

BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET

CABINET

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

Wednesday, 12th February, 2014

Present:

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

101 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair was taken by Councillor Paul Crossley, Leader of the Council.

He said that at the end of the meeting he would answer some questions received from members of the public via Twitter.

He made a statement about agenda item 12:

We apologise both to First Steps and to readers of the agenda papers that within the appendices to the report for item 12 [minute 112] we have inadvertently published detailed information in excess of what was necessary or relevant to the matters being considered tonight. Specifically, this relates to the publication of the full staffing structure of First Steps, which is not directly comparable to the staffing published for the Council Children's Centres and therefore could be seen as disproportionate and misleading. We will withdraw this information from the published version following the meeting. In essence this will mean deleting the table in Appendix 5 which relates to the staffing of the two Children's Centres delivered by First Steps and retaining the key data in the paragraph which follows it – i.e. referring to 11.8 FTE in these two centres. We will continue to work with First Steps to ensure information contained in subsequent consultation and commissioning documents is appropriate. Cabinet members are asked to disregard this additional information when considering their decision this evening.

He made a statement about the current floods:

The last few weeks have seen extraordinary weather conditions and nightly on TV we are witnessing the terrible plight of residents on the Somerset Levels and in other areas. Our hearts and thoughts are with those residents. Our praise goes out to all sectors of the public service and local government, who are working so hard for long hours to control the situation and help residents. As a Council we have offered to help Somerset and their emergency response and have provided one of our gully cleansing machines and crew to support

their efforts. In Bath and North East Somerset we are not complacent and these floods bring back memories of floods in recent years in Chew Valley, Chelwood and a few properties this year in Bathampton and elsewhere. Each individual flooding of property and business is a personal disaster. As a Council we are working closely with the Environment Agency, both our local water companies and all the emergency services. We are prepared, should the need arise, to be ready and able to help residents. This winter we have seen that flood mitigation measures that have been taken to enable the Bath Western Riverside development have been successful. Last summer we cleaned out the gulleys and verges across the Chew Valley, and this helped to reduce the flood risk. Last summer we improved the drainage in Chelwood village, and this has worked. The Council has already commissioned a survey of properties at highest risk of flooding in Chew Magna and has budgeted £200,000 to improve flood protection in the Chew Valley. This is likely to enhance the protection of approximately 7 properties. In this coming year we are planning to commence a major flood alleviation programme in central Bath, working in partnership with the Environment Agency. It should be noted that the most significant impact of this prolonged wet weather in our area is the land slip on private land in Midford Road, which requires the closure of the road for four weeks. This is not a decision which the Council takes lightly, but public safety is paramount and without the measures in place to stabilise the land, it would be irresponsible to open the road. We are talking about people's lives being in danger if the land slips any further with cars or bicycles in its path, which is why we have no other option but closing the road. Council engineers are working really hard with the representatives of the landowner to identify the underlying causes of the land slip, and work is already under way to develop a solution, which must take into account many complex environmental factors. This is not an overnight job, and specialist equipment, materials and operators are needed to carry out this complex process. We are not as a Council complacent, and we recognise the severity of the current weather conditions and we will be undertaking drainage works across the whole district in 2014/15 as we prepare for more challenging weather conditions in future years.

102 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

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

103 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

104 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

105 TO ANNOUNCE ANY URGENT BUSINESS AGREED BY THE CHAIR

There was none.

106 QUESTIONS FROM PUBLIC AND COUNCILLORS

There were 19 questions from the following Councillors: Dave Laming (2), Nathan Hartley, June Player, Brian Webber (4), Anthony Clarke (5), Charles Gerrish, Vic Pritchard, Liz Richardson(3), and Michael Evans.

There was 1 question from the following member of the public: Graham Harrison. *[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.]*

107 STATEMENTS, DEPUTATIONS OR PETITIONS FROM PUBLIC OR COUNCILLORS

Nigel Sherwen made a statement *[a copy of which is attached to these Minutes as Appendix 2 and on the Council's website]* about the impact of the Gateway project on the safety of cyclists. Councillor Crossley responded that the scheme was still in the consultation phase, and that Mr Sherwen's comments would be fed into that consultation.

David Redgewell made a statement on the Greater Bristol Bus Network. He emphasised that the Network includes most of Bath and North East Somerset and comprises the longer-distance services jointly supported by neighbouring unitary authorities. He urged the maintenance and ringfencing of funding for rural transport links in the Council's budget. He was worried about the future of buses to Radstock and Frome. He pointed out that residents of Radstock and Midsomer Norton need access to the Mendips for health care, among other things. He urged co-operation with Mendip District Council and Somerset County Council. He also said that there should be greater investment in bus vehicles, as many of those in Bath were below standard. He also made a statement on local rail issues. He referred to the disruptions to the rail service caused by the recent flooding, which highlighted the need to improve the resilience of the rail network. He said this was an issue that should be taken up by South West Councils. He feared that that all the funding for local rail would be used up in repairing weather damage. He was concerned that MetroWest was not listed as a recipient of capital funding in the Council's budget, as the Minister had clearly stated that it was a local authority scheme, not a Department for Transport scheme. Provision for Phase 1 of the scheme was included in North Somerset's budget. Councillor Crossley assured Mr Redgewell that the issues he had raised would be taken into account when the proposals on the City Deal project were considered.

Jay Risbridger (Director, Oliver Currency c.i.c.) made a statement *[a copy of which is attached to these Minutes as Appendix 3 and on the Council's website]* on the Bath Pound, submitting that its wider use would result in more of the money spent in Bath being retained in Bath, and urging the Council to support the Bath Pound in the same way that Bristol City Council had supported the Bristol Pound. Councillor Crossley said that he would ask Councillor Stevens to speak to the Council's Economic Development Service and arrange a meeting with Mr Risbridger about this issue.

Dawn Milsom (Chairman, Clandown Residents Association) made a statement on the Scrap Metal Dealers Act Policy (agenda item 19). She said that the Act gave the Council an opportunity to regulate a sector of business that had hitherto been difficult to control. She was concerned that though the Act had come into force in October 2013, Bath and North East Somerset was agreeing its policy only now. She hoped

that robust vetting procedure would be established in accordance with section 3(2) of the Act and that information about applicants would be sought from Planning Enforcement, Highways, the Environment Agency and the Police. There should also be consultation with the public. Site operators should be strictly monitored and be aware that if they did not comply with the law and regulations, they would be shut down. Councillor Crossley said that her statement would be considered when the relevant agenda item was reached.

108 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 4th December 2013 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

109 CONSIDERATION OF SINGLE MEMBER ITEMS REQUISITIONED TO CABINET

There were none.

110 MATTERS REFERRED BY POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY BODIES

The draft minutes of the Policy and Resources Policy Development Scrutiny Panel of 10th February 2014 had been circulated to Cabinet members. Councillor John Bull in an *ad hoc* statement drew attention to the resolution of the Panel:

To note the conclusions and resolutions from the other PDS Panels and refer them on to the Cabinet in 12th February 2014 for consideration; and

To recommend that the Cabinet earmark for the 2015/16 budget £300k to go into Children's Services ring fenced for Children's Centres to allow them to stay open from 9am-5pm. The Panel suggest that this be financed by the ongoing resource allocations for the financial planning reserve; and

To recommend that the Cabinet set aside £200k of the one-off headroom allocation money from the financial planning reserve to enable the smooth transition to the new model for Children's Centres; and finally

To ask that the Cabinet give active consideration in its budget setting to additional provision for bus services in new estates/developments.

Councillor Crossley thanked Councillor Bull and said that the Cabinet would have these proposals analysed to see if anything could be done in the budget to be put to Council on 18th February 2014. He added, for the avoidance of doubt, that any amendment to the budget because of the recommendation of the Resources PDS Panel would not count as a substantial change, because it had been publicly notified, and because the Cabinet would be able to give the matter due consideration.

