

Democratic Services

Riverside, Temple Street, Keynsham, Bristol BS31 1LA

Telephone: (01225) 477000 *main switchboard*

Direct Lines - Tel: 01225 394416

Web-site - <http://www.bathnes.gov.uk>

Date: 11 February 2014

E-mail: Democratic_Services@bathnes.gov.uk

To: The Chairperson and Clerk of each Parish and Town Council in Bath & North East Somerset and the Chairpersons of Parish Meetings

Copy to :

Group Leaders:

Cabinet Members:

Chief Executive and other appropriate officers

Press and Public

Dear Member

Parishes Liaison Meeting: Wednesday, 19th February, 2014

You are invited to attend a meeting of the **Parishes Liaison Meeting**, to be held on **Wednesday, 19th February, 2014 at 6.30 pm** in the **Council Chamber - Riverside, Keynsham BS31 1LA**.

The agenda is set out overleaf.

Yours sincerely



Ann Swabey
for Chief Executive

If you need to access this agenda or any of the supporting reports in an alternative accessible format please contact Democratic Services or the relevant report author whose details are listed at the end of each report.

This Agenda and all accompanying reports are printed on recycled paper

NOTES:

- 1. Inspection of Papers:** Any person wishing to inspect minutes, reports, or a list of the background papers relating to any item on this Agenda should contact Ann Swabey who is available by telephoning Bath 01225 394416 or by calling at the Riverside Offices Keynsham (during normal office hours).
- 2. Public Speaking at Meetings:** The Council has a scheme to encourage the public to make their views known at meetings. They may make a statement relevant to what the meeting has power to do. They may also present a petition or a deputation on behalf of a group. Advance notice is required not less than two full working days before the meeting (this means that for meetings held on Wednesdays notice must be received in Democratic Services by 4.30pm the previous Friday)

The public may also ask a question to which a written answer will be given. Questions must be submitted in writing to Democratic Services at least two full working days in advance of the meeting (this means that for meetings held on Wednesdays, notice must be received in Democratic Services by 4.30pm the previous Friday). If an answer cannot be prepared in time for the meeting it will be sent out within five days afterwards. Further details of the scheme can be obtained by contacting Ann Swabey as above.

- 3. Details of Decisions taken at this meeting** can be found in the minutes which will be published as soon as possible after the meeting, and also circulated with the agenda for the next meeting. In the meantime details can be obtained by contacting Ann Swabey as above.

Appendices to reports are available for inspection as follows:-

Public Access points - Riverside - Keynsham, Guildhall - Bath, Hollies - Midsomer Norton, and Bath Central, Keynsham and Midsomer Norton public libraries.

For Councillors and Officers papers may be inspected via Political Group Research Assistants and Group Rooms/Members' Rooms.

- 4. Attendance Register:** Members should sign the Register which will be circulated at the meeting.
- 5. THE APPENDED SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS ARE IDENTIFIED BY AGENDA ITEM NUMBER.**
- 6. Emergency Evacuation Procedure**

When the continuous alarm sounds, you must evacuate the building by one of the designated exits and proceed to the named assembly point. The designated exits are sign-posted.

Arrangements are in place for the safe evacuation of disabled people.

Parishes Liaison Meeting - Wednesday, 19th February, 2014

at 6.30 pm in the Council Chamber - Riverside, Keynsham BS31 1LA

A G E N D A

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair of Council, Councillor Neil Butters will welcome everyone to the meeting.

2. EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

The Chair will draw attention to the emergency evacuation procedure as follows:

If the continuous alarm sounds, you must evacuate the building by one of the designated exits and proceed to the named assembly point. The designated exits are sign-posted. Arrangements are in place for the safe evacuation of disabled people. The assembly point is along Temple Street on a grassy area at the top of Dapps Hill, past the Ship Inn and the flats.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

4. URGENT BUSINESS AS AGREED BY THE CHAIR

The Chair will announce any items of urgent business accepted since the agenda was prepared

5. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING ON WEDNESDAY 16TH OCTOBER (Pages 7 - 12)

To approve the minutes of the previous meeting on 16th October 2013 as an accurate record.

6. BATH & NORTH EAST SOMERSET COUNCIL'S BUDGET 2014-2015

The Cabinet member for Community Resources (Cllr David Bellotti) and the Divisional Director for Finance (Tim Richens) will attend to present this item and answer questions.

The Council's budget proposals can be found on the B&NES website:

<http://democracy.bathnes.gov.uk/documents/s29317/MTSRP%201415%20-%201516%20Budget%20Council%20Tax%201415.pdf>

7. COMMEMORATION OF THE CENTENARY OF THE START OF THE 1914-18 WAR (Pages 13 - 14)

A briefing report is attached. Ann Cullis (Senior Arts Development Officer) will attend to answer questions.

8. THE ENERGY@HOME PROJECT

Jane Wildblood (Corporate Sustainability Manager) and Marion Britton (Interim Project Manager, Sustainability) will give a presentation and take questions.

9. UPDATE ON "PAPERLESS CONSULTATION" REGARDING PLANNING APPLICATIONS (Pages 15 - 16)

A briefing note is attached. Lisa Bartlett (Development Manager, Planning and Transport Development) will attend to answer questions.

10. UPDATE ON THE "CONNECTING COMMUNITIES" PROJECT (Pages 17 - 18)

A briefing note is attached. Claire Gresswell (Programme Manager – Connecting Communities) will attend to answer questions.

