

BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET

CABINET

These minutes are draft until confirmed as a correct record at the next meeting.

Wednesday, 13th November, 2013

Present:

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| Councillor Paul Crossley | Leader of the Council |
| Councillor David Dixon | Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods |
| Councillor Simon Allen | Cabinet Member for Wellbeing |
| Councillor Tim Ball | Cabinet Member for Homes and Planning |
| Councillor David Bellotti | Cabinet Member for Community Resources |
| Councillor Katie Hall | Cabinet Member for Community Integration |
| Councillor Caroline Roberts | Cabinet Member for Transport |
| Councillor Dine Romero | Cabinet Member for Early Years, Children and Youth |
| Councillor Ben Stevens | Cabinet Member for Sustainable Development |

65 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair was taken by Councillor Paul Crossley, Leader of the Council.
The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

66 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

The Chair drew attention to the evacuation procedure as set out in the Agenda.

67 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

68 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

69 TO ANNOUNCE ANY URGENT BUSINESS AGREED BY THE CHAIR

There was none.

70 QUESTIONS FROM PUBLIC AND COUNCILLORS

There were 18 questions from the following Councillors: Alan Hale, Geoff Ward, Patrick Anketell-Jones (2), Charles Gerrish (3), Michael Evans, Tim Warren, Liz Richardson (2), Anthony Clarke (5), Eleanor Jackson, David Laming.

There were 2 questions from the following members of the public: Judith Chubb-Whittle (Chair, Stanton Drew Parish Council), Simon Whittle.

[Copies of the questions and response, including supplementary questions and responses if any, have been placed on the Minute book as Appendix 1 and are available on the Council's website.]

71 STATEMENTS, DEPUTATIONS OR PETITIONS FROM PUBLIC OR COUNCILLORS

Clarke Osborne (Chair, Stanton Wick Action Group) in a statement *[a copy of which is attached to these Minutes as Appendix 2 and on the Council's website]* expressed dissatisfaction with the lack of progress in completing the DPD process and asked Cabinet to allocate resources to complete the DPD, to remove unsustainable sites from the list and to proceed with the Lower Bristol Road site.

Karen Abolkheir (Stanton Wick Action Group) in a statement *[a copy of which is attached to these Minutes as Appendix 3 and on the Council's website]* listed a number of ways in which she felt the DPD so far had not been well managed. She urged Cabinet to ensure that progress would be made on the project.

72 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS CABINET MEETING

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

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 11th September 2013 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

73 CONSIDERATION OF SINGLE MEMBER ITEMS REQUISITIONED TO CABINET

There were none.

74 MATTERS REFERRED BY POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY BODIES

The Chair invited Councillor Sally Davis (Chair of Early Years, Children and Youth PDS Panel) to introduce to Cabinet the Panel's recommendations relating to the Reorganisation of Early Years, Children's Centres and Early Help Service.

Councillor Davis in her statement *[a copy of which is attached to these Minutes as Appendix 4 and on the Council's website]* explained the Panel's Terms of Reference and how it had worked to deliver its recommendations. She listed the 8 recommendations, which had previously been published in the Notes of the Panel's meeting.

The Chair thanked Councillor Davis and said that the Cabinet would give consideration to the Panel's recommendations when considering the issue later in the agenda.

75 SINGLE MEMBER CABINET DECISIONS TAKEN SINCE PREVIOUS CABINET MEETING

The Cabinet agreed to note the report.

76 CAPITAL ALLOCATION OF THE DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION GRANT PROVIDED FOR EARLY LEARNING FOR TWO YEAR OLDS

Councillor Dine Romero in moving the proposals explained that they were a continuation of the process of increasing the provision of child care for 2-year-olds

from 20% to 40% at no cost to the Council. She asked Cabinet to agree the capital allocation of the grant.

Councillor Simon Allen seconded the proposal, saying that this was very good news. He particularly welcomed the investment of extra places in Radstock.

On a motion from Councillor Dine Romero, seconded by Councillor Simon Allen, it was

RESOLVED (unanimously)

(1) To AGREE to adopt recommendation 6.3 of the 2013 Childcare Sufficiency Assessment by using available capital to increase the supply of 2 year old places in the areas identified as follows:

- Twerton, Bath
- Keynsham
- Writhlington, Radstock

77 RE-STRUCTURING OF THE EARLY YEARS, CHILDREN'S CENTRE AND EARLY HELP (0 - 11 YEARS) SERVICES 2014 - 2016

Councillor John Bull in a statement *[a copy of which is attached to these Minutes as Appendix 5 and on the Council's website]* asked for a reversal of the plans. He felt that the PDS Panel's response to the issue was not sufficient. The aim of Children's Centres should be to reach all young children and their parents; moving to targeted services for only vulnerable families would undo the progress made since Sure Start. He asked that the Panel should be asked to reconvene and come up with proposals for a sustainable level of service.

Councillor Bull presented a petition of 880 signatures to Cabinet.

The Chair referred the petition to Councillor Dine Romero for her response in due course.

Councillor Liz Hardman in a statement *[a copy of which is attached to these Minutes as Appendix 12 and on the Council's website]* introduced her minority report and reminded Cabinet that the Panel had admitted that there were a number of unanswered questions. She felt that the Panel should be asked to report back to Cabinet in December with new proposals.

Roz Lambert (Chief Exec, First Steps Bath) in a statement *[a copy of which is attached to these Minutes as Appendix 6 and on the Council's website]* said that if Children's Centres were obliged to be self-funding, they would depend only on government Early Years funding and fees from parents. The kind of holistic intervention presently possible would be lost.

Sue Pendle (Chair of Trustees, First Steps Bath) in a statement read by Dougie Brown *[a copy of which is attached to these Minutes as Appendix 7 and on the Council's website]* said that the 38% cut was out of balance with the rest of the Council's budget reductions. It was also out of line with the Council's stated priorities. Provision should be based on need, not on financial savings alone.

Nettie Williams (parent, Radstock) in a statement *[a copy of which is attached to these Minutes as Appendix 8 and on the Council's website]* spoke of her personal passion to see Children's Centres thriving and helping young families especially at critical times in their lives.

Jane Carter (Branch Secretary, UNISON) in a statement *[a copy of which is attached to these Minutes as Appendix 9 and on the Council's website]* spoke of the importance of the work undertaken by Children's Centres and of the concern of her members about the impact of the proposed cuts. She urged the Cabinet to note the issues raised and to consider the recommendations of the minority report.

Councillor Eleanor Jackson in a statement *[a copy of which is attached to these Minutes as Appendix 10 and on the Council's website]* expressed her concern that the PDS Panel had been asked to consider where the cuts should be made, but had not been asked to consider the depth of the cuts. Not enough account had been taken of the equality impact assessment. If the cuts were made as recommended, the service remaining would not be sustainable. She urged Cabinet to accept the proposals outlined in the minority report.

Tony Crouch (Chair, Keynsham Children's Centre Advisory Group) in a statement stressed that Cabinet should not make a decision based only on the information currently available. He asked for further thought to be given to the issue.

Elsie McKenzie in an *ad hoc* statement explained her role as Assistant Head Teacher and SENCO in a nursery for 2-year-olds. She felt that her job would become untenable if the input from Children's Centres was lost.

Councillor Michael Evans in an *ad hoc* statement said that as a member of the Task and Finish Group, he had been aware that the Panel was dealing with the consequences of a Council Budget adopted in February. Children's Centres were very valued. But he acknowledged that the Cabinet were obliged to manage within budget. He appealed to Cabinet to find funds from another source, even if short term, to minimise the impact of the changes.

A mother and user of a Children's Centre in an *ad hoc* statement said that Children's Centres were essential to some families. She didn't know where she would be without her local Children's Centre.

Lesley Mansell (Chair, Radstock Town Council) in an *ad hoc* statement *[a copy of which is attached to these Minutes as Appendix 11 and on the Council's website]* welcomed the recent re-opening of a Children's Centre in Radstock. She reported that the petition handed in by Councillor John Bull had been well received in Radstock. The Youth Service had already been reduced in the town. She agreed with Councillor Liz Hardman that the process leading up to the Panel's report had been flawed.

Councillor Dine Romero introduced the item by thanking all those who had contributed to the debate and to the investigations by the Task and Finish Group. The level of cuts imposed by central government had been unprecedented and the Council could not escape this. She had been impressed by the passion and enthusiasm of those she had heard. She wanted to emphasise that although across the country Children's Centres were being closed, the proposals before Cabinet were not to close any Children's Centres at all. Any changes would not be implemented until March 2015. She asked Cabinet to support her proposals to focus on finding new ways to deliver Children's Centre services.

She moved the proposals.

Councillor Paul Crossley seconded the proposal. He reminded Cabinet of the difficult times and unprecedented cuts by central government. He emphasised that no Children's Centres were to be closed, but there would be a refocusing on those most in need. He thanked First Steps and the other speakers, and the PDS Panel for its hard work on a difficult brief.