111 SINGLE MEMBER CABINET DECISIONS TAKEN SINCE PREVIOUS CABINET

MEETING

The Cabinet agreed to note the report.

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

Councillor Hardman in an *ad hoc* statement added more detail to the recommendations of the Resources PDS Panel. She welcomed the £500k that the administration had agreed to put back into Children's Services. She said that the successful campaign by parents and the public for the restoration of funding to Children's Centres had shown how valued they were. However, she understood that only £300k of the £500k would be going to Children's Centres, with the rest being earmarked for other areas of Early Years services. This would mean that Children's Centres would still suffer a significant cut in funding. She understood that to keep all Children's Centres open on a daily basis would require an additional £294,000. She therefore requested the Cabinet to agree to put back a further £300,000 into the Early Years budget on an ongoing basis with the specific purpose of keeping all Children's Centres open each day.

Councillor Evans in an *ad hoc* statement said that he thought that there had been no cuts to the Children's Services budget this year; he hoped that this would be clarified. He welcomed the permanent reinstatement of the £500k. He also welcomed the detail given in the report, which gave a clear picture of precisely what services were being affected. He welcomed the fact that all Children's Centres would stay open. He said it seemed to be assumed that the voluntary sector would take care of all the universal services; the problem with this was that the universal services were a good route for identifying those who needed the targeted service. He therefore urged the administration to ensure that there were other means of identifying clients needing the targeted services.

Councillor Romero in proposing the item, stressed this was a report on a work in progress, and not on the end product. She said that the recommendations from the Resources PDS and the points made by Councillor Hardman would be considered before the Council's budget meeting next Tuesday. In her view there was merit in exploring the proposed new model further, as the report suggested that it would bring significant savings without impacting on the front delivery of targeted services. Partly this was because the situation had changed since the Children's Centres were first set up. Funding was now coming into Early Years from a variety of sources, and health visitors were acting as a referral point for further services. The Cabinet would consider the issue again in the summer of 2014.

Councillor Crossley seconded the item. He too emphasised that it was a work in progress. He thought it was important to note that there were no proposals to close Children's Centres as other councils had done.

On a motion from Councillor Romero, seconded by Councillor Crossley it was **RESOLVED** unanimously:

- (1) to include within its budget proposals to Council, the proposed adjustment which permanently deletes the £500,000 savings originally required from the

Early Years and Children's Centres base budget in 2014/15 and subsequent years;

- (2) to note and accept the emerging models and proposals for each of the five service areas;
- (3) to instruct officers to formally consult on the proposals for these services; and
- (4) to instruct officers to bring back to Cabinet fully developed models and proposals for the future delivery of each service.

113 REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING, CASH LIMITS AND VIREMENTS - APRIL 2013 TO DECEMBER 2013

Councillor Bellotti in proposing the item said that this was a report on the Council's performance in the current financial year. He said that performance had been outstanding, highlighting three aspects:

- (i) the number of visitors attracted to the area;
- (ii) skilful cash flow management;
- (iii) an increase in recycling and a reduction in landfill charges.

In addition, a large number of capital projects were being delivered, including the £34m project at Keynsham, which was on time and on budget.

Councillor Stevens seconded the proposal, commenting that Heritage Services had made a huge contribution to the Council's budget; the £5m profit they had earned was equivalent to an additional 6.5% on Council Tax.

Councillor Roberts said that she had recently visited areas of B&NES subject to severe flooding last and where deaths had occurred. The work that officers had done in these areas had prevented any recurrence this year. She expressed her thanks to everyone who had been on flood watch over Christmas and in recent weeks.

Councillor Crossley said that it was very fortunate that Bath and North East Somerset was able to generate income in ways that other local authorities did not. The Council need to look for further sources of income so that it could maintain services to residents.

On a motion from Councillor Bellotti, seconded by Councillor Stevens, it was **RESOLVED** (unanimously)

- (1) to agree that Strategic Directors should continue 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 this year's revenue budget position as shown in Appendix 2 to the report;
- (3) to note the capital expenditure position for the Council in the financial year to the end of September and the year-end projections detailed in Appendix 3 of the report;

(4) to agree the revenue virements listed for approval in Appendix 4(i) of the report; and

(5) to note the changes in the capital programme listed in Appendix 5(i) of the report.

114 TREASURY MANAGEMENT MONITORING REPORT TO 31ST DECEMBER 2013

Councillor Bellotti in proposing the item said that this report was about how much the Council borrowed and where it invested its money. The Council still had a borrowing requirement of just over £200m for capital projects, but because it was funding some of this from cash flow, it should not be necessary to reach the borrowing requirement. Bath and North East Somerset had never invested in risky propositions. Unlike other councils it had not invested in Iceland, for example. It did not even lend to countries in the Eurozone.

Councillor Crossley seconded the proposal. He said that the report showed that the Council was practising sound finance based on sound principles, and for that the Council's outstanding finance team had to be congratulated.

On a motion from Councillor Bellotti, seconded by Councillor Crossley it was **RESOLVED** unanimously

(1) to note the Treasury Management report to 31st December 2013, prepared in accordance with the CIPFA Treasury Code of Practice; and

(2) to note the Treasury Management Indicators to 31st December 2013.

115 TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT & ANNUAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY 2014/15

Councillor Laming in an *ad hoc* statement said that as a member of the Corporate Audit Committee he was astonished at the skill and expertise possessed by Council finance staff, and would like to congratulate them for their excellent work.

Councillor Gerrish noted that although Councillor Bellotti had stated that the Council did not invest in the Eurozone, banks in Germany and the Netherlands appeared in the list of counterparties in Appendix 3 of the report. Councillor Bellotti explained that the Council did not invest in all the institutions listed in Appendix 3; it was a list of those who met the Council's prudential criteria.

Councillor Bellotti in proposing the item explained that Treasury Management was about responsible borrowing and investing and about positioning the Council in relation to a number of factors, such as interest rates, the rate of growth and inflation.

Councillor Crossley seconded the proposal and said that the Council needed to keep its borrowing continually under review.

On a motion from Councillor Bellotti, seconded by Councillor Crossley, it was **RESOLVED** (unanimously)

- (1) To recommend the actions proposed within the Treasury Management Strategy Statement (Appendix 1 of the report) to February Council for approval;
- (2) To recommend the Investment Strategy as detailed in Appendix 2 of the report to February Council for approval;
- (3) To recommend the changes to the authorised lending lists detailed in Appendix 2 of the report and highlighted in Appendix 3 of the report to February Council for approval;

And further;

- (4) To note the Treasury Management Indicators detailed in Appendix 1 of the report and delegate authority for updating the indicators prior to approval at Full Council on 18th February 2014 to the Divisional Director – Business Support and Cabinet Member for Community Resources, in light of any changes to the recommended budget as set out in the Budget Report elsewhere on the agenda for this meeting.

116 BUDGET & COUNCIL TAX 2014/15 AND FINANCIAL PLAN 2014/15 - 2015/16

Elizabeth Derl-Davis (Radstock Town Council) made a statement [*a summary of which is attached to these Minutes as Appendix 4 and on the Council's website*] about the Bronze Band support scheme. She said that about 320 pensioners, including herself, would be affected if the Council stopped paying the support charge for those living in sheltered housing. Those living in sheltered housing were there because they were over 60, disabled or had a long-term illness. They were the poorest, most vulnerable group in the country. The Bronze Band only gave access to an alarm system, which was part of the fabric of the building and could not be removed. The cost for this was £3.60 a week or £187.20 over a year. Those who could not afford to pay this amount would be expected to move. The majority of pensioners where she lived were over 80. The Silver, Gold, Platinum and Diamond Bands were, of course, more expensive. The cost of 320 x £187.20 was not a great sum in the overall budget for B&NES. If the Council withdrew this support, it would create a precedent. She urged the Cabinet to reverse this cut, as Bristol City Council had done.