11. UPDATE ON THE PARISH CHARTER

Peter Duppa Miller (Secretary of the Local Councils Association) will attend to brief the meeting and answer questions.

12. UPDATE ON THE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK (Pages 19 - 24)

A briefing note is attached. Simon de Beer (Planning Policy and Environment Manager) will attend to answer questions on the following issues:

- a) Update on the Core Strategy
- b) Update on the Placemaking Plan
- c) Update on the Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Show People site allocations DPD
- d) Update on Neighbourhood Planning in B&NES

13. UPDATE ON THE IMPROVEMENT OF RURAL BROADBAND IN N.E. SOMERSET (Pages 25 - 28)

Two briefing notes are attached. David Wales (Principal EEB Development Officer), a representative from BT (Laurent Boon) will attend to answer questions. A representative from Wansdyke Telecom (David Bland) will attend to give a presentation and answer questions.

14. UPDATE ON THE PARISH HIGHWAY RANGERS PROJECT (Pages 29 - 32)

A briefing note (prepared by Stefan Chiffers) is attached for the meeting to note.

15. FUTURE DATES OF MEETINGS

The next Parishes Liaison meetings will be on Wednesday 18th June (at Riverside) and Wednesday 22nd October (venue to be confirmed) respectively.

The Committee Administrator for this meeting is Ann Swabey who can be contacted on 01225 394416.

This page is intentionally left blank

Bath and North East Somerset Council

PARISHES LIAISON MEETING

Minutes of the Meeting held

Wednesday, 16th October, 2013, 6.30 pm

Councillors: Neil Butters (Bath & North East Somerset Council) (Chair), David Veale

Representatives (Parish and Town Councils): Bathampton, Cameley, Camerton, Chew Magna, Clutton, Combe Hay, Compton Dando, Corston, Dunkerton, Englishcombe, Farmborough, Freshford, Hinton Charterhouse, Keynsham, Marksbury, Monkton Combe, Newton St Loe, Paulton, Peasedown St John, Priston, Publow with Pensford, Saltford, South Stoke, Stanton Drew, Timsbury, Ubley, Wellow, Whitchurch,

Officers attending: Jo Farrar (Chief Executive), Louise Fradd (Strategic Director of Place), David Trethewey (Divisional Director of Strategy and Performance), Simon de Beer (Planning Policy and Environment Manager), David Wales (Principal EEB Development Officer), Stefan Chiffers (Area Traffic Engineer), David Dixon (Stronger Communities Manager), Ann Cullis (Senior Arts Development Officer), John Wilkinson (Divisional Director of Regeneration), Claire Gresswell (Programme Manager, Connecting Communities).

Also in attendance: Eric Potter (Chairman, B&NES Local Councils Association), Peter Duppa-Miller (Secretary, B&NES Local Councils Association), Tony Crouch (Avon Local Councils Association), Laurent Boon (BT)

17 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair of Council, Councillor Neil Butters, welcomed everyone to the meeting.

18 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

The Clerk read out the procedure.

19 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received as follows:

B&NES Councillors: Paul Crossley, David Bellotti, Dine Romero, Tim Warren, Eleanor Jackson.

Parish Representatives: Charlcombe Parish Council

20 URGENT BUSINESS AS AGREED BY THE CHAIR

Peter Duppa-Miller read out a statement from Tim Richens (Divisional Director, Business Support, Finance) concerning the issue of Council Tax Support and local grants. The Director will write to all parishes once he has received information from central government about the level of Localised Council Tax Support.

21 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING ON 19TH JUNE 2013

The minutes of the last meeting of 19th June 2013 were proposed for approval by Councillor Tony Crouch, seconded by Peter Duppa-Miller and signed by the Chair.

22 THE PARISH HIGHWAY RANGERS PROJECT

Stefan Chiffers (Area Traffic Engineer) and Dave Dixon (Stronger Communities Manager) introduced this item and gave a Power Point presentation on the proposed work of the Parish Rangers. The scheme will be piloted in the 11 parishes of the Chew Valley cluster area, starting in December.

A representative of Englishcombe PC asked whether the scheme would affect the current funding for village sweepers and Public Rights of Way and was informed that the Parish Rangers would operate in addition to those services. There would be no extra cost to parishes unless additional work was needed. A representative of Ubley PC asked whether the Parish Rangers would have enough time and resources on be able to clean all the considerable numbers finger posts in the area. The officer replied that they hoped to sponsor apprentices to work alongside the rangers.

It was planned that rangers would liaise with a named contact in the parishes to survey the area and identify what needed to be done. This contact could be the parish clerk or one of the councillors. A representative from Corston PC asked whether the rangers would be working to a specific timeframe or rota or whether parishes could call them in on an ad hoc basis. The officer replied that the rangers would visit each parish in the cluster every 3 weeks and to begin with, would be working to a rota.

The Chief Executive informed the meeting that the parish rangers scheme was one of the '10 in 100' initiatives which was being promoted by the Council, whereby council employees had been invited to make suggestions to improve council services and skills. Out of 100 ideas, 10 were chosen and had to be implemented within 100 days.

The Chair thanked the officers for their presentation.

23 THE B&NES CORE STRATEGY

Simon de Beer (Planning Policy and Environment Manager) introduced this report which gave an update on the progress of the examination of the Core Strategy by the Inspector. One of the main outcomes so far was that B&NES would no longer be required to fulfil unmet housing need from Bristol. The next hearing would take place in December looking into the proposed 12,700 houses which are planned to be built

in this area between now and 2029. The urban extension area hearings would be held in March 2014.

