cancelled elections since the project began.</p> <p>What is the Cabinet Member for Children's Services doing to ensure that these elections take place?</p>	
<b>Answer from:</b>	Councillor Chris Watt
<p><i>The Council is committed to youth democracy and the participation of young people and has provided significant support to the Youth Democracy Project (and a range of other groups and activities), and will continue to do so. The support provided by the Council's Youth Service has contributed to the success of the Youth Parliament elections to date and has been crucial in ensuring that all secondary schools participate; in enabling young people to vote; and in training and supporting candidates and those elected to carry out their duties. This represents a very significant amount of work that requires a long lead in time to achieve. It has not been possible to put all the required actions in place to hold effective elections early next year, and it is the view of the Council that it would be better to ask the current MYP and deputy to carry on for a further year and to carry out well run and supported elections in 2011.</i></p> <p><i>Young people have advised that they wish to go ahead with the election for 2010 and have made plans for doing so within a shorter timeframe. The Youth Service will offer support throughout this process, but is not in a position to coordinate this work as it has done in previous years.</i></p> <p><i>Note: Prior to the matter being raised by Councillor Hartley a meeting with Dafby had been arranged and agreement was reached on the elections for 2011.</i></p>	

05

<b>Question from:</b>	Councillor Nicholas Coombes
<p>How many parking tickets have been issued in the vicinity of Bathwick Parade (the stretch of Bathwick Hill on the right hand side as you ascend between Bathwick Terrace and the Canal i.e. where Tesco's is located) in the last 12 months? Does the cabinet member feel that this addresses the problem of dangerous parking in the area and if not, what response is planned?</p>	
<b>Answer from:</b>	Councillor Charles Gerrish
<p><i>This area, which is known as George Place, is included in Bathwick Hill for the issue of PCNs, and individual statistics are not maintained.</i></p>	

06

<b>Question from:</b>	Councillor Gerry Curran
<p>Would the Leader of Council echo my congratulations to Bath City Football Club, who play in Twerton, for their achievement in getting to the First Round Proper of this season's FA Cup? Hopefully they will return from Grimsby with a win. Would the Leader also agree that Bath City FC's role in the community is very important especially given that they hold a number of events at Twerton Park, play host to the Twerton market every week and are now working with local schools by formulating the 'Attacking Skills' project (including allowing 200 Year 4 children into a recent game for free)? All this hard work from the club is helping to put football back on the map in Bath, and I hope the Council will support the football club in their community initiatives.</p>	
<b>Answer from:</b>	Councillor Francine Haerberling
<p><i>The Council would like to congratulate Bath City Football Club on their immediate success and hope that this year they can carry their participation in the FA Cup into later rounds and repeat the achievements of past teams in reaching the 3rd round on 3 occasions and the second round in 2004.</i></p> <p><i>Clearly adopting the approach of 'one step at a time' the game against Grimsby Town is a significant hurdle. We all hope Bath City Football Club return having won a great game .....I believe Bill Shankley, the great Manager of Liverpool Football Club, had some good advice to pass on to teams that aspire to great performances - "If you're not sure what to do with the ball, just pop it in the opponents net and we'll discuss your options afterwards."</i></p> <p><i>My colleagues in the Cabinet would also like to wish the Club well in their Conference South League campaign. We all anticipate an improvement on last years position. We appreciate the current position is only reflective of the focus on the FA Cup and allows a few of the other teams in the Conference some 'momentary satisfaction' with only one third of the seasons games completed.</i></p> <p><i>The Cabinet would also like to thank Bath City Football Club for their work in the past alongside the Youth Service (running a series of taster sessions in different sports) and in the operation their community focussed activities. We are also aware of the work they have undertaken with Somerset FA to provide some disability coaching for the Special Schools at Twerton Park in the last few months.</i></p> <p><i>The Council has some innovative projects underway to support children who find school life a challenge. Our Sport and Active Lifestyles Team look forwards to working with the Club to further their community outreach programmes, based upon their undoubted success on the pitch.</i></p> <p><i>I would not want to miss this opportunity to congratulate Paulton Rovers for being matched against Norwich City, and to wish them every success in the match this week-end.</i></p>	