Councillor Bull in an *ad-hoc* statement highlighted the continual reductions in central government grants to councils. The Institute of Fiscal Studies had warned that 50% of austerity cuts were yet to take effect. The Local Government Association had warned that eventually councils might only be able to afford adult social care and refuse collection. The budget was unsatisfactory and failed to meet the expectations of residents. There were many other relatively small cuts like the one the previous speaker had raised, but above all there had been a £1.8m cut for Children's Services.

Councillor Laming in an *ad hoc* statement welcomed the recommendation for provisional approval of a River Corridor Fund. He had been urging this for the past three years. He recalled that on 28 April 2012 the river had been so low that boats had been sitting on the river bed, and there had been warnings of drought. Since then rain had been unremitting. The Transport Secretary had confirmed on the radio that morning that climate change was occurring. In his experience of 27 years on the river everything had changed, and in particular during the last 2 years. The River Corridor Working Group was desperately needed and should be properly funded, because people's lives and livelihoods were at risk. 23 businesses in Keynsham, including his own, had been ruined in the past two weeks because of the floods. He

urged that the allocated £340,000 should not be wasted, but used as “feed money” to attract additional investment from private enterprise, government and the EU.

Councillor Gerrish in an *ad hoc* statement welcomed many aspects of the budget, but also raised some concerns. He was concerned that the costs of travellers’ sites were increasing. His group proposed that the proposed capital spend on travellers’ sites be reduced by £670,000, with the savings redirected to Highway Services and additional safer routes to schools. In order that this proposal could be considered properly on Tuesday, he requested the Cabinet to provide information about the sum of money actually required to deliver the Lower Bristol Road scheme, and how it would be affected if the budget were reduced as suggested. He also proposed a one-off sum of £200k from budget headroom to create a pump-priming fund to support voluntary and other external organisations in taking a greater role in the provision of Children’s Services. He also raised two Keynsham issues: making the pedestrian crossing outside St Keyna School in Charlton Road safer, and the repair of the closed footbridge in Keynsham Park.

Councillor Bevan in an *ad hoc* statement welcomed the budget as enabling a safer, cleaner, greener Bath and North East Somerset. She thanked Councillor Dixon for committing the afternoon of 24th February to meet her in Peasedown for a tour to ascertain what was needed and where. She urged that the public lavatories in Peasedown should be converted into additional much-needed parking spaces, if that was the will of residents.

Councillor Symonds in an *ad hoc* statement urged that the streets be made safer for cyclists. Safety on London Road was very poor. He suggested the optimal solution would be a bus lane.

Danny Kite (Alexandra Bowling Club) in an *ad hoc* statement thanked the Cabinet for including the Alexandra Bowling Club in the list of organisations to be considered for the Community Asset Transfer Programme during 2014/15, and spoke about the role of the Club in the community.

Councillor Jackson in an *ad hoc* statement welcomed proposals to improve parking in Radstock. She suggested that there should be a master plan for parking in Radstock. She supported Councillor Hardman’s statement on Children’s Services. She also supported the statement of Elizabeth Derrill-Davis on the Bronze Band support scheme. She thought, however, that the number of pensioners affected was 450, not 320. The total sum involved was £60k, but the benefit and peace of mind for these pensioners and their relative was beyond price. She hoped that there would be an amendment to the final budget to be put to Council.

Bryn Jones (Chair, Transition Larkhall) made a statement on the impact of the Gateway project on the safety of cyclists. His group believed that the worst of the options being considered was an on-road cycle lane. He urged the retention of the existing cycle path. His group believed that there was scope for extending this to Larkhall.

Councillor Bellotti in proposing the item said that local residents have been consulted more than ever before. Four Budget Fairs had been held and comments from those Fairs had been circulated to all members of the Cabinet. Comments from all the PDS Panels had been considered. The resolution from the Resources PDS Panel

previously referred to would be given serious consideration. He highlighted three main objectives of the budget:

- i) to freeze Council Tax for another year;
- ii) to protect front-line services;
- iii) to facilitate more homes and more jobs.

He said that there was scope to reconsider the cut in funding of the Bronze Band scheme.

In seconding the item Councillor Crossley said that it was difficult to balance the budget in the current public funding situation. He responded to comments made by the public speakers.

Councillor Dixon said that times were tough for local authorities. B&NES was fortunate in having a large commercial property portfolio. He was pleased that the Council was able to invest in many projects in the community.

Councillor Romero said that the resolution from Resources PDS and the comments of Councillor Gerrish about Children's Services would be carefully considered. Responding to the statement of Councillor John Bull, she said that not 2 but 4 Children's Centres would be open full time, and, when nursery provision was taken into account, 8 out of 11 buildings would be open full time.

Councillor Allen said that he believed the budget protected the most vulnerable. He explained that the funding for the Bronze Band scheme related only to the old-style fixed alarms, which had been replaced by newer personalised alarms, which were safer.

Councillor Ball said that the Housing Service was doing well on a tiny budget, delivering housing and earning revenue for the Council. Responding to the statement of Councillor Gerrish, he said that the Council had for many years neglected provision for travellers. A budget of £1.8m had now been allocated, because of the difficulties of the designated site. He believed the money for site was safe for this year, if the Secretary of State called in the application for the site, the project would slip and the money would be lost, and the travellers could go to other parts of the area, causing inconvenience to local residents.

Councillor Stevens said that in his portfolio there was a capital programme which would generate growth. The Arts Development budget had been frozen, ensuring that the arts community could continue to deliver for the benefit of residents. There was funding for capital projects by Heritage Services, which should demonstrate to UNESCO that Bath took its World Heritage Site status seriously.

Councillor Roberts said that additional funding was being put into cycling and walking schemes. Extra money had been provided for grit bins and snow wardens. Money had been provided for the Parade road scheme and for the east Bath Park and Ride and for various safety schemes.

Councillor Hall said that the Council had listened to and worked with communities to develop this budget. She believed that the budget had protected the most vulnerable in difficult times. Skate parks were an investment in the future of young people.

On a motion from Councillor Bellotti, seconded by Councillor Crossley it was **RESOLVED** (unanimously) to recommend:

1.2 That the Council approve:

- a) The General Fund net revenue budget for 2014/15 of £119.926m with no increase in Council Tax.
- b) That no Special Expenses be charged other than Town and Parish Council precepts for 2014/15.
- c) The adequacy of reserves at Appendix 1 Table 8 with a risk-assessed level of £10.5m.
- d) The individual service cash limits for 2014/15 summarised at Appendix 1 Table 4 and detailed in Annex 1.
- e) That the specific arrangements for the governance and release of reserves, including invest to save proposals, be delegated to the Council's Section 151 Officer in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Community Resources and the Chief Executive.

1.3 That the Council delegates the sign-off of the Better Care Plan on behalf of the Council to the Health & Wellbeing Board in consultation with the Chief Executive, the Leader and the Cabinet Member for Community Resources.

1.4 That the Council delegates the updating of the council's discretionary rate relief policy, to reflect the measures announced in the Autumn Budget Statement, to the Council's Section 151 Officer, in consultation with the Chief Executive and the Cabinet Member for Community Resources.

1.5 That the Council include in its Council Tax setting, the precepts set and approved by other bodies including the local precepts of Town Councils, Parish Councils and the Charter Trustees of the City of Bath, and those of the Fire and Police Authorities.

1.6 That the Council notes the Section 151 officer's report on the robustness of the proposed budget and the adequacy of the Council's reserves (Appendix 1, Annex 2) and approves the conditions upon which the recommendations are made as set out throughout Appendix 1.