The public consultation on the Green Belt would take place from 11th November until 20th December 2013 to which parishes were invited to attend and make comments on both the Green Belt boundaries and the development boundaries. There would be public exhibitions in Bath, Keynsham and Whitchurch – parishes would be informed about the details and dates. It was hoped that the Inspector would be satisfied with the plans and be in a position to sign them off after the March hearings.

A representative from South Stoke PC asked whether the Core Strategy would absolutely define the Green Belt boundary and was informed that it would. The clerk to Combe Hay PC asked if it was proposed that with reference to the Green Belt adjacent to Bath, the entire place-making process (including the preparation of the necessary development management policies) would be by-passed and was informed that it would for particular sites, though some are being reviewed.

Councillor Veale (Bathavon West) commented that the government's intervention in the planning process appeared to be intended to allow development within the Green Belt. He asked under what circumstances would this be allowed and the officer replied that the government was not in favour of ad hoc development – sites within the Green Belt would need to be scrutinised and go through the full planning process.

24 THE B&NES PLACE-MAKING PLAN

Simon de Beer (Planning Policy and Environment Manager) introduced the report and informed the meeting that, after the Placemaking Plan was launched in May, the department had received over 200 representations. There had been considerable concern expressed that the Placemaking Plan had been advanced before the finalisation of the Core Strategy. The next consultation will take place in late spring 2014.

A representative of Hinton Charterhouse PC said that they were in the process of doing their village assessment and wondered how to get their document accepted by B&NES. The officer replied that they hoped to incorporate village plans into a region-wide document. The representative from Hinton Charterhouse asked if it was a good idea to create a design statement and was informed that it was a useful exercise.

25 THE IMPROVEMENT OF RURAL BROADBAND IN NORTH EAST SOMERSET

David Wales (Principal EEB Development Officer) and John Wilkinson (Acting Divisional Director for Regeneration) presented the report and introduced Laurent Boon who is the Programme Lead Officer for British Telecom in Devon and Somerset. The programme is on track to deliver faster broadband to 91% of homes in the area by the end of 2016. Surveying is planned to start in B&NES in spring 2014 with first services live by the end of that year.

A representative from Cameley PC asked when their exchange was due to be upgraded and was informed by Laurent Boon that the website would give dates for

when exchanges would go live. A representative from Englishcombe PC, David Bland (who declared a non-disclosable interest), informed the meeting that there were alternatives to this project and that despite promises of 24Mb download speed, for most of the time it was only 15Mb from the current provider. In his opinion, the requirement had been watered down. Laurent Boon assured him that coverage for the private sector would be 24Mb by the end of 2016.

David Wales added that Connecting Devon and Somerset (CDS) was not the end game – the authority aimed to achieve more in the future and deliver higher speeds in due course. He said that BT had been a good partner, already having invested £40m in the project. Additional funding was also being sought by CDS from the government £250m investment scheme announced last June, as the successor to the Rural Communities Broadband Fund.

The Chair thanked the officers for their contribution.

26 CONNECTING COMMUNITIES

David Trethewey (Divisional Director, Strategy and Performance) introduced the programme in his role as sponsor and explained that the programme was being jointly adopted by public services in B&NES, including the Council, Police, Fire & Rescue, Curo and the Health services. The Parish Ranger project referred to earlier in the meeting was a good example of the Connecting Communities programme.

He then introduced Claire Gresswell who has been appointed programme manager for the roll-out of the initial pilot schemes in Keynsham, Chew Valley and the Somer Valley. She informed the meeting that the pilots were going well and that there was already an improvement in the communications with the community and also with the local authority.

27 ARTS DEVELOPMENT BUSINESS PLAN

Ann Cullis (Senior Arts Development Officer) introduced the report and commented that investment in the arts did not seem to have reached out into the rural communities and that there was an opportunity gap for those who cannot engage in the current activities on offer. The Arts Development Team is planning to remedy this and reach out into the North East Somerset area; as such they would welcome feedback from parish and Town councils about what they would like to see happening.

A representative from Newton St Loe PC asked about what was actually available to small villages. The officer replied that the Bath International Music Festival did take events out to villages as well as to Keynsham, There had also been cinema screenings in Midsomer Norton as well as support for the Priston Festival. The Chair asked whether, under the ward councillors' initiatives (worth £8K), any funding had been sought for Arts schemes and was informed that there were not many.

Councillor Sally Davis said that she had used some of her ward councillors' initiative fund to hold a cinema screening in Stanton Wick. Ann Cullis added that micro grants of £500 were also available to local groups and organisations. The link giving information is included below:

<http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/services/sport-leisure-and-parks/arts-development/arts-funding-bath-north-east-somerset-council>

A representative from Monkton Combe PC suggested that the Arts Development Team contacted the editors of parish newsletters to advertise the grants to a wider audience. Ann Cullis replied that her team would take up this opportunity. It was also suggested that the Arts Development Team send information and listings about arts events and projects to parish newsletters. Ann Cullis explained that her team tried to get organisations to do their own publicity, but that they would bear this in mind.

28 PARISH CHARTER

Peter Duppa-Miller (Secretary to the B&NES Local Councils Association) informed the meeting that there was a need for a revision of the Parish Charter as a result of the following:

- The outcomes of the earlier review by B&NES Council and the Local Councils
- The clear need to define the Spectrum of Engagement much more specifically
- The recent changes to legislation, especially the Localism Act and all the subsequent guidance
- The Connecting Communities programme, initiated by major public services
- The increasing perception (particularly by Local Councils) that the commitments embodied in the Parish Charter are not being honoured e.g. the commitment by B&NES to respond in a timely manner to communications from Local Councils.