Councillor David Bellotti acknowledged the part played by Children's Centres as a partner across many different services. He outlined some recent improvements in services, but said that it was necessary to find new models of delivery. It would not be acceptable to charge vulnerable families for the service, nor would it be acceptable to close any centres. He supported the proposals.

Councillor Tim Ball remembered that he had been involved in funding First Steps when it originally set up in Twerton. He had said then that should central funding be removed, the provision would be in danger of failing. He expressed some doubt about the relevance of the petition, because many signatories had been erroneously told that the Children's Centres were to be closed.

Councillor David Dixon thanked Councillor Liz Hardman for her minority report. He had been disappointed by the outcome of the main Scrutiny report. He wanted the Scrutiny Panel to be asked to look again at the issue. He supported the recommendations.

Councillor Dine Romero summed up by reminding everyone that the Panel had worked to its Terms of Reference so it was not true to say they had failed in their task. She thanked them for their hard work. The ongoing debate would enable a new model to be developed, drawing on all the contributions received.

On a motion from Councillor Dine Romero, seconded by Councillor Paul Crossley, it was

RESOLVED (unanimously)

(1) To NOTE that the Early Years, Children & Youth Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel had a number of questions, in particular which services will be provided at the Children's Centres under the proposed new model, who will run the various Children's Centres, and to whom these services will be available;

(2) To NOTE the issues raised in the Minority Report; and

(3) To FORMULATE their response to the Panel's recommendations and to the Minority Report.

78 STANDARDS AND GENERAL CONDITIONS TO BE ATTACHED TO HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE LICENCES

David Redgewell in an *ad hoc* statement objected that no Equality Impact Assessment had been provided, nor referred to in the report. He was angry that the Council was still allowing operators to run from the train station with not a single vehicle with disabled access. He asked when the Council would enforce this. He was unhappy that the report imposed no conditions about accessibility.

The Chair assured David Redgewell that an Equality Impact Assessment had been completed and said that he would arrange for him to be sent a copy.

Councillor Anthony Clarke in an *ad hoc* statement asked that other vehicles be considered for licensing under special circumstances, as are wedding and funeral cars already. He also asked why the use of GPS was not allowed.

Councillor David Laming in an *ad hoc* statement asked for more detail about the available training.

Councillor David Dixon introduced the item. He apologised that no Equality Impact Assessment had been published with the proposals. He replied to David Redgewell's observation about accessible vehicles at the station by assuring him

that all new vehicles must in future be fully accessible, so the fleet would gradually move towards compliance. Operators would also be required to undertake manual handling training which will be both practical and theory, with an assessment which would require a pass.

Councillor Dixon explained the reasons why GPS was not allowed in vehicles.

He moved the proposals.

Councillor Caroline Roberts seconded the proposals.

Councillor Ben Stevens agreed to the proposals and felt that they would contribute to making Bath a welcoming place to visit.

Councillor Tim Ball agreed with the points made by David Redgewell about accessible vehicles at the station. He looked forward to the improvements promised by Councillor Dixon.

Councillor David Dixon, summing up, said that the majority of drivers were excellent and the conditions were to ensure that. The drivers had been keen when the training opportunity had been suggested. He observed that it would be possible to negotiate with the train operator to see if access to the taxi rank immediately outside the station could be improved.

On a motion from Councillor David Dixon, seconded by Councillor Caroline Roberts, it was

RESOLVED (unanimously)

(1) To ADOPT the policy for hackney carriage and private hire licensing standards; and

(2) That the Cabinet provide comment to the Licensing Committee on the general conditions relating to hackney carriage and private hire drivers, specified in the report.

79 REVIEW OF B&NES LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME

David Redgewell in an *ad hoc* statement said he was generally pleased with the proposals although had some concerns about accessibility issues, which needed more detail. He welcomed the involvement of Scrutiny in exploring the possibility of a public transport link into Wiltshire.

Councillor Liz Richardson in an *ad hoc* statement made some observations about paragraph 3.4 of the report. She asked for clarification of the meaning of the “S” in the chart in Annex 1.

Councillor Tim Ball thanked both speakers. He explained to Cabinet that it had been hoped that further progress would have been made on the review – however, in December the Council would be looking at housing numbers with the government inspector. He explained that the “S” in the chart indicated “Submitted” – that is, the process had been completed. He said that dates and timetables would be informed in due course. However, they would tie in closely with the Placemaking Plan.

He moved the proposals.

Councillor Katie Hall seconded the proposals and said that she was very pleased to see the progress that had been made.

On a motion from Councillor Tim Ball, seconded by Councillor Katie Hall, it was

RESOLVED (unanimously)

- (1) To ADOPT the revised Local Development Scheme; and
- (2) To DELEGATE authority to the Divisional Director of Planning and Transport Development, in conjunction with the Cabinet Member for Homes and Planning, to make editorial amendments to ensure the LDS is up-to-date and correct any errors.

80 REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING, CASH LIMITS AND VIREMENTS - APRIL 2013 TO SEPTEMBER 2013

Councillor David Bellotti explained that this item was about the way the Council spent its money. It was good news – the Council continued to operate within its budget. He thanked the officers who had worked hard to ensure that services were delivered within budget. He made particular reference to the increased visitor numbers at the Roman Baths and to the fact that the council had been able to repay £50M of expensive debt by careful cash flow management. This had been achieved against the backdrop of no Council Tax rise. He listed a number of projects across the area into which the Council had invested large sums. He moved the proposals.

Councillor Paul Crossley seconded the proposal. He reminded the Cabinet that in difficult financial times it was a huge challenge to deliver services but said how pleased he was that there would be no Children's Centre closures. He listed a number of schemes across the area which had recently been completed.

Councillor David Dixon welcomed the very positive report which showed the investment which had been made into the whole area. He urged Cabinet members to consider what would be done in subsequent years to attract visitors to Bath.

On a motion from Councillor David Bellotti, seconded by Councillor Paul Crossley, it was

RESOLVED (unanimously)

- (1) To ASK Strategic Directors to work towards managing within budget in the current year for their respective service areas, and to manage below budget where possible by not committing unnecessary expenditure, through tight budgetary control;
- (2) To NOTE the revenue budget position;
- (3) To NOTE the capital expenditure position for the Council in the financial year to the end of September and the year end projections;
- (4) To AGREE the revenue virements listed for approval; and
- (5) To NOTE the changes in the capital programme.

81 TREASURY MANAGEMENT MONITORING REPORT TO 30TH SEPTEMBER 2013

David Redgewell in an *ad hoc* statement asked the Cabinet to find a home for the West of England Partnership once it had lost its present space in Wilder House, Bristol.

Councillor David Bellotti introduced the item by explaining that this item was about how the Council managed its cash and debts. He thanked officers for helping to reduce the huge historical debt. He was pleased that the Council had avoided

making risky investments in countries such as Iceland and Portugal. He moved the proposals with pleasure.

Councillor Paul Crossley seconded the proposal. He advised David Redgewell that it had been felt that Wilder House had not been the most suitable venue for the West of England Partnership, so alternative venues were being explored. He promised to get back to David once more information was available.

On a motion from Councillor David Bellotti, seconded by Councillor Paul Crossley, it was

RESOLVED (unanimously)

(1) To NOTE the Treasury Management Report to 30th September 2013, prepared in accordance with the CIPFA Treasury Code of Practice;

(2) To NOTE the Treasury Management Indicators to 30th September 2013; and

(3) To ASK that this Treasury Management Report and attached appendices be reported to November Council and December Corporate Audit Committee.

82 LEARNING PARTNERSHIP WEST

The Chair asked all Cabinet members to confirm that they had read and considered the public interest test. All agreed.

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

RESOLVED (unanimously)

(1) To AGREE that the entire report constitutes exempt information according to the categories set out in the Local government Act 1972 (amended Schedule 12A) because it contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information);

(2) To AGREE that having already been satisfied that the public interest would be better served by not disclosing relevant information, and in accordance with the provisions of Section 100 (A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business because of the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Schedule 12A of the Act as amended.

[At this point the public and press were asked to leave the meeting]

The Cabinet then considered the exempt report and made certain decisions which are exempt from publication for the reasons previously stated.

The meeting ended at 8.35 pm

Chair _____

Date Confirmed and Signed _____

Prepared by Democratic Services

CABINET MEETING 13th November 2013

REGISTERED SPEAKERS

Where the intention is to speak about an item on the Agenda, the speaker will be offered the option to speak near the beginning of the meeting or just before the Agenda item.