1.7 That in relation to the capital budget the Council:

- a) approves a capital programme of £65.865m for 2014/15 and notes items for provisional approval in 2014/15 and the programme for 2015/16 to 2018/19 as shown at Appendix 1, Annex 3 including the planned sources of funding .
- b) delegates implementation, subject to consultation where appropriate, of the capital programmes set out in Annex 3i to Annex 3iii to the relevant

Strategic Director in Consultation with the appropriate Cabinet Member.

- c) approves the Minimum Revenue Provision Policy as shown at Appendix 1, Annex 4
- d) approves the Capital Prudential Indicators as set out in Appendix 1 Table 6.

1.8 That the Council agree the Council's proposed pay policy statement, including the arrangements for senior severance practice, as set out at Appendix 4.

1.9 That the Council notes the approach to Community Assets as set out in Appendix 5.

And the Cabinet further agrees

1.10 To authorise the Council's Section 151 Officer, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Community Resources, to make any necessary changes and presentational improvements to the draft budget proposal for submission to Council.

117 ADVICE & INFORMATION STRATEGY 2014-17

Councillor Allen in proposing the item, said that this was an interim report followed a six-week consultation. The results of the consultation, the review of the Adult Social Care pathway and duties imposed by the Care Act needed to be considered before a further report was brought to Cabinet.

Councillor Hall seconded the proposal and said that she thought it was a very good report. She thought the Council ought to consider example of best practice in other parts of the country.

On a motion from Councillor Allen, seconded by Councillor Hall, it was **RESOLVED** (unanimously)

- (1) to note the outcome of the consultation on the draft Advice & Information Strategy 2014-17, attached as Appendix 1 to the report; and
- (2) to receive a further draft of the Advice & Information Strategy at its July 2014 meeting, which takes account of
 - a. feedback from the consultation;
 - b. the redesign of the adult social care pathway;
 - c. the detailed implications and requirements of the Care Bill 2013-14; and
 - d. the February 2014 Council decision on the 2014-15 budget, which will determine the resources available to respond to the priorities set out in the revised draft Advice & Information Strategy.

118 VOLUNTARY SECTOR FUNDING APPLICATIONS FOR COMMUNITY TRANSPORT 2014/5

Councillor Roberts in proposing the item said that Bath Dial-a-Ride was operated by the Council's in-house transport team, but the others were provided by independent groups. The funding proposed would allow services to be maintained for the first part of 2014, after which new service level agreements would be negotiated with a view to maintaining the same services with roughly the same costs. There had been a 7% growth in the use of these services and cost per passenger had fallen.

Councillor Romero seconded the proposal and said that these were not statutory services, but the funding provided demonstrated the Council's commitment to helping people live independently.

Councillor Allen said that these services were important to counter loneliness, which was an objective of the Council's Health and Wellbeing Strategy. These services helped people get out of their own homes, which promoted wellbeing. He said there was a need for additional drivers in Bath.

Councillor Crossley said that the Council had provided long-term support for these schemes. There had been a growth in ridership, which demonstrated that it was worth promoting these schemes. Keynsham Dial-a-Ride had recently celebrated its 10th anniversary and recruited its 1000th member.

On a motion from Councillor Roberts, seconded by Councillor Romero, it was **RESOLVED** (unanimously)

- (1) that funding proposals in Appendix 2 of the report be approved, subject to decision of the Council on the budget for 2014/15; and
- (2) that the Divisional Director for Environmental Services be given delegated powers to reallocate funds, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Transport, from approved projects that become unviable owing to the level of funding allocated or to a change in circumstances of the applicant group, should such situations arise during the year.

119 POLICY AND DELEGATIONS FOR THE SCRAP METAL DEALERS ACT 2013

Councillor Laming in *ad hoc* statement said that because of the flooding he now owned a sunken barge and almost 70 feet of steel from a pontoon. He wondered whether he needed to apply for a licence as a scrap metal dealer under this legislation. Councillor Crossley responded that the definition of a scrap metal dealer could be found on agenda page 226.

Councillor Jackson in an *ad hoc* statement welcomed this legislation. She said that metal theft had been increasing nationally and referred to thefts of metal from churches, which were particularly vulnerable. She was disappointed that the Council had not been in a position to implement the legislation as soon as it came into force last October. She was very pleased with the proposed licensing system, which would be able to deal with people in the scrap business who had criminal records.

Councillor Dixon in proposing the item, acknowledged that the legislation was being implemented a couple of months late. The new regime would replace the previous simple registration system. All work relating to the policy would be delegated to one Divisional Director. All dealers within the B&NES area would have to hold a licence.

Councillor Allen seconded the proposal. He said the legislation brought new responsibilities for council officers, who would be ready to act when they needed to.

Councillor Crossley said that this was an excellent piece of legislation. Thefts from churches were inconveniences, but thefts from railways and other places put people's lives at risk. Most people in the scrap metal business were trading lawfully; this legislation was aimed at those who were not.

On a motion from Councillor David Dixon, seconded by Councillor Allen, it was **RESOLVED** (unanimously)

- (1) to accept the Scrap Metal Dealers Policy provided in Appendix A to the report;
- (2) to note and agree the fees associated with the function provided in paragraph 5.6 of the report;
- (3) to recommend to delegate to the Divisional Director Environmental Services;
 - a. the administration and enforcement of the function;
 - b. the power to request further information of applicants;
 - c. to review and amend the fees on an annual basis;
 - d. to determine applications (including refusal), revoke licences, or impose conditions under Section 3(8);
 - e. the power to issue or cancel a closure notice for unlicensed sites, and where appropriate, to apply for closure orders (Schedule 2) and take such other action in this respect as may be required; and
 - f. to note that Council will be asked to delegate the function to the Licensing Committee when the power to do so is available.

The meeting ended at 9.14 pm

Chair _____

Date Confirmed and Signed _____

Prepared by Democratic Services

CABINET MEETING 12th February 2014

REGISTERED SPEAKERS

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

Statements about issues NOT on the Agenda

- Bryn Jones (Chair, Transition Larkhall)
Re: London Road Gateway project proposals
- Nigel Sherwen
Re: Cycling on the London Road
- David Redgewell (South West Transport)
Re: Greater Bristol Supported Bus Network
- David Redgewell (South West Transport)
Re: MetroWest as core element in WoE LEP's Strategic Economic Plan
- Jay Risbridger
Re: the Bath pound

Re: Agenda Item 12 (Children's Centres)

- Cllr Liz Hardman

Re: Agenda Item 16 (Budget)

- Elizabeth Derl-Davis (Radstock Town Council)

Re: Agenda Item 19 (Scrap Metal Dealers)

- Dawn Milsom (Chairman Clandown Residents Association) *(to speak at the start of the meeting)*
- Cllr Eleanor Jackson
- Nettie Williams

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS - COUNCILLORS

M 01	Question from:	Councillor David Laming
<p>The lack of a one way system for Deadmill Lane and Ferndale Road in the Ward of Lambridge continues to be a serious safety issue and has been an on-going problem for many years. A proposed traffic scheme to solve this problem has been available for years; how and when does the Cabinet Member intend to implement the scheme?</p>		
Answer from:		Councillor Caroline Roberts
<p>Officers have carried out a study of this traffic issue and are currently evaluating options prior to reporting back to me. I am aware that any scheme coming forward will also need to give due consideration to the traffic impact on the wider network. If the proposed scheme is acceptable to the local community, I anticipate works will complete by summer 2014.</p>		
Supplementary Question:		
Will Councillor Roberts clarify the nature of the proposed scheme.		
Answer from:		Councillor Caroline Roberts
<i>I will reply within 5 working days.</i>		

M 02	Question from:	Councillor Nathan Hartley
<p>For almost a decade residents of Peasedown St John have been calling for more safety measures at the junction connecting Bath Road and the A367 by-pass (Radstock-end of Peasedown). Thousands of vehicles pass this junction each day, often at high speeds. There have been a lot of accidents here too, with many people breaking bones and seriously injuring themselves.</p> <p>Since 2006 councillors have taken an active role in trying to secure funding for either a roundabout or traffic lights to be installed here, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting a resident-led petition to B&NES Council in 2006 asking for a roundabout to be built here. Over 700 people signed the petition. • Featuring the campaign on the front of a special newsletter to all villagers in 2011 • Lobbying B&NES Council for a roundabout over many years, asking for funding to be made available • Meeting with Traffic and Safety Officers to look at changes to the physical layout of the junction 		

We've achieved some success by seeing £35,000 being made available in S106 money from David Wilson Homes, who have recently completed at 95-house development in the village.