Under the umbrella of the Connecting Communities programme, a root-and-branch revision of the Parish Charter will be undertaken. Subject to the meeting agreeing to establish a joint working party, Peter Duppa-Miller would contact all Local Councils and seek nominations for members of the joint working party. He would also send out examples of Parish Charter issues that have arisen in 2013 so that the wording of the Charter may be revised to ensure that such issues do not arise again. He was aware of 23 Local Councils in B&NES that have had such issues. The meeting agreed that such a Joint Working Party should be established forthwith.

The Chair thanked Peter Duppa-Miller for his contribution.

29 GYPSIES, TRAVELLERS AND TRAVELLING SHOW PEOPLE SITE ALLOCATIONS DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENT

Peter Duppa-Miller commented that the programme needed to take account of the dates of cabinet meetings at which it would need to be approved. Louise Fradd

(Strategic Director of Place) replied that the timeframe of the programme was been looked at and may have to be changed. A representative of Stanton Drew PC asked about the status of the Lower Bristol Road site and the provision for families – Louise Fradd said she would report back. A representative from Compton Dando PC commented that 2 recent actions concerning gypsies centred around the fact that B&NES has no sites and that the longer the problem goes on, the greater the concerns of parish councils.

The briefing paper was noted.

30 PAPERLESS PARISHES CONSULTATION REGARDING PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Eric Potter (Chair of the Local Councils Association) commented that applicants for planning permission find the paper applications with their detailed drawings more helpful than viewing applications on screen. Louise Fradd replied that the desire was to make all applications electronic eventually, but where paper was absolutely required, the planning department would work with that. She confirmed that, in the interim, smaller Parish Councils would receive paper copies. A representative from Dunkerton PC pointed out that once paper copies were scanned, they were easy to download and project onto a screen. A representative from Compton Dando replied that, given slower broadband speeds, it was very difficult and long-winded to download. Jo Farrar added that Lisa Bartlett would be attending the next Parishes Liaison to respond to parishes' concerns on this issue. A representative from South Stoke said that they were moving towards paperless planning applications, but they had problems with multiple files and unclear numbering. The Chair asked where B&NES stood in the league table of councils who are moving towards paperless parishes. Louise Fradd offered to supply that information.

The briefing report was noted.

31 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The next meeting will be on Wednesday 19th February 2014 at 6.30pm in the Council Chamber, Riverside, Keynsham.

The meeting ended at 8.05 pm

Chair(person)

Date Confirmed and Signed

Prepared by Democratic Services

PARISHES LIAISON
Wednesday 19 February 2014

Commemoration of the Centenary of the start of World War One

Purpose of this briefing:

- For information
- Invitation to parishes to join in with plans for the year
- Request to parishes to contribute information on any planned commemorative events

Introduction

2014 is the centenary of the start of the First World War (WW1). The centenary date, marking the outbreak of war, is **Monday 4 August 2014**. The Dept for Communities & Local Govt has given direction to local authorities as follows:

- *Centenary programme has as its overarching themes: **remembrance, youth and education***
- *Three-pronged approach to mark the centenary: **identifying key dates for commemoration, development of a Centenary education programme, and a series of community-based activities***

The Chief Executive and the Leader have approved outline plans for how Bath & North East Somerset will mark the centenary. Events and activities are being co-ordinated by a working group comprising relevant Council officers, Bath Abbey, and British Legion.

The Council sees the centenary as a significant anniversary for all our communities, and it is an opportunity not only to commemorate the losses of WW1 but also to contemplate broader themes as they apply to the present day.

It is an opportunity to:

- Join the national commemoration on Monday 4 August 2014
- Work with the Armed Forces and Veterans through the Community Covenant
- Mark the centenary in each village or community in B&NES, in whatever way each community wishes
- Engage children and young people through work with schools
- Provide information about community events and other activities, such as exhibitions, undertaken by local organisations

Parish Clerks were contacted 10 January.

Key events and dates for commemoration

Bath Abbey special service: Monday 4 August, late evening appx 22:00hrs
There will be national service in Westminster Abbey, in the late evening of Monday 4 August, and the directive is for all cathedrals and churches to conduct their services at the same time.

Civic ceremony in Bath: Monday 4 August, early evening appx 18:00hrs
There will be a civic ceremony at the War Memorial in Royal Victoria Park - details to be confirmed. The time 18:00hrs is proposed because this is a normal working day and early evening is probably best to enable most people to attend.

Community commemoration ceremonies elsewhere
Towns and villages in B&NES will want to do similar ceremonies on the same day, or on Sunday 3rd.

Commemoration of Victoria Cross recipients
Dept for Communities & Local Govt have commissioned specially designed commemorative paving stones which will be presented to Councils, to be placed in the home towns or villages where First World War Victoria Cross recipients were born. In B&NES district we have one VC recipient, in Paulton – Oliver Brooks, awarded 8 Oct 1915. The instruction from DCLG is that the stones are to be laid on the centenary of the date awarded.

Exhibition in Bath, summer 2014
There are plans for a small exhibition of photos and memorabilia contributed by local residents, possibly displayed in the central library exhibition room and/or using the windows of empty retail premises. There will be more information about this from April.