Statements about issues NOT on the Agenda

- Clarke Osborne (Chair, Stanton Wick Action Group)
Re: Gypsy and Traveller DPD
- Karen Abolkheir (Stanton Wick Action Group)
Re: Gypsy and Traveller DPD

Re: Agenda Item 13 (Restructure of Early Years, Children's Centres and Early Help Services)

- Cllr John Bull
- Cllr Liz Hardman
- Roz Lambert (Chief Exec, First Steps Bath)
- Sue Pendle (Chair of Trustees, First Steps Bath) – read by Dougie Brown (Trustee)
- Nettie Williams (parent, Radstock)
- Jane Carter (Branch Secretary, UNISON)
- Cllr Eleanor Jackson
- Tony Crouch (Chair, Keynsham Children's Centre Advisory Group)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS - COUNCILLORS

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| M 01 | Question from: | Councillor Alan Hale |
| <p>Regarding the general 20mph zones throughout B&NES;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What pre-evaluation has been carried out? Which roads have had speed recordings taken to establish user speeds currently? 2. On the basis that the police expect 20 zones to be self-enforcing with traffic calming measurers in place, what traffic calming will be put in place? 3. If there are no traffic calming measurers are the police going to enforce? I can tell you that no mobile camera van enforcement will be provided and it is highly unlikely that the sparse roads policing unit coverage of Avon and Somerset will be focussed on 20 limits. 4. How will you evaluate the worth and success of £0.5m spend once the limits are in place, and over what period? 5. What will success look like? 6. What is the current average speed in a selection of roads soon to be subject of the 20 limit? From enquiries elsewhere it is suggested that in most places there is a normal average speed of 31 to 34 mph. Approximately ten per cent over the legal limit. 7. I am able to tell you, having spoken to other areas that their finding is that with the establishment of 20mph limits they see a drop of some one to three mph on the above mentioned average speed. Therefore currently we have a very minor speeding problem. Once the 20mph limit is in then that average lower running speed of shall we say 30mph suddenly gives you a significant speeding problem of some 45% to 50% over the limit. Is that what we are seeking to achieve? 8. How do you propose to offer schools protection when currently they have a 20mph limit around their school and some people respond to it and travel past at 20 but not many, certainly if they are following me, they do, traffic going the other way is nearer 25 to 30? Once everywhere has a limit of 20 and everyone is exceeding it the schools will not have their protection? 9. How are we going to achieve our improved air quality with lower gears being used and traffic bunching? 10. Have we ensured that all bus time tables are being changed to recognise the lower speeds everywhere? This is important as well as that will impact on people's lives. 11. What meetings and when have been held with the bus and coach companies. | | |
| Answer from: | | Councillor Caroline Roberts |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Prior to implementation of the programme a sample of the traffic speeds has been collected on roads representative of streets in the area.</i> 2. <i>20 mph speed limit areas are distinct from 20mph zones. 20mph speed limit areas do not require traffic calming.</i> 3. <i>The Police are supportive of 20mph speed limits, but guidance offered by the Department for Transport Circular 1/2006 'Setting Local Speed Limits' advises that 20mph speed limits should be self-enforcing and that there should be no expectation on the Police to provide additional enforcement beyond their routine activities unless</i> | | |

this has been explicitly agreed

4. The worth and success of 20mph speed limits will be assessed using before and after speed and accident data over a 3 year period and continuing local support for 20mph speed limits.

5. A slight reduction in casualties, 50% of speeds at or below 24mph and continuing local support for 20mph speed limits.

6. No, the speed limits are set in mainly residential streets where speeds are already below or close to 24mph.

8. Only residential streets where speeds are already below or close to 24mph are covered by the 20mph speed limit areas so schools within the speed limit area will continue to have protection.

9. Reducing speeds to 20mph does not have a significant effect on air quality.

10. Only residential streets where speed are already below or close to 24mph are covered by the 20mph speed limits and bus timetables are not significantly affected.

11. Bus companies are consulted in writing on all speed limit traffic regulation orders before they are implemented.

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| M 02 | Question from: | Councillor Geoff Ward |
| How has the Council's resolution on the Military covenant been enacted and translated into reality? | | |
| Answer from: | Councillor Paul Crossley | |
| <p><i>Following the resolution at Council on 6th May, the Community Covenant for Bath and North East Somerset was signed at the Council's Annual Flag raising ceremony on 24th June 2013. The signatories comprised representatives of The Army, The Royal Navy, The Royal Air Force, Bath and North East Somerset Council, Avon Local Councils Association, Curo, Armed Forces charities, Avon Fire and Rescue and Avon and Somerset Constabulary. The Chairman signed on behalf of Bath & North East Somerset Council.</i></p> <p><i>A lead officer within the Council is responsible for working with the armed services and armed services charities to implement the provisions of the Covenant. Representatives from the army and the Royal British Legion have been invited to participate in a group established for this purpose. Some examples of recent initiatives which have arisen as a result of links made through the Community Covenant are:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>• The Royal British Legion have been working with the Council to establish a regular presence in the Council's One Stop Shops to provide help and support. We understand from the Royal British Legion that they will begin operating from our Manvers Street one-stop shop later this month.</i><i>• The new gateway signs for Radstock are being produced by Royal British Legion Industries- a not for profit charity that provides rehabilitation, accommodation and employment for disabled and disadvantaged former service personnel.</i> <p><i>Complementing this work are the preparations currently being made locally for the First World War centenary commemorations, A working party has been established to co-ordinate and oversee the range of activity taking place across our area.</i></p> <p><i>The Council will be represented at the MOD's conference on Community Covenants</i></p> | | |

taking place in London on 22nd November.

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| M 03 | Question from: | Councillor Patrick Anketell-Jones |
| <p>The news of the extension of Hinkley Point nuclear power station informed us that the national supply of electricity currently exceeds demand by approximately 15%. Over the next ten years that safety margin will fall to less than 5% resulting in an increased risk of power outages. Public communication networks depend on a reliable supply of electricity and the continuous delivery of front line services depends on uninterrupted communications. What measures has the Council put in place to ensure there is resilience within its communications networks to a prolonged power outage and has that resilience been tested?</p> | | |
| Answer from: | | Councillor David Bellotti |
| <p><i>Bath & North East Somerset Council will be taking part in EXERCISE HOPKINSON on 30 April/1 May. This is a Department of Environment and Climate Change exercise looking at a National Grid failure. This will be in the format of a table top exercise and will involve 3 Local Resilience Forums in the South West and will address the issues raised in this question.</i></p> <p><i>In addition to this our Emergency Management team are working with all services to ensure Disaster Recovery Plans are up to date and well maintained.</i></p> <p><i>Whilst we are not anticipating any long term outages we are supporting the governments initiative to use wind up radios and BBC broadcasting are our national default position.</i></p> | | |

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| M 04 | Question from: | Councillor Patrick Anketell-Jones |
| <p>The Council's new car park information signs appear to be in place but they are not yet displaying complete information. Will the signs be fully operational before the Christmas Market opens?</p> | | |
| Answer from: | | Councillor Paul Crossley |
| <p><i>The new car park count system signs are currently displaying information from the following Council car parks:-</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>• Charlotte Street</i><i>• Avon Street</i> <p><i>Manvers Street is linked into the system and is still being tested to ensure the best possible accuracy of data is displayed on the signs.</i></p> <p><i>Southgate and the Podium car parks are in private ownership, however Southgate is linked into the system and as is still being tested for accuracy of data as in Manvers Street. We are actively working with the Southgate car park operators.</i></p> | | |

The owners of the Podium car park have agreed for their car park to link to our count system and to have a legal agreement to cover this, we are using our best endeavours to push on with the legal agreement for this exchange of data.

In light of the above it was considered a better option to progress the erection of the signs displaying as much information as possible ahead of the Christmas Market starting on the 28th November.

We are working to have as much car park availability information displayed.

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| M 05 | Question from: | Councillor Charles Gerrish |
| <p>Once work is completed on the Council's office rationalisation strategy, what proportion of Council employees will be primarily based in Keynsham, what proportion in Bath and what proportion in other parts of the authority? How will these figures change from the current situation?</p> | | |
| Answer from: | | Councillor David Bellotti |
| <p><i>Broadly the percentages will be:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>• Bath around 50%</i><i>• Keynsham around 45%</i><i>• Hollies and elsewhere 5%</i> <p><i>We are exploring income from partners in Keynsham to make our development there better value for money.</i></p> <p><i>We will be accommodating around 100 staff in the Guildhall Bath which was not originally planned by the previous administration.</i></p> | | |

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| M 06 | Question from: | Councillor Charles Gerrish |
| <p>Now that the civic centre car park Keynsham has been partially reopened, other than the press announcement, what other action is being taken to make it clearer to car users that this car park is open for use?</p> | | |
| Answer from: | | Councillor Caroline Roberts |
| <p><i>The opening of the car park has been announced within the press releases and on the Council website. Highway signage directs users towards the car park from Temple Street.</i></p> <p><i>Additional signage will be placed in Ashton Way to guide drivers towards the car park if they are unaware of the reopening.</i></p> | | |