07

<b>Question from:</b>	Councillor Tim Ball
Can the executive member tell us what action is being taken to ensure that all shops are fully disability accessible and in Particular what proposals are his officers putting forward to resolve the issue of disabled access to the shops at The Parade High Street Twerton?	
<b>Answer from:</b>	Councillor Charles Gerrish
<p><b><i>The following reply was provided after the meeting:</i></b> <i>Somer Community Housing Trust submitted and received planning permission in June 2008 for a proposal to provide a ramped access to the shops in The Parade. (Details of the proposal can be found on the planning pages of the Councils website planning application ref. 08/01516/FUL) The Council have been advised by the Trust that the improvements are progressing and the work is currently out to tender. Somer Community Housing Trust should be able to provide further information about their proposals if required.</i></p>	

08

<b>Question from:</b>	Councillor Nicholas Coombes
Will the cabinet member re-introduce smaller sized recycling boxes for use in flats or single occupancy households? Large green boxes are inappropriate in a small home and are a deterrent to recycling.	
<b>Answer from:</b>	Councillor Charles Gerrish
<p><i>We currently offer a smaller 25 litre basket as an alternative to the 55 litre green box. Any resident can request one of these. We are also looking at samples of smaller polypropylene sacks to see if these may offer a good alternative in the future.</i></p>	

09

<b>Question from:</b>	Councillor Nicholas Coombes
When will a wider selection of plastics be collected for recycling as part of the doorstep scheme?	
<b>Answer from:</b>	Councillor Charles Gerrish
<p><i>The new scheme will begin on the 30th November 2009. We will be able to accept the majority of rigid household packaging in the green box. This will be advertised in the next edition of Connect magazine with a much more detailed description of the types of plastic we will then be able to recycle.</i></p>	

<b>10</b>	<b>Question from:</b>	Councillor Nicholas Coombes
<p>Despite the cabinet member's answer (to Cabinet question 21) of June 2007, the poor quality and availability of public toilets in Bath city centre remains of concern to residents and visitors. Does the cabinet member have any plans to rectify the situation now?</p>		
<b>Answer from:</b>		Councillor Charles Gerrish
<p><i>I can confirm that officers are currently evaluating and consulting on toilet provision both within Bath city centre and throughout the district. This follows the report to the Overview and Scrutiny, Stronger, Safer Communities Panel (O &amp; S SSC) setting out a draft strategy for the provision of public conveniences in Bath and North East Somerset. The findings and recommendations arising from the current evaluation and consultation will be reported back to O &amp; S SSC in March 2010.</i></p>		

<b>11</b>	<b>Question from:</b>	Councillor Nicholas Coombes
<p>Following the government inspector's judgement regarding footpath AQ78, how will the suggested cycle path upgrade be progressed and what money has been set aside to match that given by the university? I am aware that the inspector's judgement itself has caused some additional delay.</p>		
<b>Answer from:</b>		Councillor Charles Gerrish
<p><i>The Planning Inspector has yet to confirm the order for the creation of the PROW. In order for this to happen officers are currently preparing a further public advertisement so that the PROW can be confirmed by the Planning Inspector. Additional legal work would then be necessary in order for the creation of a Cycleway Order. These statutory processes could result in a further public enquiry.</i></p> <p><i>As we cannot be sure that the process will be successful the scheme sits on the task register and officers will work to secure funding from the most appropriate source once the legal processes have successfully completed.</i></p>		

<b>12</b>	<b>Question from:</b>	Councillor Nicholas Coombes
<p>Given the departure of Wali Rahman, how does the council plan to structure the Student Community Partnership's staff and when will the vacancy be filled?</p>		
<b>Answer from:</b>		Councillor Chris Watt
<p><i>The structure of the Student Community Partnership will remain the same, as the departure of the staff member does not affect the agreement between the</i></p>		

*Universities and the council. Temporary staff cover for the post is in position until a permanent replacement is recruited. Short listing for the replacement staff member is already under way the post having been advertised during September / October 2009. It is anticipated that a permanent replacement officer will be in post shortly after Christmas 2009.*

13

**Question from:** Councillors Paul Crossley and Dine Romero

Early last year the Council received a large amount of Government funds to invest in improving dangerous roads. Following site visits with officers and the member it was agreed to look at the Whiteway Road from the Globe all the way up to Clarks. The Council is now considering a report on some options. Can the Cabinet member assure us that the Government money will be sufficient to implement some of these schemes and, if there is money left over, can the next priority be the entire length of Englishcombe Lane?