Parishes - community-based activities

Parishes will want to create their own church services, community events and other projects, and Ward Councillors are likely to be involved in activity for their Wards.

B&NES Council will shortly issue a press release, inviting communities and organisations to tell us their plans. There will shortly be a page on the B&NES Council website where we will list all events, exhibitions etc.

Paulton Councillors and the Parish Clerk are considering how they will commemorate Oliver Brooks in 2015.

Ann Cullis
Arts Development Manager
19.2.14

Update Briefing Note on the Transition to Electronic Communication

Planning application process

Improving our service to Town and Parish Councils

Background

In 2013 Officers presented a briefing Note to the Liaison Meeting around the suggestion that due to the increased number of planning applications that are now submitted on line, it makes little sense for the Council to receive planning applications electronically only to then print these out in paper in order to carry out consultations.

A number of Parish Councils have requested to only be consulted on information electronically, and the feedback we have received has been very positive. And a number of Town and Parish Councils have invested in Laptop, Projectors and Screens so that planning applications can be easily discussed in meetings. A number of Parish Council's raised real concerns about the proposed process at the Liaison meeting and consequently it was agreed that a consultation period would follow in order for views to be collated.

This consultation raised the following points:-

Several Parish Councils expressed the view that they would like to move to electronic consultations but:-

- No internet access in the village
- Lack of equipment and resources to procure this
- Concern around the ability to read plans, especially in the case of large applications
- Concern about looking at plans whilst on site
- Concern about measuring from electronic plans

Proposed Next Steps

In order to provide some support, guidance and training it is proposed that a workshop or workshops are planned. In a straw-poll of 23 Parish Councils regarding paperless consultation on Planning Applications relating to a hands-on workshop - the result was -

1. In favour of a hands-on workshop (or perhaps several) - about 17.
2. No need for a workshop, we do it already - about 3.
3. Not interested, we don't intend to agree to go paperless - about 3.

Action

Officers will arrange a workshop (s) and invite Parish Council representatives to attend with a view to supporting more Council's to move to electronic consultation.

Parish Liaison Meeting, 19th February 2014 – Connecting Communities

1. Aim of this briefing

This briefing note updates on the progress of Connecting Communities over the previous 4 months (Parishes Liaison having received updates on 19th June and 16th October 2013), including identifying the emerging framework and next steps.

2. Update

Work has continued on implementing Connecting Communities in the Keynsham/Chew Valley and the Somer Valley Cluster Areas. This has focused on how new arrangements can strengthen collaboration between public services, parishes and local communities. The following Connecting Communities Framework has emerged from these discussions:

- Cluster Forums to comprise local elected members, public services, Parish Councils; and also voluntary and community groups, residents and businesses, as appropriate to local circumstances. These Forums will adopt a common “core agenda” to ensure key issues identified locally are addressed, including
 - Channelling concerns to those best placed to deal with them
 - Receiving reports from local projects and updates from public services to see the “big picture” of what’s going on locally
 - Progressing initiatives based on local needs

Cluster Forums will not generally deal directly with complaints and issues about individual services and there is a presumption also that individual schemes will be discussed and any issues resolved separately wherever possible and only raised if there are impacts across the Cluster area. Neither will Forums have any locus for:

- Development Control and regulatory matters
- Delegated decision-making including budgets and funding

It is expected that Clusters will come together in networks for wider community engagement, either through an event (as with the Bath City Conference), use of social media or other ways of getting as many people involved as possible.

This framework will provide a clear structure for closer joint working. As part of this offer, a Council Director-level sponsor will be appointed for each Cluster and a locality team of officers established to help get things done. In Bath, the South East Bath pilot is being progressed and is being linked with local regeneration initiatives such as Foxhill and the Enterprise Area.

3. Next Steps

One of the aims of Connecting Communities is to have fewer, better meetings. As a result, it is expected that the current Parish Cluster Group meetings will be absorbed into the Connecting Communities Forums. Work will therefore take place through the Bathavon South and Bathavon North Parish Cluster Group meetings to establish them as Connecting Communities Forums as above. Given that these arrangements, as with Parishes Liaison itself, are included in the Parish Charter it is proposed that work now be undertaken to amend and update the Charter to reflect the Connecting Communities approach.

This page is intentionally left blank

PARISH LIAISON MEETING

19TH FEBRUARY 2014

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK UPDATE

1. CORE STRATEGY

Introduction

- 1.1 In September last year the Inspector confirmed in his note ([ref ID39](#)) that the B&NES Core Strategy could progress without it having to be based on a new assessment of housing needs for the West of England. He also sought greater clarity on the proposal for Green Belt releases for urban extensions and further public consultation on these proposals.
- 1.2 He subsequently held hearings on 10th & 11th December 2013 in which he sought to establish the appropriate housing target for B&NES. Early in the New Year the Inspector reported ([ref ID44](#)) on his initial findings on the housing figure and the arrangements for the next steps for the Core Strategy hearings.

Inspector's comments on the Housing Target

- 1.3 The Inspector's key conclusions on the housing figure are set out in paras 2.3 & 2.4 of ID/44;

*"I have, however, heard all those existing parties who wanted to be heard who consider the plan unsound because identified need/overall housing provision included in the March 2013 changes are too low and that the supporting SHMA is inadequate. I have not identified any fundamental problem as a result of the hearing on 10/11 December which I need to bring to the Council's attention at this stage and which would require a delay to the further hearings. **I have not been persuaded that overall housing provision in the plan needs to be greater than the around 13,000 homes as now proposed by the Council***

... the discussion at the hearings should proceed on the assumption that the total supply of housing of around 13,000 homes is either about right or should be lower (if, for example, the exception in NPPF paragraph 14 is met)....".