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| M 07 | Question from: | Councillor Charles Gerrish |
| <p>In light of the proposed work by Wales & West utilities, which will require Keynsham High Street to be made one-way from the 20th January to the 28th February, will the Council recognise there is a significant level of public support for a permanent one-way system, and therefore use this as an opportunity</p> | | |
| Answer from: | | Councillor Caroline Roberts |
| <p><i>It is often difficult to draw evidenced conclusion from temporary traffic arrangements, particularly during winter months when traffic levels can be much reduced and also do not take into account future developments such as K2, Town Hall and Somerdale and potential mitigation measures.</i></p> <p><i>However I am happy to ask officers to undertake monitoring of these arrangements to see if it provides any indication of the deliverability of introducing one-way traffic working in the High Street on an experimental or permanent basis. I will ask officers to share the results of this monitoring with you in due course.</i></p> | | |

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| M 08 | Question from: | Councillor Michael Evans |
| <p>In view of the fact that Ofsted is introducing tougher inspections for nurseries and pre-schools, with those rated as 'requiring improvement' at risk of closure if they do not rapidly improve, does the Council have plans and resources to support vulnerable centres and help them to improve rather than close?</p> | | |
| Answer from: | | Councillor Dine Romero |
| <p><i>The Council has a long-standing strong Early Years Foundation Stage Team that supports all our voluntary, maintained, private and independent nurseries, Reception classes and Childminders to deliver the best outcomes for children (approximately 100 Early Years preschool and nursery settings, 58 schools and 176 Child-minders).</i></p> <p><i>Over the last 2 years this service has seen an upward trajectory in Ofsted ratings from 'satisfactory' to 'good' and from 'good' to 'outstanding'. In August 2009 70% of providers received an Outstanding or Good Judgement – by 31st December 2012 that figure had risen to 88% of nurseries and 89% of childminders.</i></p> <p><i>The new Ofsted Framework that came into force since November 2013 is tougher and the requirements of providers are more demanding. Our aspiration is that all providers are good and they have a solid foundation upon which to build. However, there will be particular challenges relating to (i) high staff turnover in this sector (ii) the expansion of provision for two year olds and (iii) the growing number of young children with SEN and the changes in this area planned by the Government.</i></p> <p><i>Given the wider changes proposed in this service area we plan to develop more of a 'traded' service based on our good reputation, where more settings would have to pay for the support we offer, in order for us to continue to deliver a quality service. The ability for the sector to pay needs to be gauged. The core budget will be focused on the geographical areas of the Council where children have the poorest outcomes, on the statutory responsibilities around inclusion and vulnerable children.</i></p> | | |

New Government legislation has reduced the timescale for settings to secure improvement before funding is removed. Obviously, the Local Authority will seek to support providers to improve as quickly as possible bearing this reduced timescale.

Supplementary Question:

Thanks to the Cabinet member for the detailed and informative reply. I note, however, the intention to charge those providing early years settings for advice from Council officers. Would this not tend to diminish the support actually received, and therefore make it more difficult to gain a good judgement from Ofsted, or to improve after an adverse one?

Answer from:

Councillor Dine Romero

It is the responsibility of individual settings to address the standards expected of them by Ofsted and to consider what support they might need to improve or sustain their quality standards. The offer of support from the LA is not a specific statutory function for us to provide and the scale of support we are able to offer in future will be dependent on the final model agreed for the delivery of services within the budget available. However, we expect to continue to offer some targeted free support and believe that local settings have appreciated the support we have been able to offer in the past and may see purchasing support from us as a more effective and better value for money option than other sources of help available.

M 09

Question from:

Councillor Tim Warren

Following the resolution of Full Council in September regarding the closure of public toilets, can the Cabinet Member please detail what work has been undertaken to enact the wishes of Full Council, with particular reference to resolutions 3 and 4 of the Full Council motion.

Answer from:

Councillor David Dixon

Work is underway to ensure that Council can receive proper consideration of the issue as part of the budget setting process.

Supplementary Question:

Can he reassure me that the toilets will remain open until an alternative is found?

Answer from:

Councillor David Dixon

We are abiding by the package agreed by Council. If no alternative is identified, we will present the costing options to Council to make choices.

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| M 10 | Question from: | Councillor Liz Richardson |
| <p>What progress has the Council made in taking land at Twerton out of the Greenbelt to enable to building of the planned traveller site, and when does the Cabinet Member anticipate this work being completed?</p> | | |
| Answer from: | | Councillor Tim Ball |
| <p><i>National Planning Policy as set out in "Planning Policy For Traveller Sites" distinguishes between plan making and planning application on this issue as follows;</i></p> <p>Policy E: Traveller sites in Green Belt</p> <p>14. Inappropriate development is harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved, except in very special circumstances. Traveller sites (temporary or permanent) in the Green Belt are inappropriate development.</p> <p>15. Green Belt boundaries should be altered only in exceptional circumstances. If a local planning authority wishes to make an exceptional limited alteration to the defined Green Belt boundary (which might be to accommodate a site inset within the Green Belt) to meet a specific, identified need for a traveller site, it should do so only through the plan-making process and not in response to a planning application. If land is removed from the Green Belt in this way, it should be specifically allocated in the development plan as a traveller site only.</p> <p><i>Planning permission should only be approved in the Green Belt for a Travellers' site if very special circumstances are demonstrated and other planning requirements are addressed.</i></p> <p><i>Therefore the only way to change the Green Belt is through the plan-making process and in the case of B&NES, this would need to be done through the Gypsies, Travellers, & Travelling Showpeoples' Site Allocations Plan if justified by exceptional circumstances. The timetable for the preparation of this Plan is set out in the Local Development Scheme which is being considered for review by Cabinet at this meeting. The timetable for the preparation of the Plan is the subject of cabinet question Cabinet QU #M11.</i></p> | | |
| Supplementary Question: | | |
| <p>For clarification, can he say whether it will be at the end of the DPD or sooner?</p> | | |
| Answer from: | | Councillor Tim Ball |
| <p>Sooner.</p> | | |

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| M 11 | Question from: | Councillor Liz Richardson |
| <p>Can the Cabinet Member please detail the current timeframe for the production and publication of the Gypsy and Traveller Site DPD?</p> | | |

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| Answer from: | Councillor Tim Ball |
| <p><i>The programme for the production of the Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Show peoples' Sites DPD is set out in the B&NES Local Development Scheme. This is currently the subject of a review and a report on a revised programme is due to be considered by Cabinet at this meeting</i></p> <p><i>However the report omits the proposed revised adoption date of the Plan and the full programme is as follows.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Options consultation Nov 2014</i> • <i>Draft Plan May 2015</i> • <i>Submission for examination Jan 2016</i> • <i>Hearings May 2016</i> • <i>Adoption Dec 2016</i> | |
| Supplementary Question: | |
| <p>Given that £161K has been spent so far, can he clarify how many sites are left on the list?</p> | |
| Answer from: | Councillor Tim Ball |
| <p><i>The list is unchanged since the question was last asked no further work will be done until the conclusion of the works on the Core Strategy</i></p> | |

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| M 12 | Question from: | Councillor Anthony Clarke |
| <p>Can the Cabinet Member please detail how revenue raised from on-street parking is used by the Council?</p> | | |
| Answer from: | Councillor Caroline Roberts | |
| <p><i>The Council uses all on street parking income in line with the requirements of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 section 55 as required.</i></p> <p><i>This requires that any surplus, after the costs of running the service are considered, is only spent on the purposes as specified within section 55 which include opportunities such as meeting the costs of providing or increasing off street car parking, meeting the costs of the provision or operation of passenger transport services or purposes of a highway or road improvement project.</i></p> | | |
| Supplementary Question: | | |
| <p>Does the Cabinet member have details of the surpluses generated and how they have been spent?</p> | | |
| Answer from: | Councillor Caroline Roberts | |

Within the Parking Services budgets the on street budgets generate £1.4m over the direct operational budget. This funds attributable overheads from running Parking Services and Council Support Services, any surplus helps fund the net revenue budgets for Highways £7.5m and Transport Services Inc. Public Transport £5.8m.

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| M 13 | Question from: | Councillor Anthony Clarke |
| <p>When does the Cabinet Member currently on reviewing the current parking charge regime at Royal Victoria Park, and does the Cabinet Member see merit in the proposal of creating 2-hours' free parking here?</p> | | |
| | Answer from: | Councillor Caroline Roberts |
| <p><i>The review of the arrangements will commence in December as previously confirmed. At that time all options will be considered and therefore it is not possible to pre judge the outcome at this time.</i></p> | | |

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| M 14 | Question from: | Councillor Anthony Clarke |
| <p>Can the Cabinet Member please confirm the currently planned total cost of the Rossiter Road project, and if the estimated cost is greater than that currently earmarked within the Capital Programme, how the Cabinet proposes the additional funding requirement be met?</p> | | |
| | Answer from: | Councillor Caroline Roberts |
| <p><i>The current budget is £1.834m and at present the forecast is that the scheme will come in on budget. Until the final tenders are received and evaluated it is not possible to establish the actual works costs. Should tenders be submitted 'over budget', Cabinet will consider reducing the scope of the works or funding the addition costs from alternative capital allocations.</i></p> | | |

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| M 15 | Question from: | Councillor Eleanor Jackson |
| <p>“Report: care home inequality A report from Independent Age, a support group, has claimed that middle-class pensioners in care homes are routinely forced to pay up to £150 a week on top of their bills to subsidise council-funded residents. A study into how the industry would operate after a planned overhaul of the care system found that residents of homes in England were collectively having to find an extra £700m a year support it. A total of 350,000 older people live in residential care in England. Just over four in 10 of them have their fees paid by their local</p> | | |

council. Most of the rest have to meet all the costs themselves, but about 56,000 have some of their fees paid and make top up payments to cover the rest. Currently, only those with total assets of less than £23,500 get any state support with their care.

