

## **BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET**

### **MINUTES OF COMMUNITIES, TRANSPORT AND ENVIRONMENT POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL MEETING**

Monday, 16th January, 2017

Present:- **Councillors** John Bull, Brian Simmons, Alan Hale, Neil Butters, Lizzie Gladwyn, Bob Goodman, Ian Gilchrist and Deirdre Horstmann (in place of Peter Turner)

#### **117 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

#### **118 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE**

The Chairman drew attention to the emergency evacuation procedure.

#### **119 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS**

Councillor Peter Turner gave his apologies and was substituted by Councillor Deirdre Horstmann

#### **120 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were none.

#### **121 TO ANNOUNCE ANY URGENT BUSINESS AGREED BY THE CHAIRMAN**

There was none.

#### **122 ITEMS FROM THE PUBLIC OR COUNCILLORS - TO RECEIVE DEPUTATIONS, STATEMENTS, PETITIONS OR QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE BUSINESS OF THIS MEETING**

The following members of the public made statements to the Panel:

1. Susan Charles (WWISE) made a statement on Warm Water Swimming at item 10 on the agenda. *A copy of the statement is attached to the minutes and is available on the Council's minute book for this Panel.*
2. Pamela Galloway (WWISE) made a statement on Warm Water Swimming at item 10 on the agenda. *A copy of the statement is attached to the minutes and is available on the Council's minute book for this Panel.*
3. Rosemary Naish made a statement regarding a junction in Clutton. *A copy of the statement is attached to the minutes and is available on the Council's minute book for this Panel.*

In response to a question from Councillor Simmons, Ms Naish explained that her main concern is basic mistakes in the data for the plans. Councillor Butters stated that the Planning Application should deal with concerns. Ms Naish stated that outline planning permission was given and now it is full permission. Martin Shields – Divisional Director for Environmental Services – stated that he would send a written response.

4. Mike Parr made a statement on the 6/7 Bus Route. *A copy of the statement is attached to the minutes and is available on the Council's minute book for this Panel.*

Councillor Simmons asked if there is an alternative route, Mr Parr stated that this route worked before and it would be good to investigate getting back to that. Councillor Anthony Clarke – Cabinet Member for Transport – explained that alternatives are available and that the group are not prepared to consider shortening the route. The survey showed that the route was poorly utilised and the £39k subsidy did not represent value for money.

5. David Redgewell made a statement on Rail and Bus Investment. *A copy of the statement is attached to the minutes and is available on the Council's minute book for this Panel.*
6. Nicolette Boater made a statement on Infrastructure development and investment. *A copy of the statement is attached to the minutes and is available on the Council's minute book for this Panel.*
7. Paul Stansall – Bath Central Library Rescue Team made a statement regarding the relocation of Bath Central Library. *A copy of the statement is attached to the minutes and is available on the Council's minute book for this Panel.*

The following Councillors made statements to the Panel:

8. Councillor Lin Patterson made a statement on the 6/7 Bus Route.

She explained that the three buses do not connect the community and also shops are suffering. She stated that the survey mentioned by Councillor Clarke was taken during a period of severe disruption and a better service is needed. She asked that the Panel recommend that the Cabinet Member reinstates the subsidy.

9. Councillor Rob Appleyard made a statement regarding the 6/7 bus route. He explained that there are no plans from First Bus to refigure the route. He invited the campaign to look at the alternative solution.
10. Councillor Dine Romero made a statement regarding concerns on the budget plans. She stated that she hoped the Panel would scrutinize the proposed changes to Bath Library including the proposed click and collect service and

potential loss of exhibition space, children's are and study area. She also asked that the Panel examine plans for other libraries in the authority. Councillor Romero also asked the Panel to examine and monitor what they are being told regarding the introduction of wheelie bins and changes to the dog walking service and play areas such as Weston.

Councillor Bull asked what the concern is regarding access to books. Councillor Romero stated that she feared the library may become an electronic ordering service. Ian Savigar – Divisional Director Customer Services – explained that the plan is for a modern library where technology will enhance the browsing experience. He explained that there will still be shelves of books and that the consultation starts at the end of this month. Councillor Hale stated that after a few teething problems with Keynsham Library, it has settled and also the library staff are also useful in other areas. He said that the changes may seem big but there is a need to save money.

## **123 MINUTES**

The Panel confirmed the minutes of the previous meeting as a true record and they were duly signed by the Chairman.