The most recent call for a roundabout came from Cllr Sarah Bevan in November 2012: <http://www.peasedownlibdems.org.uk/local-news-mainmenu-2/1-latest/538-roundabout-calls-continue-25th-nov-12.html>

We recognise now though that finances are becoming increasingly sparse, and that identifying £250,000 to carry out the works is more unlikely in the near future.

We ask, therefore, of the Cabinet that the £35,000 we've helped secure is put into an allocated pot and ring fenced for this project in the future. If not, can the funding be transferred elsewhere to a more local funding pot (eg, Peasedown Parish Council) to ensure it is looked after and only spent in Peasedown St John?

Answer from:

Councillor Caroline Roberts

Officers have investigated the status of the Section106 contribution and, as is usual in such contributions, there are restrictions on the use of this money that must be complied with. If it is not then the money must be returned to the Developer.

I am also aware that officers have met with representatives of the local community to consider traffic management issues.

I will ask officers to establish the accident statistics and costs of the work requested.

There is considerable demand for the limited capital funding available but I am happy to consider this project as a potential scheme to include in the programme.

As in previous years, the proposed programme will be consulted upon and subject to a formal decision.

Supplementary Question:

X

Answer from:

Councillor Caroline Roberts

X

M 03

Question from:

Councillor June Player

In January 2012, I asked Cabinet: 'What action is the Council prepared to take to restrict the To Let Signs in areas such as Westmoreland and Oldfield Park'. (M 07).

In their response they: 'acknowledged that the Council's existing policy and practice on a number of issues related to advertisements within Bath is in need of review. I have asked Officers to undertake this review and this will include the issue of 'For Sale' and 'To Let' signs'.

These signs are, however, once again 'rearing their ugly heads' which blights our streets, makes them look uncared for and unattractive to prospective house buyers.

They do not benefit the areas they are in and they are purely put up as free advertising for the Estate Agents. In addition to this, all these signs advertise the many Houses of Multiple Occupancy to potential burglars. I do find it extremely disappointing that I am AGAIN having to ask for them to be dealt with.

Please could the Cabinet Member update me on where we are with the review he asked his Officers to undertake on the Council's policy and practice on a number of issues related to advertisements within Bath which was also to include the issue of 'For Sale' and 'To Let' signs and in the meantime, because it is clearly not yet in operation, may I ask that this Council write again to the local agents as they did in 2012 to: '...request that they use restraint with regard to their advertising'

Answer from:

Councillor Tim Ball

In the previous reply to this question in January 2012 we said that we expected the review relating to the possibility of extending the control over To Let and For sale signs outside of the Conservation Area would take place after the (then) timetable for the Core Strategy Hearings.

Because of the delay in the CS timetable this work has not commenced. I have therefore kept the response general in terms of this work recommencing, alternatively you could refer to the review taking place when the CS hearings finish later this year.

M 04

Question from:

Councillor Dave Laming

Following yet another recent tragic death by drowning in our River Avon, can the Cabinet Member confirm when the "Immediate Actions" will be completed as recommended in the June 2011 RoSPA River Safety Report; particularly the repair of all grab lines and ladders and the visibility of the ladder cut-outs.

Answer from:

Councillor Dave Dixon

Apologies for not having the answer ready for you yet. The reason is that I want to give you an accurate answer. I am shortly to meet with the Canals and Rivers Trust, the Environment Agency and the original author of the RoSPA report to review all the "Immediate Actions." When we have done that, I will come back to you straightaway.

Supplementary Question:

Will Cabinet ensure that all matters concerning the river corridor and its catchment area, will in future be co-ordinated through the River Corridor Working Group, including matters of river safety, and that it will be adequately funded to ensure that it carries out its designated duties and priorities.

Answer from:

Councillor Dave Dixon

The more help we can get from all levels and from other organisations will be really appreciated and the higher the level in that organisation the better. In short the answer is yes.

M 05	Question from:	Councillor Brian Webber
<p>A few years ago I was given a conducted tour below ground at the so-called Bog Island in Bath, and I saw the mass of metal supports. Is there any realistic prospect in the foreseeable future of the space – or at least that part which is in the Council’s ownership - being brought back into use?</p>		
Answer from:		Councillor David Bellotti
<p>The first two phases of the Grand Parade and Undercroft project are proceeding on time and Bog Island has always stood in a future phase. Detailed plans will be therefore be shared in due course when the first two phases have progressed.</p>		
M 06	Question from:	Councillor Brian Webber
<p>On 11 September 2012 in response to my written question Councillor Caroline Roberts gave an update on the repairs to the high pavement at the Vineyards, Bath. Please may I have a further update on the investigations and the consultations with affected residents?</p>		
Answer from:		Councillor Caroline Roberts
<p>Consultation with residents and all interested parties on the scheme is due to commence towards the end of March 2014. The consultation is expected to be for 2 months. When all parties are in agreement, the works will be put out to tender. Upon receipt of tenders it is anticipated that works will commence June/July 2014 dependant on the agreement of all parties.</p>		
M 07	Question from:	Councillor Brian Webber
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All the parking meters in the Central Zone and nearly all the meters in Zone 1 are dual user, ie for paying visitors as well as permit holders. Might it reduce the amount of cruising around by both classes of motorists looking for empty spaces if there were fewer meters but they were reserved for paying visitors (as they are, for example, at Laura Place)? Fewer but more productive meters would also be cheaper to service and maintain. 2. The parking meters at Laura Place are for paying visitors and are not available (during operative hours) for permit holders. They are similar in that respect to Manvers Street car park. In what way is Laura Place so much more attractive that it is charged at the ultra-premium rate of £3.40 for 1 hour and £5 for 2 hours, whereas at Manvers Street car park the fee is £3.10 for 2 hours? The contrast at Milsom Street is even more stark because the meters there are dual-user: a paying visitor has to pay £3.40 for 1 hour, if he can find a space in competition with residents, whereas round the corner the Broad Street car park is exclusively for paying visitors and the fee is only £1.60. 		

3. If most meter parking is aimed at facilitating essential short visits, would it be more logical to make the charge for each successive period progressively more expensive rather than less expensive?
4. Approximately how much does it cost to re-calibrate a single parking meter if the tariff is changed?
5. I cannot see where the decision to vary the charges at certain parking meters with effect from 9 December 2013 is shown on any of the registers of decisions (cabinet, single cabinet member or officer) on the Council's public website. Has it been displayed? Before the decision was made were any of the following consulted (a) residents associations in the area (b) bodies representative of traders (c) ward councillors?