The Telegraph p2

With reference to the above quotation from the Local Government website, could Cllr Allen say whether a similar system operates in B&NES?

Answer from:

Councillor Simon Allen

B&NES Council's Residential and Nursing Care Home fee levels are in line with those paid by neighbouring local authorities.

As highlighted in the report, it is the case that many Care Home providers have differential fee levels, with higher fee levels for private individuals. However, this is not a "system" or "policy" of the Local Authority as the Local Authority is not in a position to control or dictate the fees charged by care home providers to private individuals (often referred to as "self-funders").

There is a benefit to care home providers in taking placements at Local Authority indicative fee levels as such placements come with security of income - particularly in respect of those providers that the Local Authority has a block contract arrangement with - which is why Local Authorities are often able to make placements at lower fee levels than individuals. The Council does have a policy of paying "market supplements" if necessary in order to make placements to meet eligible need.

Proposals in the Care & Support Bill, likely to be enacted in 2015, would enable self-funders to ask the Local Authority to "commission" placements on their behalf. The benefits to both the individual and the Local Authority of this arrangement include better value for money through the increased purchasing power of the Local Authority and, also, the fact that self-funder's are likely to be able to meet the cost of their care for a longer period of time and/or reduce the Local Authority's "call", through a Deferred Payment, on that individual's estate following their death.

Supplementary Question:

Thank you for your prompt and detailed reply. But is he aware that there is a dearth of residential home places in Radstock area?

Answer from:

Councillor Simon Allen

Yes.

M 16

Question from:

Councillor Anthony Clarke

In the light of the anticipated provision of £5.2m within the Council's capital budget for the provision of an East of Bath Park and Ride, when will an announcement be made on the Cabinet's preferred location?

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| Answer from: | Councillor Caroline Roberts |
| <i>As I indicated in reply to Cllr Clarke's question at the last Cabinet we anticipate that the Bath Transport Strategy will identify a preferred location for this important facility. The Cabinet's agreement to this location will be aligned with the progression of the Placemaking Plan which is scheduled to be published next year as part of the Council's approval for the Core Strategy.</i> | |
| Supplementary Question: | |
| The previous Cabinet member promised that we would know the new location by now. Do you know when we will be told? | |
| Answer from: | Councillor Caroline Roberts |
| <i>This is part of the Transport Strategy which is currently being developed.</i> | |

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| M 17 | Question from: | Councillor Anthony Clarke |
| Does B&NES adhere to the 'Well Maintained Highways' code of practice for the maintenance of its highways, or if not, what is the present regime for the inspection of feeder roads in rural areas? | | |
| Answer from: | Councillor Caroline Roberts | |
| <i>Although the standards are not statutory, the Council's maintenance regime is based on those specified in the Code of Practice. Officers work with the guidance contained in code, when exact standards are not specified.</i> | | |

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| M 18 | Question from: | Councillor Dave Laming |
| Will the Leader of the Council investigate the possibility of setting in place a Memorandum of Understanding between Bath & N E Somerset Council, The River Regeneration Trust and Wessex Water to use the East of Bath meadowland as part of the Government's wetland, flood compensation and water drought storage? | | |
| Answer from: | Councillor Paul Crossley | |
| <i>The Council would be pleased to speak to the River Regeneration Trust as part of our on-going work with them to explore whether there is an opportunity to take this forward.</i> | | |
| Supplementary Question: | | |

Does he realise the significance of this in case of drought?

Answer from:

Councillor Paul Crossley

I certainly recognise the importance of the question and I look forward to exploring the issues at the meeting.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS - PUBLIC

P 01

Question from:

Judith Chubb-Whittle, Chair, Stanton Drew PC

At the October 2013 Parish Liaison meeting I asked the following questions and was told that since the officer responsible was not in attendance on this agenda item an answer would follow. I have not received the answer to date. Could Cllr Ball update me on the Gypsy & Traveller DPD please as the following questions are of significance to the parishes and the wider community?

1. What is the status of the planning application on the illegal Lower Bristol Road travellers' site following your announcement in September 2012 to convert this to a legal site?
2. What provision is being made to accommodate the present occupants, many of whom are from vulnerable groups during the upgrade of the Lower Bristol Road site?

Answer from:

Councillor Tim Ball

1. It is expected that a full planning application for the scheme will be submitted by the end of this month. At present there is a single matter delaying the application. This relates to the design of an acoustic barrier which is required following the results of a commissioned noise survey. Once this matter is resolved, expected within the next few weeks, the application will be submitted.

2. Throughout this process the Council has attempted to maintain good communication and relations with the existing and often transient occupants. As such the Council has been able to keep the occupants informed about the Council's intention to submit a planning application to develop the site, consult on design requirements and importantly offer and provide housing options advice. However, given the highly transient nature of the occupants it is not feasible to quantify at this stage how many of the current occupants will be affected by the need to vacate the site pending any redevelopment. However, we are committed to assist any vulnerable occupants who express a desire to reside on any future site and who are likely to comply with site requirements, such as, being a Gypsy or Traveller. This assistance is yet to be firmly established but could include investigating the possibility of developing the site with one or two occupiers present, their possible relocation or other feasible and appropriate assistance.

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| P 02 | Question from: | Simon Whittle |
| <p>In item 5.10 on page 150 of the Agenda, and in Annex 2, it is stated that the Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople DPD is subject to yet another delay. Considerable Officer time and expenditure has already been invested in this programme with no tangible results or benefits for the very people it is intended to benefit, but with significant fear, uncertainty and doubt created in the settled communities where developments have been proposed or are under consideration. Could you please quantify how much money has been spent to date on Officer time, consultancy fees and other third party costs, and provide an estimate of the costs required to take the programme to completion?</p> | | |
| Answer from: | | Councillor Tim Ball |
| <p><i>Information provided to the B&NES Planning, Transport and Environment Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel in May 2013 stated that at that stage, expenditure on the Plan was approximately £161.4K. This included dedicated officer time (2009/10 and 2010/11) and consultant time 2011/12 and 2012/13). Yearly breakdown at that time was:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2009/10 = 13K • 2010/11 = 18.4K • 2011/12 = 28K • 2012/13 = 99K • 2013/14 = 3K <p><i>However the current question seeks a wider range of information on a number of items relating previous and future spending on the Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople DPD. This will take some time to compile and will not be ready in time for the Cabinet meeting on 13/11/13. A response will therefore be provided as possible. Please note that it is not possible to specify the costs incurred by third parties.</i></p> | | |

Clarke Osborne – Statement for Cabinet Meeting 13th November 2013

It is unfortunate that I feel the need to make a presentation this evening but as a representative of the communities of Pensford, Publow, Stanton Drew and Stanton Wick and representing the concerns of many in your rural communities, I am back again to bring the matters of Gypsy and Traveller DPD to your attention.

You will appreciate, I am sure, that the almost unbelievable lack of progress in completing the DPD process and commencing the provision of permanent and transit pitches causes great concern to the thousands of residents who live within the vicinity of the 29 sites your officers and you have listed as having potential.

Despite the majority of the sites being clearly unsuitable and unsustainable you have again failed to undertake the very little work that is required to cull the list and concentrate effort and resource on those sites which have potential.

It is very disturbing that after this administrations launch of the DPD 21 months ago with a flurry of politically motivated statements, the hugely damaging blind and unfounded determination to see your then preferred sites through to planning applications we are here, looking at a policy left to rot with the hope that it will simply be forgotten.

It is sometimes expedient to leave Policies left in the long grass, but here your continuing lack of interest leaves communities exposed to unscrupulous developers and rogue landlords.

It is simply wrong to allow your officers to drive their own agendas and to try endlessly to justify clearly biased reporting in the name of what appeared to be a politically motivated desire to find pitches for travelling communities, whatever the consequences.

It is simply wrong not to call your officers to account when they cause so much damage after clear lack of proper investigation when promoting sites for your DPD. They must have known that the Stanton Wick site was not deliverable when it was suddenly promoted from near the bottom of your list to the top. Or did they make that recommendation? Was it made by members? This and other strange decisions need to be openly and honestly explained. Our commitment to our long suffering communities is to find the real answers and have people account for their actions.

It must be wrong for a Cabinet based administration to ignore the resolutions of its Scrutiny Committees (I have provided a copy of the minutes from the MPPDS of 14th May)

It cannot be acceptable to simply push delivery dates back 3 times and by over 2 years without a very good excuse. How did we get to Options Consultation November 14, Draft Plan May 15 and complete in January 2016!