Implications of ID/44 for decision making

- 1.4 This raises the question as to whether this conclusion has any impact for determining planning application or appeals. The Inspector has reached a clear conclusion which is firm enough to enable the Council to give substantial weight to the figure of 13,000 homes being the upper limit of the housing requirement.

1.5 However the Inspector is yet to examine the housing land supply on both brownfield and greenfield sites. The hearings to discuss these matters are scheduled to take place in March/April 2014 and whilst the use of the Green Belt is the most sustainable strategy and is unlikely to be found to be inappropriate, this remains to be tested through the examination process.

1.6 This uncertainty calls into question whether the Council can demonstrate a 5 year housing land supply which is the main reason for the vulnerability from predatory planning applications. It is therefore considered premature to use the Core Strategy to refuse planning applications and for use in appeals on this issue.

Public consultation on Green Belt boundaries

1.7 The public consultation closed on 20th December 2013 and around 1,000 comments were received. A schedule of all the representations is available (from the 14th February) on the Council's website www.bathnes.gov.uk/corestrategy. Paper copies of all of the representations can be viewed at the Council offices at Lewis House, Manvers Street, Bath.

1.8 The Inspector has asked for the Council to prepare Statements of Common Ground with key developers/landowners and these have now been completed. From the 14th February these are available on the Council website at www.bathnes.gov.uk/corestrategy

March/April Hearings

1.9 In ID44, the inspector outlined a draft timetable for the March/April hearings. On 28/2/14 he is due to issue any questions that require pre-hearing statements and will give participants until 7/3/14 to reply. The main areas that he still wants to scrutinise are;

- a. The Spatial strategy (housing/employment distribution);
- b. Housing delivery, including 5 year supply calculation and the SHLAA
- c. Timing and consequences of plan review
- d. The Green Belt allocations & safeguarded land
- e. Other matters arising from the consultation which may include;
 - *flood mitigation strategy*
 - *Affordable housing policies*
 - *Small Green Belt sites on the edge of Bath/Keynsham*
 - *Sites at large 'villages insets' in the Green Belt*

1.10 Following the hearings in March/April, the Inspector may want the Council to consult on a consolidated list of modifications which have arisen from the hearings before he finalises his report.

CIL

1.11 Progress on the Core Strategy has also enabled work on the preparation of a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) for B&NES to resume. The programme

schedules a draft CIL to be agreed in June 2014 for public consultation. A more detailed report on CIL, and the implications for local communities, will be brought back to a future Parish Liaison Meeting.

2. PLACEMAKING PLAN & NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING

Introduction

2.1 The scope of the Placemaking Plan was broadly set out in the Launch Document consultation of 2013. The public comments on the Launch Document will shortly be available on Council's website. The key streams of work on the B&NES Placemaking Plan are;

- Preparation of generic district wide planning policies (including an update to the current Local Plan policies)
- Allocation of key development sites not already allocated in the Core Strategy, mainly brownfield development sites in and around Bath
- Work with Town & Parish Councils to identify sites for development and assets for protection in rural areas

Work with Town & Parish Councils

2.2 The Town and Parish Councils have responded positively to working collaboratively with the District Council on the Placemaking Plan. Around forty Parish/Town Councils are involved in this challenging task.

2.3 The deadline for the initial tranche of character and site assessments was the 21st December 2013 and by this date 24 were received. In light of the delay to the Placemaking Plan agreed by Cabinet in November, Parish Councils were given an additional deadline of 2nd February 2014, to date another twelve assessments have been received with a few Parishes needing some additional time to finish the assessments before sending their evidence into B&NES.

2.4 This process has enabled a significant latent local resource to be mobilised to the benefit of local communities which will enable them to have greater ownership of the planning framework for their areas as encouraged by the Localism Act.

2.5 These assessments are now being reviewed. B&NES will respond to the first tranche of assessments in February and to the second tranche in early April 2014.

Rural Facilities Audit

2.6 In light of sustainable development objectives, the Core Strategy seeks to steer new development to those settlements with a better range of local facilities and services. This set out in Policy RA.1 of the Core Strategy. To inform this policy, the Council has committed to work with local councils to maintain an up-to-date record of rural facilities. This update is currently underway and the audit is due to be published during February.

Next Steps

- 2.7 The workstreams described above will come together in the Placemaking Plan Options consultation is due in Autumn 2014, comprising;
- The sites emerging from the work by Parish and Town Councils
 - Proposals emerging from the Enterprise Area Masterplan work
 - Updated policies from the Local Plan and new policies where needed
 - Allocation of other key brownfield sites
 - Outputs from other Council strategies such as the Transport Strategy, the Leisure Strategy, the Green Spaces Strategy, the Economic Strategy and the health & Wellbeing Strategy

Neighbourhood Plans

- 2.8 To date there are eight parished areas with Neighbourhood Plan area designations and one Neighbourhood Plan area which is currently undergoing consultation to become a designated area. Freshford and Limpley Stoke are currently in a final consultation period on their draft revised Neighbourhood Plan before formal submission to B&NES in March 2014. The Plan examination is expected in summer 2014, the referendum in Autumn 2014 and adoption at the end of the year.
- 2.9 The seven other Neighbourhood Plan areas are currently in the policy formulation and evidence gathering stages and are making good progress towards developing their Neighbourhood Plans.