Answer from:

Councillor Caroline Roberts

1. The current scheme was implemented to increase the amount of flexibility within all parking areas and to service the many different reasons people enter the city. Allocating specific areas as suggested would not allow such flexibility and could result in some areas sitting empty when parking spaces are required by other groups. The idea will however be considered again when a review of the zone is undertaken.
2. The charges are set to encourage use of the car parks, thus maintaining the availability of on street parking for those who value convenience over cost. Parking within the most central of areas on street within the city should be at a higher rate than at car parks (where usage is encouraged) or in the more remote areas (where vehicle movements have less impact).
3. Whilst charges could be set in the way suggested, this may then have a counter-productive effect on usage as the level of price elasticity is reached. Charges are set to support behaviours which free up road space but support the local economy rather than penalise people going about their daily business. Officers would be happy to discuss with Councillor Webber the underlying principles of the tariffs adopted and that might be more helpful than attempting a detailed response here.
4. Approximately £112 per machine including call out fees
5. All Local Authorities have the powers under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 to vary prices using a process called Notice of Variation under Sections 35(1) and 35(3) and 35C and also Regulation 25 of the Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996. This statutory process allows changes in tariffs to be undertaken without public consultation or objection. All Local Authorities are required to do is to advertise both on site and in the local paper which is what was done in this case. These changes were agreed by me and the Council Leader in order to help achieve the outcomes agreed previously by Council at the Budget meeting and advertised accordingly. The Notice of Variation was displayed as per normal on the Council website and was signed by the Divisional Director for Environmental Services Matthew Smith

who has delegated powers to set fees and changes.	
M 08	Question from: Councillor Anthony Clarke
It is understood that the policy of this Council is to enforce bus lanes where they exist to ensure the bus lanes are effective and used for their intended purpose. Does the Council therefore intend on installing ANPR cameras to enforce the new bus lane restrictions on Dorchester Street, and if so when?	
Answer from:	Councillor Caroline Roberts
<p>Yes, in February.</p> <p>The Council uses ANPR technology to enforce bus lanes within the city at different times. Not all bus lanes are enforced all of the time but Dorchester Street is a valid and enforceable restriction and will therefore be enforced at some point. Any vehicle that contravenes the restriction may receive a PCN at any time however, warning letters will be issued in the first instance for a short period to raise awareness of the scheme. We do not publicise when enforcement may be undertaken to prevent selective usage of routes thus reducing the effectiveness of the scheme</p>	
Supplementary Question:	
If the enforcement is not seen to be working, in terms of vehicles being displaced into surrounding roads and consequent delays to buses, do you accept that it is not possible to make valid decisions about the effectiveness of the scheme.	
Answer from:	Councillor Caroline Roberts
<i>We will report back after the six-month trial. We will know whether enforcement is working and whether the scheme is a success.</i>	

M 09	Question from: Councillor Anthony Clarke
How many cars does the Council estimate have breached the Bus Lane restrictions on Dorchester Street since the bus lane came into operation on the 20 th January?	
Answer from:	Councillor Caroline Roberts
Numbers of vehicles contravening the regulation during the implementation and familiarisation phase are not recorded but all vehicles contravening the regulation once enforcement commences will receive a PCN	
M 10	Question from: Councillor Anthony Clarke
At the Full Council meeting of the 4 th March 2013 at which the draft Core Strategy was	

debated by Councillors, upon an amendment moved by the Conservative Group it was resolved 'To request that Cabinet work with Bristol City Council and the Local Enterprise partnership to consider the feasibility of creating Park and Ride for the A37 at Whitchurch'. Traffic on the A37 remains a major issue for residents in the area, and so can the Cabinet Member please provide an update on this work?

Answer from:

Councillor Caroline Roberts

A Park and Ride at Whitchurch would need to be a joint project between ourselves and Bristol. Officers have raised the issue with their counterparts in Bristol and the project is not currently a priority for Bristol CC. Nonetheless, given Bristol's current focus on creating Resident Parking Zones, the demand for a Park & Ride site in this location may increase although it would still require revenue support. I will ask officers to raise this issue when the Joint Local Transport Plan is reviewed in the near future. I am aware that there is technical information on potential usage of this facility which was developed for the Core Strategy and I am happy for officers to share this with Councillor Clarke if he wishes to understand the challenges with this proposal. In any event, the capital funding of the facility would have to be sought from the limited budget available to the Local Transport Body/LEP.

M 11

Question from:

Councillor Charles Gerrish

I understand that for Keynsham shops looking to relocate to the new Town Centre, the rent is higher than existing units in riverside and they are expected to fit out from scratch an empty shell. This is all well and good for national multiples but should we not be supporting and encouraging local business. Could the Council therefore not be doing more to help smaller local businesses who are considering locating in the new town centre but are being put off by these concerns?

Answer from:

Councillor David Bellotti

The council has a range of different shop sizes available for local businesses. Rents are comparable with the commercial rents within the town centre and are not being marketed at a premium. The council is also providing business support to current retailers within Riverside to investigate options for alternative accommodation.

Supplementary Question:

What is the name of the officer to whom enquiries from traders should be directed.

Answer from:

Councillor David Bellotti

The Properties Team is keen to include existing businesses in Keynsham in the new development. There are three officers working on this.

M 12	Question from:	Councillor Vic Pritchard
<p>Following the successful campaign by Stowey Sutton Action Group to prevent asbestos and non-hazardous waste being dumped in the quarry, and the Council being awarded costs despite withdrawing from the process, would the Council acknowledge the Action Group's success, and if so how?</p>		
Answer from:		Councillor Tim Ball
<p>The Council does acknowledge that the Stowey Action Group played an important role in the consideration of both the planning application proposals and the scheme as amended and accepted at appeal by the Planning Inspector. The Action Group was able to engage in the Planning Process, which is designed to be open and transparent and is designed to ask for and to take into account the views of interested parties when decisions are made in the public interest.</p> <p>The Planning Inspector has recorded the evidence submitted at the Inquiry by the Action group along with his consideration and conclusions which were based, in part, upon this evidence. This is a matter of public record which I consider acknowledges their role and, in addition, I will be pleased to ask the Leader of the Council to write to them accordingly.</p>		
M 13	Question from:	Councillor Anthony Clarke
<p>What negotiations has the Council had with Network Rail about the proposed electrification of the rail line through Bath?</p>		
Answer from:		Councillor Caroline Roberts
<p>The Council has had several meetings with Network Rail in preparation for the implementation of this important project. This has included providing advice on engagement and what statutory consents may be required. We expect the applications for these consents to be submitted later this year. The West of England Joint Transport Executive Committee meets regularly with Network Rail on this and other topics. Part of these discussions has been pressing the case to extend electrification to other parts of the local network e.g. the Westbury line, to Weston Super Mare and local services like Severn Beach.</p>		
M 14	Question from:	Councillor Liz Richardson
<p>Noting the Planning Application which has now been submitted for a 13 pitch traveller site on the Lower Bristol Road, and that a key element of this application is the demonstration of Very Special Circumstances for allow development within the Greenbelt, have the consultants been given access to the absolute latest information on the 27 sites that were suggested to the Council through the public Call For Sites? If so, can Councillors through the PT&E PD&S Panel also be given access to this information?</p>		
Answer from:		Councillor Tim Ball

Combined Answer for M14 & M15

It is inappropriate to release the work on the site assessments currently being undertaken as part of the Gypsy, Travellers & Travelling Show People Sites Plan prior to this work being complete. This is because there is a proper process for the release of this information when the options are published for consultation towards the end of 2014 and the suitability of sites can be made clear. At previous stages in the process, the release of partial information before studies were complete resulting in ambiguity over sites caused considerable difficulties for local communities and criticisms of the Council.

M 15	Question from:	Councillor Liz Richardson
-------------	-----------------------	---------------------------

When will the Council publish an update to its list of preferred gypsy and traveller sites?

Answer from:	Councillor Tim Ball
---------------------	---------------------

See response to Question 14 above.

Supplementary Question:

Can you confirm that the occupied site on the Lower Bristol Road is owned by the Council.

Answer from:	Councillor Tim Ball
---------------------	---------------------

Yes. the families currently there were placed there by the previous administration.