Having opened the box, it cannot be acceptable to leave both settled and travelling communities in a state of limbo for over 4 years and, surely it cannot be acceptable not to stand up and say “we got it wrong”

The community from which I am mandated by majority has been damaged both financially and emotionally by this sorry saga and the litany of error and possibly worse that we have uncovered.

Our plea, again, is for you to provide resource and, drive some urgency and determination into the Gypsy and Traveller DPD, remove the clearly unsustainable sites from your list and move forward with your declared intentions at Lower Bristol Road. You will not be forgiven if this matter is not concluded on your watch.

My name is Karen Abolkheir and I am a member of the Stanton Wick Action Group

Unfortunately I have to attend here yet again to remind Cabinet and inform Council Tax Payers of the expensive project that is your Gypsy Traveller DPD.

It is not a good story so far;

- Contrary to the Parish Charter you failed to consult with the Stanton Drew PC on the Old Colliery in Stanton Wick between January and mid April 2012, when the site suddenly appeared in your “Preferred Options” DPD.
- Despite comprehensive information provided to you at your meeting on 9th May 2012 clearly setting out that the site was not sustainable or achievable, you ignored us, blamed the previous administration, and announced your absolute commitment to provide pitches for the demonised travelling community.
- Despite detailed advice that your evaluation matrix was seriously flawed, you ploughed on, trying to defend the indefensible with sometimes bizarre reasoning.
- Having robustly defended your evaluation matrix, you then ignored it when selecting sites for your “preferred list”. Bizarre and damaging.
- You ignored your own Scrutiny Panel’s recommendations on a number of occasions to stop and review the process, ploughing on regardless, extending the costs and damage to your settled communities.
- You ignored the representation at an unprecedented Special Full Council in June 2012 callously issuing the text of your resolution of rejection to the request to stop and review the process - in advance of the meeting.
- You advised the Full Council that halting the DPD process would severely damage the progress of your Core Strategy – a Core Strategy that was rejected by the Inspector shortly after.
- Your officers failed to fully investigate the Stanton Wick site, despite the provision of detailed information, which supported their clear intention to run roughshod through planning law.
- You only removed the site from the DPD under proceedings for a Judicial Review. A costly exercise for some of your tax-payers. Unfortunately you again failed to properly remove the site from your list, in what appeared to be a rushed withdrawal.

- As a result you left the door open and consequently you have now presided over 3 flawed planning applications bringing yet more cost and stress to the settled community.
- You have simply failed to progress on your DPD, despite continued encouragement from your tax-payers and your Scrutiny Panels. You have failed to progress your prize site at Lower Bristol Road.
- You need to clarify if Lower Bristol Road has been removed from the DPD and why the number of pitches has decreased by nearly 27%.
- You have presided over a flawed Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Assessment which appears to overestimate the number of new Age Travellers on the Lower Bristol Road site.
- You have failed to cull the current long list of 29 possible sites for pitches despite the majority being clearly unavailable, unachievable and therefore undeliverable.

You said in May 2012 that you would not be deflected from this task yet you have failed to deliver at every stage which has cost a small fortune in time, anguish, stress and money.

We again urge you to get a grip, turn away from the excuse driven philosophy and make things happen.

Thank you

STATEMENT FROM Cllr Sally Davis Chair of EYCY PDS Panel.

The Panel undertook this review at the request of Council following the Budget meeting in February this year when an amendment regarding funding for Early Years services including Children's centres was passed.

The Panel agreed the work be undertaken by a Task & Finish Group working with Officers from Children's Services, this group really appreciated all involved in the research whether it be the various groups or individuals they met, all of whom were willing to talk through issues or explain the work they undertook within their organisation or as part of the service they delivered. I am sure many of the statements you will hear today will reflect the issues raised with us.

The Group were able to ask many questions & the honesty of the answers was really helpful.

At the EYCY PDS Panel meeting on October 14th the recommendations presented tonight were made by the majority of the Panel following much discussion, all Panel members realise the importance of the work carried out by those involved with children in various Early Years settings & how this stage is vital to a child's future development in all areas.

The Panel noted that there remain a number of questions over what services will be provided at the Children's Centres under the proposed new model, who will run the various Children's Centres, and to whom these services will be available.

Noting these continued uncertainties, the majority of the Panel agreed the following recommendations:

1. The design and commissioning principles set out in Appendix 4 of the report presented to EYCY PDS Panel on Oct 14th are adopted and applied to any future model of service delivery
2. That the approach to Play; Specialist Family Support and the Early Years Foundations Stage services are dealt with separately from Children's Centres
3. That any funding reductions for these services are considered separately in line with service models
4. To recommend a hub and spoke model as the basis for delivery of Children's Centre Services, whilst recognising that the number of hubs, and the level of service at the non-hub Children's Centres, will be dependent upon the scale of budget reductions, ultimately agreed by Council in February 2014
5. To retain all existing Children's Centre buildings
6. To further explore the potential of a commissioned model and / or integrated model with health services, acknowledging the need for further market testing of potential providers
7. To undertake a full cost/benefit analysis of any service changes
8. To propose that Cabinet reconsiders the overall Council budget to determine if alternative areas of saving can be identified. The reasons being: a) Information gained by the Task & Finish Group shows that early support to vulnerable people can lead to savings overall. There is concern that such

significant cuts could lead to more costly interventions by statutory services of the council at a later stage

b) A commitment by the Panel to recommend some changes to services to meet part of the potential savings if the Cabinet are prepared to do likewise.

CABINET NOVEMBER 13 2013

My first task tonight is to present a petition of over 1000 signatures (with over 200 more on line) asking for a reversal of the planned 38.8% cut in Children's Services funding , with its devastating effect on Children's Centres. Significantly these signatres were mostly not collected electronically but gathered in the course of talking to local people in the street and outside the centres, from Keynsham to MSN and points in between. We found a high level of anxiety about the likely impact on the work of the Centres and certainly I myself found no-one who was unwilling to sign.

Liz has already eloquently described how inadequate has been the response of the Early Years and Children's Panel to the planned cuts. Instead of looking closely at the impact of various levels of reductions in funding they have meekly come up with a plan to implement the full 38% cut, effectively doing the work of officers rather than scrutiny members. Interestingly the ruling LD Group were represented at the relevant meeting of the panel by one substitute member and two others drafted in at the last moment who confessed publicly that they were not properly prepared to make the recommendations asked for.

Children@s centres were set up originally by the Labour Government as Sure Start centres, modelled on the American Headstart programme, because it was recognised that children from disadvantaged backgrounds were in danger of falling well behind their peers , in development, before they even started school. At Children's Centres however the aim was to reach all families to offer activities such as parenting skills,

positive play, and pregnancy and breastfeeding advice. As a result there would be no stigma in attending Centre activities and the net would be cast as widely as possible. The proposal before the Cabinet to target only the most vulnerable section of the population therefor undermines this concept.

Our Group believes that reducing funding for the centres by over 38% will make many Centres unviable and we are not convinced by waffle about finding other sources of funding or rebnting the premises to other organisations. We believe the Early Years panel should reconvene and look again at the impact various levels of cuts will have on the Centres and at what level it will still be possible to run a meaningful service.

At the last meeting of the Panel I was moved by the personal stories of some of the parents and volunteers at the centres and what the Centres meant to them, for example in helping to overcome post-natal depression and encouraging them to enter into the life of the Centres as volunteers. We risk throwing all that away as well as invaluable work such as support for breastfeeding. We have all heard about the scheme in another part of the country to reward breastfeeding mothers with shopping vouchers. I hope it is successful but how much better to encourage breastfeeding by persuasion and example.

On ehalf of our the labour Group I therefore call upon the Cabinet to send this report back to the panel to do their work in a proper way which will result in a meaningful future for the Centres.

Roz Lambert Chief Executive

The point I would like to make is as follows:

The proposal referred to by Liz Hardman that the 5 Sure Start Nurseries should be self-funding (using fees charged to parents and the Early Years Entitlement) will impact on area of high need and prevent families gaining vital support. I will illustrate this with a case study by agreement with a parent who feels so passionately about the prospect of other families losing the support that his family have received that he has come tonight.

Jeremy's children came to First Steps Nursery in October 2011, at the same time Jeremy was serving a custodial sentence and his children were living with their mother with a Child Protection Plan.

First Steps were able to provide emergency nursery care whilst the family moved from temporary accommodation in a house in the local area.

First Steps were able to meet the children and their mum alongside the health visitor. As there were some complex and sensitive issues surrounding the mothers parenting capacity it was felt that meeting them in the family home would enable the nursery staff to gain a bigger picture of some of the issues. This action ensured that the children received a joined up approach to their care at this difficult time.

An outcome on the Child Protection plan was to develop the mother's attachment to her children and to achieve this Flying Start sessions (a series of play sessions in the home – a trained practitioner working with the parent to enhance parental understanding of their child's development and relationships with their child).