3. GYPSIES, TRAVELLERS AND TRAVELLING SHOW PEOPLE SITE ALLOCATIONS DPD

- 3.1 An update on this work was provided to Parish Liaison Meeting towards the end of 2013. This included setting out the revised timetable for this work agreed in November in the Local Development Scheme. This entails an options consultation in the Autumn of this year and a draft Plan in 2015.
- 3.2 Key tasks identified in order to prepare the DPD include:
- a. On-going site assessment work
 - b. Co-operation with adjoining authorities to ensure a joint strategic approach to provision has been undertaken;
 - c. Assessing the contribution that major development sites can make towards accommodating travelling communities;
 - d. Investigating the scope to regularise existing Travelling Showpeople accommodation;
- 3.3 Over the last few months, work has therefore focused on the site assessments and working with the other West of England UAs to ensure a consistent approach to the assessment of need across the sub-region and arrangements for ensuring that the Duty to Co-operate is met. This work is influenced by processes/timetables in the adjoining authorities.
- 3.4 In recent months planning permission for traveller sites has been granted at Whitchurch and Bathampton and a planning application has been submitted for the unauthorised site at Lower Bristol Road, Bath.

Progress update: Connecting Devon and Somerset

The Connecting Devon and Somerset (CDS) programme is still on track to deliver 90% (incl. private sector plans) high speed fibre by the end of 2016. We have passed over 16,000 premises to date and expect this to grow to 70,000 by the end of July. As further survey work is being completed the programme has announced further communities across Devon and Somerset to benefit from high speed fibre broadband.

As was mentioned during the previous Parish Liaison meeting (October 2013) surveying is still planned to start in B&NES in spring 2014 with first services live by the end of 2014.

Maps: CDS has recently added the [Current Infrastructure Deployment](#) map to complement the previously published final and interactive maps

<http://www.connectingdevonandsomerset.co.uk/current-infrastructure-deployment/>

This map will be updated once surveying for a particular phase has been completed and the programme is able to identify at postcode level where fibre will be rolled out to. Currently this map shows the areas to benefit from the programme up to spring 2014.

F10: There have been recent Government announcements of additional funding in support of the final 10%.

- the £10m to be used in support of piloting alternative technologies
- the £250m, which we are expecting to receive confirmation from Government imminently on how it will be shared across all BDUK rural programmes.

For further information please visit www.connectingdevonandsomerset.co.uk/

This page is intentionally left blank

Briefing paper for Parish Liaison Meeting, 19th February 2014

Wansdyke launched ultrafast broadband in rural NE Somerset on Feb 7th 2014

On Friday Feb 7th Wansdyke showcased its fibre optic demonstration services into Newton St Loe. The initial properties served are in the heart of this 18th century conservation area village and have been connected to Wansdyke's fibre optic backhaul directly all the way to the London internet exchange. They are now enjoying ultrafast speeds, both upload and download, in excess of 700Mbps. This is some two hundred and fifty times faster download than the speed available in the village from the incumbent supplier. In the upload direction, the speeds are even more impressive at some two and a half thousand times faster than currently available.



Jacob Rees-Mogg MP, and David Bland of Wansdyke Telecom CIC, launch ultrafast broadband in NE Somerset

In launching the service, Jacob Rees-Mogg, MP for NE Somerset, commented: 'The lifeblood for rural communities over the next 100 years is how we communicate with the outside world. This demonstration is real progress. Wansdyke are enabling businesses and homes in the region to access the high speed communications that are currently only available in cities. It is going to preserve the welfare of rural communities, and allow us to lead the lives we want to lead.'

Wansdyke's David Bland: 'Newton Farm shop, here in Newton St Loe, is now clearly the fastest farm shop in the west! Customers can now access ultrafast broadband speeds whilst they sip their coffee or buy local produce. We're demonstrating what a rural business can achieve with a truly high quality, really fast broadband connection. We will be hosting further events for both businesses and residential customers, as well as potential investors.'



Demonstrating what ultrafast speeds could achieve in the home, guests were able to chat via Skype with Chris Conder from another people-power broadband company, Broadband for the Rural North, which has been an inspiration to Wansdyke and others. The call lasted throughout the evening, and allowed both sides to feel as though they were in the same room.

Wansdyke's Matt McCabe: "We've been streaming 4K video as part of our demonstration, which has blown everyone away. The picture quality is so good, and that's not TV we're talking about, it's ultra high definition video streamed from the internet. This is something that residents of rural NE Somerset could only have dreamed of until now. It's certainly not something I can manage at home. This is the future of home entertainment as well as home communications. I can see I may have to get a 4K TV once I'm connected to Wansdyke!"

Wansdyke Telecom intends to build out from its current base around Newton St Loe, out to the most rural communities in NE Somerset. Jacob Rees-Mogg: 'This is a real community effort. People coming together as a community can make things happen. This is going to preserve our wonderful countryside, not as a rural theme park but as a real place of business, prosperity and profit. I wish Wansdyke every success.'

The public demonstration site at the Newton Farm Shop is available seven days a week and is free of charge. Parishes and individuals are welcome to bring their own laptops, tablets or smartphones, or may access the service from the iPad air provided. Tailored demonstrations for interested parishes can be laid on at any time in the Rickyard by contacting David Bland on 07785 360326. Additionally there will be demonstrations and presentations for parishes and interested potential investors on Friday of this week – at 0800 for breakfast, at 12.30 for lunch, and at 1930 in the evening. There will also be a brunch session starting at 11.00 on Saturday 22nd.