M 16	Question from:	Councillor Liz Richardson
-------------	-----------------------	---------------------------

Whilst the Council undertakes the process of seeking planning permission for the travellers' site on the Lower Bristol Road, what action is the Council taking to clean up this site and bring it up the standard one would expect of land designated as Greenbelt?

Answer from:	Councillor Tim Ball
---------------------	---------------------

Since the occupation of the site the Council has endeavoured to keep the site clean and tidy through provision of Portaloos, Skips and the installation of a standpipe. These facilities have been replaced as necessary and additionally ad hoc repairs to fencing undertaken as well as regular litter picks and waste and recycling collections. Adjacent land in Council ownership remains in agricultural use.

M 17	Question from:	Councillor Michael Evans
-------------	-----------------------	--------------------------

The Government's pupil premium has now risen to significant levels and is providing welcome support to help direct resources at improving educational outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. However, it is also important for steps to be taken to ensure the

most gifted pupils from all backgrounds are challenged by schools to ensure they reach their potential. Can the Cabinet Member please spell out what initiatives are in place at schools within B&NES to ensure that the most able and gifted primary and secondary school pupils of all backgrounds are supported and challenged to help them realise their potential?

Answer from:

Councillor Dine Romero

The responsibility for supporting gifted and able pupils lies with schools. Schools locally take a range of approaches to provide support and stretching opportunities for the most gifted and able pupils. This includes the activities they include within the curriculum, with lesson planning to ensure that individual needs are addressed and work is differentiated within the classroom. In some schools pupil groups or sets operate within or across year groups to provide additional challenge. Some schools also put on extra-curricular activities for more able students to recognise artistic, musical, physical and creative talent as well as academic performance.

Some examples include:

- Opportunity to spend a day at the University of Bath, trying out new sports activities and fitness testing alongside talented pupils from other schools;
- Special visit to the Houses of Parliament including a behind the scenes tour and discussion with a local MP;
- A variety of after school clubs including performing arts, sports, music, art;
- Links between schools with opportunities for primary pupils to enjoy targeted experiences at a local secondary;
- Specialist sports coaching;
- Literacy events and writing and art competitions;
- Residential weekends with activities ranging from art, design, performance, team work, rocket science, philosophy, history, public speaking, natural history (with sponsorship available to ensure cost needn't be a barrier)

Schools can also expect Ofsted inspections to include scrutiny of what they do to help gifted and talented pupils to realise their potential.

Supplementary Question:

Your reply states that some schools provide additional challenges and lay on extra-curricular activities. Is there information about the proportion of schools that do this, or which schools. I would be concerned if were not all schools.

Answer from:

Councillor Dine Romero

I will report back if detailed information is available. Responsibility lies with the schools to provide such activities. The Council will give support where it can.

M 18

Question from:

Councillor Anthony Clarke

The Cabinet Member has previously made repeated promises that the new parking charge regime at Royal Victoria Park would be reviewed, first in December then in January, but with still no announcement made. Can the Cabinet Member please confirm when this review will take place, or announce the outcome of this review?

Answer from:

Councillor Caroline Roberts

As confirmed previously, the review of the parking restrictions in Royal Victoria Park commenced after 6 months of operation in December 2013. Officers have completed the evidence gathering processes and these were discussed by officers earlier this month prior to consideration by Cabinet members later this month. We will consider the results of the review and I will make an announcement about our intentions shortly afterwards.

M 19

Question from:

Councillor Brian Webber

How many hours of work are involved in assembling and displaying every month on the Council's website under the Transparency section (if you happen to know where to find it) the data on items of expenditure over £500? Is the value of this information to the public commensurate with the cost of providing it, or is this yet another example of misguided overkill and interference by central Government?

On the other hand, does the information on senior salaries disclosed in the Council's annual accounts meet the requirements of the Government's code of recommended practice, which appear to include an organisational chart with salary bands covering all posts remunerated at more than the minimum Senior Civil Service pay band (approximately £58,000)?

Answer from:

Councillor David Bellotti

The current Government issued a new code of practice for Data Transparency in 2011 requiring councils to publish a range of different information to support a drive toward more openness within local government. The requirements to publish this information were not statutory but were recommended good practice and included for instance the requirement to publish spending >£500 and senior salaries.

The Council has been complying with this Code in an efficient manner and we believe does comply with the code however it does require officer time to enable information to be analysed and published appropriately and this takes on average between one and two days per month.

In relation to payments it has gone further than the requirements of the code of practice and publishes all expenditure, not just those >£500 and in relation to senior salaries the Council publishes this information both in its annual accounts and Pay Policy Statement. Its threshold level for disclosure of senior staff salaries is at the minimum point of the senior civil service pay scale and above as at 31 March which details senior managers by job title and pay grade.

The Council believes transparency is important to allow its community to understand how its taxes are spent on local priorities and has a range of different mechanisms to allow the community to both access information and interact with the Council on its activities.

The government has just released a new code of practice on Data Transparency in December 2013 which will take effect from the 1st of April 2014. This new code will now be a statutory obligation and require further and more detailed information to be published in the public domain and the Council is currently assessing how much resource will be required to comply with its requirements.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS - PUBLIC

P 01	Question from:	Graham Harrison
-------------	-----------------------	-----------------

My name is Graham Harrison, and I am Vice-Chairman of the Bath Branch of the Federation of Small Businesses. As a committee, we are very concerned about the impact on business in the area if, as a consequence of hydraulic fracturing and exploratory testing in the Mendips, the flow of water from the Hot Springs is jeopardised.

The possibility of fracking in the UK is very much in the spotlight at the moment, and arguments, both for and against, are in the public domain. The opinion of our committee, however, is that the local implications of such procedures in and, more particularly, around the Bath & NE Somerset area are still a subject of mass ignorance. The current position adopted by the council on the matter is, I believe, broadly in line with that of Bath FSB, but I am also aware that many in the business world have little knowledge of the unique and fragile nature of the geological coincidences that have come together to produce the Hot Springs, and the ease with which these conditions could be put at risk.

Can I ask what measures the council has taken to educate the public, in both the business and residential sectors, to the hazards of disrupting the subterranean structures in the Mendip hills? Since the primary purpose of fracking is to damage the shale layers, what information is being assimilated and distributed about the relatively small pressure head at which the water is forced to the surface, and how resilient it is to disturbance?

The committee of the FSB believe that there should be a facility to educate those in the council's area, of the generally held theories concerning the source of the Hot Springs, the geography of the Mendips and its effect on Bath, and the principles of how fracking works. By doing this, we can better understand what the threats are to the livelihood of many who live and work in Bath, and allow all to form their own opinions of the issues involved.

Perhaps an 'Information Day' could be organised to allow the simple truths of the subject to be presented to all interested parties. At the very least, a permanent display of information could be assembled in a public area. From an FSB point of view, it is vital that those who run businesses in the area have as much information as possible, to allow them to join with the council in any consultations that might take place over the coming months. This is particularly important where objections to any future planning applications may be invited.

Answer from:

Councillor Tim Ball

Thank you for the question from your committee regarding hydraulic fracturing and the potential threat to the Hot Springs of Bath. The Hot Springs are a vital part of the local economy as they generate so many visitors to the City and region. Thank you also for your useful suggestions. I would confirm that the Council shares your concerns about the threat to the Hot Springs from any hydraulic fracturing operations that could be undertaken in the region. Perhaps I can use my response to explain the actions the Council has currently been taking over this matter.

The Leader of the Council, Paul Crossley has issued a number of press statements and given a number of talks about the Council's concerns which have been covered in the local and national press. He has also written to the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change on a number of occasions. You may also be aware that the Council passed a resolution about this matter last year. I have enclosed the text of that resolution for your information.