There were heightened concerns regarding the children's welfare, mums capacity to parent and her ability to put the needs of her children first. The children were removed and placed in the care of Jeremy's sister. Jeremy was released from prison around this time.

Some of this work is ongoing, however, it is clear that both children have benefited from the input that First Steps has provided and despite such difficult circumstances the eldest child has settled very well into school and is meeting her Early Learning Goals.

As a Children's centre with a nursery attached we have been able to

1. Offer flexible day care that meets specific family needs.

2. Release staff to attend and contribute to meetings, reviews and conferences
3. Write and submit reports for conferences and Looked after Children reviews.
4. Accurately record and pass on concerns to social care and to the court when requested
5. Provide funded day care all year round and access funding for the children to attend in the school holidays.
6. Provide family friendly rooms for contact sessions or review meetings with parents and children.
7. Provide home visits and Flying Start with a trained member of staff what works in the nursery with the children and has a sound relationship with the child. This ensures that the voice of the child is heard.

Finally my question to the Cabinet; how will this holistic, adaptable support be available for families in the greatest need if the nursery has to be self-supporting.

Roz Lambert.

Statement for Cabinet, 13th November 2013

Bath and North East Somerset Council:

Good evening my name is Dougie Brown and I am reading this statement on behalf of Sue Pendle, the Chair of the Board of Trustees at First Steps (Bath);

First Steps is a charity which under commission from the Council is the external provider, of your Children's Centres at Twerton and Moorlands.

I am very passionate about the work that First Steps and other Children Centres do for our local community and I would just like to briefly explain why I think they are so important. During my normally working day I work for a large national charity which helps disadvantaged and disengaged young people from the ages of 13 -25. I am convinced and have seen lots of evidence that show that high quality Early Years intervention has a hugely positive effect of Young People's lives later on, especially in their teenage years. It is therefore vital it continues.

There are three points I would like to make. They are:

- 1. The proposed 38% budget reduction on Children's Centres is out of line with your priorities and is disproportionate to the overall level of council budget reductions elsewhere and should therefore be reconsidered. Early Years intervention works.**
- 2. The three options in the council's proposed hub and spoke model are not really different options at all as they assume the same level of reduction and same service delivery.**
- 3 That the Twerton community and its specific needs mean that this area should be given particularly careful consideration when reviewing this budget discussion.**

I would now like to try and explain in more detail what I mean by these points.

Point 1

We completely accept that savings need to be made and that this will mean that the Council will need to make some difficult and drastic cuts however I believe you are targeting the wrong areas for these cuts and **that you should wholly reconsider this proposed 38% budget reduction on Children's Centres.**

This huge reduction hits front line services for some of the most vulnerable people in our community; it is therefore out of line with your priorities. Also the level of reduction you are seeking to implement will mean that young children are much more likely to be at risk of requiring more intensive support from educational, social care and health services.

The proposed model of delivery, with significantly restricted children's centre services at many of existing children's Centres will dilute the availability of Children's Centre services to the extent that their capacity to identify and support families at risk will be seriously impaired.

The Child Psychotherapy Trust recently commissioned a paper looking at promoting infant mental health in which it found, and I quote ‘ a redistribution of resources to support infants, carers and families in their Early Years would save much on what is being spent on behavioural and mental problems of older children, teenagers and adults.’

The Trust also tried to put a figure on the costs of not intervening in infancy. As an illustration they estimated that the cost to a social service department for a child protection plan for one family assuming one child is taken into care is between £15-£20k for 3 months support.

Point 2

The three options are not really options at all – they assume the same level of reduction and the same service delivery shape. Also none of the options proposed seemed to be based on need. We would ask you to give further consideration to these proposals in relation particularly to the following points

i) part time CC provision in areas of high and medium need produces real risks where the levels of engagement with vulnerable children and families are not enough to support them in a safe and appropriate way

ii) the particular arrangements proposed in this model in respect of Bath West are still not clear and we feel that further consultation should take place. From a 1st Steps view we would strongly argue on the grounds of need that if you do proceed with this model of service delivery then Twerton should be given ‘hub’ status.

iii) there were many comments at the PD&S Panel meeting on 14th October about the inappropriateness of a single focus on a ‘medical’ model inherent in asking a Health provider, to provide Children’s Centres, under your option 2). We would ask that you consider developing this option further to look at alternative patterns of providers, including perhaps partnership arrangements with ourselves, perhaps in partnership with health.

iv) that you should reconsider the assumption that day care would or can be provided on a self financing basis at all Children’s Centres – Each centre needs to be look at from its own merits and issues.

Point 3

You are being asked to make decisions that confirm a 38% reduction in Children’s Centre funding without any data on need levels or the impact that Children’s Centres are having on the areas where they deliver their support. As an example you should be aware of some of the following statistics from our support in Twerton and Whiteway

Need

1) In some Super out put areas 40% of children under 5 live in workless households

2) Twerton has the highest % of children eligible for free school meals: 31% compared with the LA average of 12.28% and the highest incidents of Domestic Abuse; 16% of families with children being affected compared with the LA average of 6.563%

Impact

- 1) The Child Care Monitory Report clearly shows that 92% of families in the most deprived areas have been seen.
- 2) The gap in achievement on the Early Years Foundation Profile is reducing.

As a charity involved in providing support to children and families in Twerton for 15 years – First Steps know that the universal availability of highly flexible day care and related services is the most effective way to engage with children and families in that community – this model of day care, in the Children’s Centre context, is not possible on a self financing basis.

I would ask that, if there are to be reductions in the CC budget at all, that particular consideration is given to the needs of the community in Whiteway and Twerton

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I came here on the 14th of October and I told everyone present about the different perspectives I have when it comes to the Children's Centres, as a mum, a volunteer in Children's centre, chair of their Advisory Board or as newly qualified antenatal teacher. It's been a daunting experience. The reason I'm back again is because I can do it, I know a lot of parents who feel passionately against these cuts, talking here is not possible, because of the time of day or because of their confidence. They would probably be far better at explaining what Children's Centres have helped them with. Volunteering at a group and talking to parents about the cuts has meant I have heard many stories of our Children's Centres' impact.

Certain parties were very interested in the fact I am a volunteer, probably because they think that volunteers could run a large proportion of Children's Centre services for free, and I really think there should be a broader discussion about what volunteers might do, how quickly their turnover might be and therefore how their contributions might change, and importantly how much they rely on trained staff to support their volunteering. My antenatal teacher training informs my volunteering completely differently to other volunteers. Their life experience informs their contribution.

Target parents, for instance, under 25's and those that are picked up early on are going to be supported.

So I feel I'm fighting for middle ground here for the parents that aren't target material, are apparently coping, but if you look deeper are having real wobbles. Well maternity leave is great but financially it does tip many parents into that really difficult area of managing on a lot less money when they're at home, there's the prospect of some returning to work when their child is really young. So they might have employment and be educated and then many parties assume that they'll be alright, because of this. It means if there were no universal groups they might not get opportunities to ask for help, in a universal group they can and this would be normalised. For instance last time I was here Ailsa McKenzie talked about how hard it was for her, as a teacher to ask for help for herself, and her daughter when experiencing postnatal depression.

Parenting, when it's going right can be the best job in the world, but when it's not and support isn't there it's the worst. Those best placed to support us like our families could be far away, many are having kids later so their parents are older. As an antenatal teacher it's not uncommon for parents-to-be tell me this is the first time they've ever had anything to do with a baby before their own. Our families are more nucleated. There has never been more research into child development and care than in the last 10 years, which often puts them into conflict with their own families. Parents are left wondering what bit they should follow, whilst trying to raise their families in a box, with 4 walls called their home in isolation with a television to replace granny or Aunty Matilda, unless they have somewhere they can go. Society sells parenthood as something wonderful, what happens when it's not? Who would do you talk to someone you know or someone you don't, someone who won't judge you regardless of your background, someone who might spot you struggling or really ask you how you are? Yes you know what my answer will be.

For me that includes the older dad who needed reassurance that it was normal to have a 4 month old baby wake at night, and wanted a discussion about controlled crying and weaning onto solids.

It includes the mum of 4 whose benefits have gone wrong and she reluctantly needs to visit the food bank, fortunately she knows the staff, so she doesn't feel judged.

So if you'd just become a parent would you feel confident in the face of Gran telling you that your 5 week old baby was manipulating you because you picked them up when they cried? Would you avoid the Health Visitor if your baby wouldn't sleep on their back? Would you know what to believe when a GP hinted you might need to put your baby on formula because their weights not going on fast enough? What would you do to help your child's development? When you pick up one book it tells you one thing and then another one contradicts it. Who helps us deal with this minefield?

Just as the Children's Centres have established themselves, given valuable support to parents to chisel away the minefield of contradictory advice and support to help our children flourish, it feels like it probably is going to be taken away.

Please think carefully about what impact the cuts may have....

The Children's Centre biggest cost is staff, to cut cost you take away staff you this takes away relationships and trust for some of the neediest. How might you keep their skills?