**Answer from:** Councillor Charles Gerrish

*The Council has invested considerable sums in improving road safety and has recruited an additional officer to increase its capacity in delivering road safety schemes.*

*The three year, plus this year's, accident record for Pennyquick and Rush Hill to Clarks is 28 accidents; of which 2 were fatal, 3 serious and 23 slight. An accident reduction scheme is currently being investigated and the study will be completed early in 2010. Similarly an accident reduction feasibility study for Rush Hill/Englishcombe Lane junction is also in progress.*

*We expect that works from this study will be capable of implementation next year and it is expected that funds will be allocated in the 2010/11 capital programme for this.*

*Members should also be aware that road safety measures were completed as part of the resurfacing works carried out on Rush Hill and Pennyquick this year; the Pennyquick/Poolmead Road junction having been treated with HFS antiskid surfacing, together with the installation of a vehicle activated warning sign. We expect this sign to be installed in March next year.*

*The three year, plus this year, accident record on the length of Englishcombe Lane from its junction with Rush Hill to its junction with Bloomfield Road (not including the junctions) is 15; of which 1 was serious and 24 slight and the request to fund future studies/ works along Englishcombe Lane is noted. However the potential road safety benefits are not considered to be sufficiently high to proceed with a study at this time.*

14

**Question from:** Councillor Paul Crossley

Now that the Council has signed up to the "Cycle to Work" scheme with the Bath company Cyclescheme, will the Cabinet member be looking to sign up to the full

"Cycle to Work Guarantee" ( <a href="http://www.cycletoworkguarantee.org.uk/">http://www.cycletoworkguarantee.org.uk/</a> ) to further encourage employees to cycle to work?	
<b>Answer from:</b>	Councillor Malcolm Hanney
<i>The matter has not at this stage been considered in any detail. I have, however, asked officers to include a consideration of this initiative in the Corporate Travel Plan brief which is currently being developed. Any proposals will need to be considered in the context of the Council's Office Accommodation plans progress and, as appropriate, in terms of budget and HR priorities.</i>	

<b>15</b>	<b>Question from:</b>	Councillor Caroline Roberts
Can the Leader of Council state why the extra Cabinet meeting scheduled for December is to be held in Keynsham not Bath? The Guildhall car park may be closed, but the other car parks, park and ride and public transport options (including free bus travel for the over 60s) are still available are they not?		
<b>Answer from:</b>		Councillor Francine Haerberling
<i>During the busy Bath Christmas Market period, the Council endeavours to minimise the number of meetings held in the Guildhall in order to lessen the number of public car parking spaces taken by Members. Therefore, along with other scheduled meetings during this period, the Cabinet meeting of the 2nd December is to be held in Keynsham.</i>		

<b>16</b>	<b>Question from:</b>	Councillor Caroline Roberts
Can the Cabinet member for Customer Services tell me when he proposes to carry out the review into parking in the outer areas of Bath that he committed to at the Safer and Stronger Communities overview and scrutiny panel meeting of 27 November 2008?		
<b>Answer from:</b>		Councillor Charles Gerrish
<i>Parking Services have developed a 4 year rolling programme for the review of all the Controlled Parking Zones. During this financial year the service is due to review the Central Zone as well as Outer Zones 8 and 9. Any suggested changes arising from reviews would be subject to consultation and the usual statutory processes.</i>		
<b>Supplementary Question:</b>		
Does that mean that the Council gave a false commitment to the Overview and		



Scrutiny Panel last year regarding the overflow of parking from neighbouring areas?

**Answer from:** Councillor Charles Gerrish

*Any answer I gave then was made in good faith. I am aware of further work being done to improve the parking problems around the RUH.*

17 **Question from:** Councillor Caroline Roberts

Recently First Bus announced cuts to some of their services in Bath, the reason being that they were struggling financially. Does the Cabinet member for Customer Services still have confidence that First or 'other operators' will be able to deliver the service for the proposed rapid transit route?

**Answer from:** Councillor Charles Gerrish

*The Council will be going out to tender in July 2010 to invite operators to bid for Park & Ride services, including the rapid transit route operation to Newbridge Park & Ride. These contracts will replace the existing Park & Ride contracts which expire in 2011. We have every confidence of attracting a wide range of high quality bidders for these contracts, and will select the best operational, financial, and environmental option that can be afforded at that time. We know that First Group at a national level are fully supportive.*

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS - PUBLIC

There were none