Wansdyke is also presenting its plans to individual parish councils and village communities on an on-going basis and this will continue throughout the balance of February and March, as well as conducting individual parish or village surveys. Wansdyke will announce its full range of products and pricing in March, with public roll-out of services starting September this year. Our plans, subject to achieving the necessary investment, are to roll out to all rural homes and businesses across the whole of North East Somerset by the end of 2015.

Wansdyke Telecom CIC is a community interest company, which means that the network will be owned in perpetuity by its local investors. It has received no government or local government funding, but is a sound financial investment giving shareholders an on-going dividend stream (currently limited by government rules to 20% per annum). Profits in excess of dividends are required to be used for other projects within the community under its constitution.

Parish Liaison Meeting 19th February 2014.

Parish Ranger Service – Update on the pilot.

1. Aims of this briefing

This briefing note aims to update the Parishes on the Parish Ranger Service Pilot. The purpose of this pilot is to establish whether it is possible to deliver existing services more efficiently and effectively by better use of existing resources.

The pilot is being undertaken in the Chew Valley Parish Cluster area.

2. Background

Bath & North East Somerset Council has over the years developed a number of different ways of delivering highways, cleansing and grounds maintenance in the towns and rural areas of the authority.

There are already in place some effective working practices between individual Parishes and the Council backed up by the Parish Charter, Parish Cluster and the Parish Liaison meeting.

The Parish Ranger Pilot is aimed at building on the existing good practice and will look to deliver increased outcomes from better co-ordination with the Parish Councils in the Chew Valley.

The Parish Ranger service, if adopted following the pilot, might eventually become part of the Councils “Connecting Communities” programme. We have an ambition for public services to become “excellent” at local engagement by:

- Listening- responding quickly and positively to new ideas
- Prioritising- being flexible to local circumstances
- Joining Up- public services co-ordinating how they engage locally and not “re-inventing the wheel”
- Working with you- helping communities find solutions to local problems

- Sharing ideas - encouraging joint working and sharing “what works”

The Parish Ranger Service pilot is intended to support the delivery of neighborhoods where people are proud to live, by:

- Developing pride in local communities
 - Delivering ad-hoc & routine tasks
 - Recruiting rangers that bridge the gap between community and council
 - More effective use of resources
 - Providing timely responses to enquiries
 - Delivering increased public satisfaction
 - Ensuring cleaner communities, road signs, hedges, etc.
 - Contributing a visible and recognisable presence in the community
 - Enabling Shared ownership and links between the council and community
- Being the face of the Council – acting as the eyes and ears for the area.

3. Parish Ranger Pilot – The story so far.

Following the last Parish Liaison meeting we contacted all 11 Parish Councils in the Chew Valley cluster area.

A workshop was arranged on the 20th November 2013 at Compton Martin Village Hall to develop a more comprehensive programme of activity with the Parishes. Nine of the eleven Parishes attended (i.e sixteen people in total).

Methods of communications between Parish contacts and the Parish Ranger were developed at the workshop as well as the activities that will need to be undertaken.

We interviewed and seconded a member of Council staff for the pilot which started on Monday the 2nd of December 2013.

In the eleven weeks since the start of the pilot, the Ranger has completed 323 separate tasks in the Chew Valley cluster area. 80 of these tasks have come directly from the Parish contacts themselves.

The Ranger has collected 1.17 tonnes of litter since the start of the pilot. The Ranger now recycles from his litter picks all the bottles, cans and other recyclable materials. Prior to this it was all sent to landfill.

In the last 4 weeks this accounts for 8 recycling boxes full of glass and 8 recycling boxes full of cans. In one lay-by alone the Ranger picked up 60 bottles in one visit!

The Ranger has also undertaken a number of tasks repairing local street furniture. The cost to install a new bench in the Chew Valley is £450 but the Ranger has repaired two at present for the cost of £55.

In addition to this the Ranger has been out and about cutting back vegetation, cleaning road signs and street furniture, emptying gulleys and removing hundreds of bags of wet leaves.

4. Parish Ranger – Next Steps

The current pilot has been extended until the end of July 2014. It was felt that the original pilot was not long enough and did not account for seasonal change that will have an effect on the Ranger's duties.

Extending the pilot will also provide more time to consider the best solutions to a number of issues which have emerged during the pilot.

These include:

Resilience – we need to ensure that adequate backup plans are in place to ensure continuity if the Rangers are away from work.

Governance – given that the tasks undertaken by the Rangers fall under the remit of a number of statutory functions (e.g Highway Authority, Waste Collection Authority, Principal Litter Authority) we need to be clear how staff are supervised and work is checked to ensure that required standards are met.

Affordability – the cost of rolling out a scheme to cover the whole area exceeds the amount of expenditure currently incurred on those tasks undertaken by the Rangers. This is because the Rangers are doing work which is not currently done. We need to find a way of closing the gap.

HR issues – implementing the scheme means reducing jobs in other teams and the affected post holders may not be capable of carrying out the Ranger duties. We need to try and avoid a situation where we drive staff into compulsory redundancy and associated costs of this.

We are also still in the process of developing the communication, recording and monitoring processes within the Council and our partners.

We are still planning to hold workshops with all the Parish and Town Councils and these are programmed for May 2014.