Volunteers don't have to give one months notice they are the icing on the cake, which means staff can have more contact with those that need it and to get to know those that attend their groups.

Universal groups attract more than just the parents who aren't deemed quite needy enough, parents who were targeted have the right to be treated as normal, and have often gained confidence to walk through that door, need these groups to move on to.

Thank you

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My name is Jane Carter and I am the Branch Secretary for the B&NES Unison Branch.

At our most recent Branch Executive meeting the committee voted unanimously to oppose these cuts to the Children's Centres for a couple of reasons:

The importance of the work that is carried out by the Children's Centres cannot be underestimated. They provide really crucial services which can help highlight and tackle problems as early as possible and we are fearful of the costs that will be built up for the authority in the future if you cut this.

The purpose of Children's Centres is to improve outcomes for young children with a particular focus on the most disadvantaged. If you take away the skilled, qualified and experienced employees from these centres, or if you outsource them outside of council control, how can you be sure that the most disadvantaged are being reached?

We are concerned about the impact of these cuts on the most disadvantaged and we are concerned that a decision could be made when we haven't seen an equalities impact assessment.

As a trade union, we are obviously also worried about the loss of skilled employees from the Children's Centres. There are currently just over 127 Paid posts in Children's Centres, 91 of these are council employees and we therefore anticipate significant job losses although we are unclear of the detail yet.

These paid posts can't be replaced by volunteers. The Councils own policy is very clear, it states that "Volunteers will only be used to provide additional or extended services to the community, to support the work of paid staff and not replace them"¹

Our Branch certainly recognise that volunteers have a crucial role in the success of Children's Centres and we highly value their work, alongside the paid, skilled, trained and qualified employees. The loss of paid posts has to therefore mean that the services that Children's Centres can offer will be cut dramatically.

The manager of a Children's Centre in the North East is quoted in the 2012 Sure Start Census document as follows:

"The move towards using volunteers to replace paid, qualified and experienced staff would be a dangerous one. Volunteers are a valuable resource but need careful and thoughtful management support"²

We urge the cabinet to seriously note the issues highlighted and consider the recommendations of the Minority report.

¹ Page 3, Bullet Point 2 under **2. Principles** of the Document '*Volunteers at Bath and North East Somerset Guidelines for Managers and Staff*' Feb 2013

² Page 26, Sure Start Children's Centres Census 2012

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E2593. Re-structuring of the Early Years, Children's Centres and Early Help (0-11) Services 2014-2016 **Cabinet 13 November 2013**

'Do you want your beans on toast or off?' How many of us have asked that question when giving our youngsters their supper? It makes no difference to mum what the answer is, except that children are more likely to 'eat up' if they get their choice. The three options given in the decision- decision- taking via the EYCY panel and the Task and Finish group it set up has a flavour of 'beans on toast'. However, the real question is whether beans on toast, with the high sugar and carbohydrate content, is the right choice in the first place. In the various officers' reports, members were asked whether they wanted horizontal or vertical cuts. Too little consideration was given to whether such deep cuts should be made at all. Here I back Cllr Hardman's argument 100%. Let me draw your attention to para. 3.4 of the report to cabinet where despite the concerns of the Task and Finish Group, it made no difference to the final outcome even though there is no authority in the budget decisions of Council in February 2013 for this £2.3m cut. Eat your beans up or else go hungry. There is nothing else!

It does not seem to me that proper account has been made of the Equalities Impact – and leaving an assessment until after the proposed model is complete, is too late to engage with the issues. (para.4.2) In Radstock apart from the very popular play park provided by the Town Council, and the provisions at our three wonderful primary schools, not to mention 'messy play' occasionally run by the churches, there is very little for children. If these cuts go through their lives, already, statistically shortened by seven years compared with the situation for MSN or Odd Down children, will be further blighted. Breast-feeding rates in my ward are already lower than average – now the support groups will be cut. At 32% of pregnant mothers aged under 30 smoking, how will we secure a healthy environment? Our definitions of 'vulnerable' are too rigid. We need a comprehensive, accessible service if children in the Radstock area (and elsewhere) are not to fall even further behind.

There is no question that co-location and more efficient management could mean more income, as the children's centres are valuable community assets. However, at the end of the day, it is a question of priorities. Stop any person in the street in Radstock (especially someone who has been nearly run over by a bicycle), and they will say that the money should be found from elsewhere. Cycling is a hobby and a luxury, so is spending £5 million painting buildings in Bath.

Finally as I pointed out to Cllr Bellotti at the MSN Budget fair, a 38% cut will make the 'rump' of the service unsustainable. It cannot be allowed to happen. I therefore call upon the cabinet to refer the report back to the Scrutiny panel, accepting Cllr Hardman's recommendations.

Cllr Eleanor Jackson

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Statement – Lesley Mansell
In a personal capacity

Cabinet meeting 13.11.2013

Proposed 40% cut to Children's Services

When collecting signatures for the petition I found that people were very concerned and more than happy to sign it.

You've heard a number of people speak from personal experience tonight. You are in danger of ignoring the human aspect of this.

Just over a year ago I attended the opening of the Radstock Children's Centre which had been refurbished. I wrote at the beginning of this year with my concerns about the potential cuts to children's services and was given an assurance that centres would not be closed.

In Radstock we have high levels of deprivation and higher than the national average of levels of children with special educational needs. Cuts of these services will not help this situation.

In Radstock we've already seen a reduction in the Youth Service, it is now being managed by volunteers which is a struggle.

Meanwhile, we have heard much talk about the regeneration in Radstock with seemingly little idea of what this is. If B&NES are not going to invest in children and young people what future is there for the town?

The core strategy proposes massive house building in Radstock, but there are no plans to improve the infrastructure or provide services to support this. It makes no sense to be cutting children's services at this stage.

I agree with Cllr Hardman that the report is flawed. For example, it mentions that a risk assessment and an equality impact assessment have been carried out, but there is no mention of the outcomes of these. How can the council make an informed decision without all the relevant information?

I urge the council to support councillor Hardman's minority report and change the proposal in the main report. Otherwise B&NES is stacking up problems for the future not just for Radstock but across the whole of B&NES.

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Speech to the Cabinet

A flawed process has resulted in a flawed model; the EYC and Y Panel has failed to implement the resolution passed by the Council. As a result of this failure, this minority report has been produced. Why was the process flawed? The Task and Finish Group took it for granted that the £2.3 million cut had been agreed and instead of focusing on the implication of these massive cuts, they instead focused on 3 models which would allow the delivery of these cuts. You are now being presented with recommendations passed by the EYC and Y Panel which itself said and I quote:

“ There remain a number of questions over what services will be provided at Children’s Centres under this new model, who will run the various Children’s Centres and to whom these services will be available”, yet they then went on to agree the recommendations, which centred on the Hub and Spoke Model.

I’d like to inform the Cabinet what the implication of cuts of 38% would be, regardless of which model is adopted:

- Most Children’s Centres jobs would be halved, with no qualified teacher support and few social workers
- Outreach workers from the Children’s Centres would be cut by 50% , so the most needy would be targeted, but this also means leaving many vulnerable and needy families without support. The Social Care Threshold is now so high, many families fail to get support, but have been picked up by referrals to Children’s Centres. This won’t happen and we will see a ballooning of families needing Social Care Provision, particularly those in transition in and out of Social Care.
- Great idea to keep all the Children’s Centres buildings open, but sadly for most there won’t be anyone in them. The key will literally be under the mat.
- There will be a 40% reduction on work with families in Children’s Centres who have been referred by Health Visitors. We do have about 67 Health Visitors, but Central Government has hugely expanded their responsibilities. Their case load should be 350; the average in B&NES is over 800. And yes we will get more Health Visitors but not enough to cope with the gap left by these cuts.
- There will be 40% less parenting courses, 40% less targeted work to promote child development, no funding for breast feeding groups, no funding for mental health services and no subsidies for the 5 nurseries attached to Children’s Centres which have a high number of children in need
- And I haven’t mentioned the support given to Universal Services, those services open to all families, which are a lifeline for many parents. None of these will be run by professional staff, so many families needing support will not now be identified.

My recommendations are that the Cabinet asks the EYC and Y Panel to report back in December with:

- A detailed implication of what the proposed cuts would have on frontline services
- The potential for management and efficiency savings that would have little impact on frontline services.
- A recommended model for the future of Children's Centre Services based on these management efficiencies and savings
- And a request to you the Cabinet that resources are identified from elsewhere to offset the proposed 38% cut as clearly there are insufficient resources available within the proposed Children's Services budget

We have been told by you that Front Line Services will be protected. How can you possibly say this when you are contemplating implementing this massive cut of 38% on our children and families. Even if some 3rd provider, such as Bernados comes forward, or we implement a Hub and Spoke Model, or rely on Health providers to deliver these services, it will be with a cut of 50% for frontline staff and a cut of 50% for our frontline services. I urge you to consider my recommendations