The Council appointed the Building Control Manager, Philip Mansfield who has overall responsibility for the protection of the Hot Springs, to act as lead officer to collate the Council's response to potential shale gas and coal bed methane extraction in the region. He has given talks to various groups about this matter to explain the technicalities of the subject and would be happy to give a talk to your group if you think this would be useful. Please contact him on 01225 477541 if you want to arrange this. He has also been in regular contact with the Department for Energy and Climate Change (DECC) to ensure they are aware of the Council's concerns. B&NES Council are also liaising with other councils and agencies in the region to share information and provide a more co-ordinated response to this potential threat.

In 2012 the Council commissioned a report by the British Geological Survey (BGS) to look into the potential for damage to the Hot Springs. They produced a balanced and detailed report which has been used to help the Council's case. I have asked the officers to send you a copy of the report for your information.

With regard to wider dissemination of information on this very important subject the Council will soon be placing information and guidance on their website so that the wider public can be well informed.

Once again I would like to thank you for your interest in this matter and would assure you that the Council is doing its utmost to ensure the continued protection of the Hot Springs in Bath.

I am here to speak about the impact of the Gateway project on cycling. This administration has provided some great new facilities for cycling. These have been largely the provision of off road leisure facilities. We now need action to make our roads safer for cycling as a means of transport. Pre 2005 there was a 2m wide cycle lane near Cleveland Place; it is no surprise that converting this to a loading bay/cycle lane just does not work for cyclists, forcing them to take their chance with the heavy traffic or else riding on the pavement; not good.

The London Road is at its narrowest here. There are two lanes of heavy traffic including HGVs heading into the city in narrow carriageway widths, one going straight on, and one for turning left, and no space for cyclists. A major factor in the recent spate of fatal accidents to cyclists in London has involved HGVs or buses at left turning junctions. With the proposed removal of the hybrid cycle lane in favour of car parking we will have, I fear, the perfect conditions to make this a potential hazard with real risks for cycling.

Experts from British Cycling have raised safety concerns regarding some of the original proposals and subsequently some minor changes have been made to the scheme to remove most of the pinch points, but nothing else. We were given the opportunity following a meeting with two Cabinet Members to come up with our ideas to improve the scheme. We have done so, producing a 2 way segregated cycle lane and also a compromise solution, both including re-siting the proposed car parking. We feel we have had little encouragement and even that our efforts have been rebuffed.

We believe that our ideas will actually do more to meet the Gateway Project objectives, notably reducing motor traffic and hence vehicle pollution and can also help bring economic vitality. A safe segregated nearly level cycle route here will serve residential areas east of the city centre. This is what the 1100 who signed the petition say they want, not the existing dangerous conditions that concern them and will be made worse by the current proposals.

The Council's published policy is: Our aim is to have "more people cycling, more safely, more often" and to provide safe and accessible cycling for users aged from 8 to 80 years *on all routes*.

The Cabinet has a decision to make; do you go for the progressive solution of encouraging a sustainable means of transport, cycling, with its recognised health and environmental benefits for all, and in line with your own policies? Or do you stick with the old methods of just accommodating motor vehicles? I am sure the 1100 would love to be able in the future to look back and say "This administration made the right decision!"

Nigel Sherwen, On behalf of Bath Cycling Club, CycleBath, Transition Bath and Transition Larkhall

This page is intentionally left blank

Presentation to BANES cabinet on a local Bath Pound

Prepared by Jay Risbridger, Director, Bath Currency C.I.C. 12.02.2014

Background: Bath Oliver and Bristol Pound

Bath currently has a local discount voucher currency scheme called the Oliver, which was launched in 2011. Bristol launched a paper and electronic local Pound in 2012. The Bath Oliver offers local residents discounts using the Oliver notes with participating Bath businesses. The Oliver is also used as a means of 100% exchange between members of the local exchange and trading system.

The Bath Oliver scheme has not been widely accepted by local businesses and residents because it is used in only part of any transaction. While the Oliver gives a discount benefit to its users, accounting for it is complicated. Bath businesses have also been reluctant to discount their products in a low growth economy. Bristol Pound has proved much more popular with businesses because the electronic system allows them to access and use their Bristol Pound balances with great ease, encouraging them to use the pound more often. In addition because users can convert the Bristol Pound back into Sterling there is a high level of confidence in the system, which has attracted involvement by large local organisations like the City Council and First Bus.

Launching and Bath Pound

The Bristol Pound CIC is actively trying to expand the size of the community involved in using the pound and views Bath & NES as a priority area for the extension of its system. A central component of the Bristol Pound is the membership by the trade users in the Bristol and Bath Credit Union, which runs the digital currency accounts. The fact that the Credit Union also covers Bath means rolling out the scheme to Bath is relatively uncomplicated. It should however be stressed that the Bath Pound needs to retain its own identity to be accepted and could not be run within the same scheme as Bristol the Pound. The Bristol pound would however provide all the software, documentation and training to set up the Bath Pound system. The Bath Currency CIC already exists as a body to administer a Bath Pound and it is envisaged that the Oliver would remain in use by the LETS system members.

Benefits to Bath & NES

The cost of the Bristol Pound to set up was about £100,000 but it is estimated the city received £3million worth of national publicity from the launch alone. The launch costs for a Bath Pound would be much smaller but its impact could be almost as large, as local currencies are particularly popular with tourists. The core aim of the Local Pound is to get individuals both local and visitors to commit to spending in local businesses by converting some of their Sterling into Local Pounds. The multiplier effect on the local economy of spending with local businesses is about five times the level of using Sterling. Here are the three core reasons for using the Bristol Pound:

Bath Pounds stick to local independent businesses. More money is kept in the city, working for the people of Bath, rather than being lost to national based business. For every £1 spent at a chain supermarket, only 10-12p stays in the local economy. Bath pounds would stick to our local economy for longer, and are spent again and again locally, creating more wealth for our communities.

Bath Pounds are 'happy money' because it feels good to use them and makes us more connected. A Bath Pound is a community currency - it connects people and brings people together to show support for our city. Independent businesses are vital for healthy communities as they employ more people and make Bath a special and unique place to live and shop in. Using a Bath Pound means less pollution; buying local means we don't need to ship or fly so many products from far away.

A Bath Pound is about fairness, cooperation and creativity. Using Bath Pounds helps create new enterprises, and social and green projects. The Bath Pound would be a not-for-profit partnership between Bath Currency Community Interest Company and Bristol & Bath Credit Union. The Credit Union is a local, co-operatively run, alternative to big banks. A Bath Pound is provides good honest money, which is run for the members, and for the good of the city.

Key facts about how a Bath Pound would work.

Bath Pounds are purchased for sterling and can be spent with business members. Which are promoted in a [Business Directory](#) of where you can spend Bath Pounds.

- Bath Pounds are spent just like pounds sterling with £B1 equal in value to £1 sterling.
- Each Bath Pound is backed pound for pound by sterling deposits, so taking part incurs no more financial risk than is generally the case when depositing money with an authorised and regulated institution.
- The Bath Pound is a complimentary currency, designed to work alongside sterling, not replace it.
- Business accounts are available to traders that are independently owned and based in or around Bath and North East Somerset.
- Anyone can pay with or accept printed Bath Pounds.
- The Bath Pound is not legal tender and so accepting Bath Pounds is voluntary.
- Printed Bath Pounds are highly secure, printed by specialist printers, incorporating a host of security features.
- All Bath Pound systems are very secure. Money can only be taken out of the system by registered account holders.

REASONS FOR REVERSING SCRAPPING THE BRONZE BAND PAYMENTS FOR PENSIONERS

- **It targets the poorest, most vulnerable pensioners**
- **It fails to consider the ability to pay**
- **It creates the possibility of making some pensioners homeless**
- **It only saves £56,000.00 in a million pound budget**
- **It sets a precedent for abolishing all support service for pensioners on Pension Credit Guarantee and Housing Benefit**

Bristol City Council has already reversed this proposal in their budget. Why can't BANES?

This page is intentionally left blank