## **124 DIRECTORATE PLANS**

Panel members considered the Directorate Plans for Place and Resources (where issues fall within the Panel's remit) as part of the Council's service planning and budget development process and made the following comments.

### Directorate Plan for Place

Councillor Hale asked whether a rateable value can be imposed onto University buildings. The Chair noted that this falls within the remit of the PHED Panel and the Cabinet Member for Finance and Efficiency, Councillor Charles Gerrish, explained that the Council have responded to Government consultation in line with this view.

Councillor Bull asked about the Highway Maintenance Programme and Transport Improvement Programme (page 31) – he asked that the Panel be sent these figures alongside figures for previous years so that they can see the overall context. The Director agreed. It was explained that the Government do not give clarity on future year proposals and also that the Highways Programme does include the pot hole funding – The Cabinet Member for Finance and Efficiency, Councillor Charles Gerrish, added that £788k is the national productivity investment from the Government regarding highways.

Regarding the Depot Review (page 33) the Director for Place, Louise Fradd explained that the review is about reducing numbers and improving existing service. Councillor Hale asked if the Council can consider any available land for increase in rental accommodation, the Cabinet Member for Finance and Efficiency explained that the Property Company always considers available land. The Director for Place

explained that a 'combined transport and licensing hub' refers to the bringing of the administration together.

Regarding the Transport and Parking Review (page 34) the Director explained that the review is covering short and long stay parking; construction vehicles; non charging car parks. Councillor Butters asked about the future of Avon Street Car Park. The Director explained that there is scope to look at automated number recognition, she explained that there will be a proportion of replacement parking and that there has always been a plan to reduce the amount of city centre parking and that is why Park and Ride schemes are being considered. Samantha Jones, Inclusive Communities Manager explained that if cash services are stopped in car parks then some people cannot access the service and there needs to be a safety net. Members asked about the likely effect of the review. Officers said that nothing was ruled in or ruled out, including charges at Council car parks which are free at present. Councillor Bull asked that the Parking Review be brought back to the Panel at a later date.

Councillor Hale mentioned the Bereavement Service and asked how charges can be increased as well as offering cheaper services. Martin Shields, Divisional Director for Environmental Services, explained that the increase in some services reflects the fact that the authority charges have been low up until now but there will be scope to cater for both ends of the spectrum. Councillor Hale mentioned that it is an excellent team with a fantastic level of customer service.

Councillor Bull asked if Bath will pay for hanging baskets (page 34) in the same way as other areas. The officer explained that a review showed that hanging baskets were being undersold so that has been rectified and should generate income.

Councillor Bull asked how the service redesign of 'Transport – moving people from A to B' (page 34) will save money, the officer explained that regarding SEN transport – the service is not efficient and now there is an officer in Children's Services who talks to the family and works out a service that the family want and will use. He explained that he is happy to come back to the Panel and talk through the details.

Councillor Goodman asked about the reduction in the dog warden service. Sue Green Group Manager - Public Protection & Health Improvement explained the procurement process is happening now. She reminded the Panel of the statutory responsibility of the authority which is strays and kennelling.

Regarding recycling centres, Councillor Bull asked about time banding. The officer explained that time banding will allow staff to check vans in and charge them. He also explained that rather than register electronically now, staff just check for physical proof of address which makes the system easier and saves time.

#### Directorate Plan for Resources

Panel members asked about the changes to library services over the next 3 years including Bath Central Library, Midsomer Norton, mobile libraries and other libraries. Officers explained that the service is being modernised, that there is considerable

investment planned to enable integration with the advice services in the Council's one stop shops in Bath and Midsomer Norton. Keynsham already has this integrated model. Other libraries will need local community led solutions such as the healthy living centre idea (and successful bid for external funding) for Radstock. Officers further explained that customer demand at one stop shops is reducing with the implementation of Universal Credits. It was explained that further local consultation will take place, with the next level of consultation in Bath beginning at the start of February.

Members asked whether the cuts to the library service budget would lead to a reduction in service. The reply expressed the hope that branch libraries would be run in future by parish councils or community groups.

## **125 RAIL ELECTRIFICATION BRISTOL-BATH - UPDATE ON PROGRESS**

Michelle Scogings – Network Rail – gave a presentation to the Panel which covered the following:

- West of England: electrification and upgrade
- West of England: deferrals
- West of England: deferrals explained
- West of England: deferrals map
- Passenger benefits
- Additional benefits

Panel members made the following points and asked the following questions:

Councillor Butters asked the target date for lengthening the platform at Bath Spa and if the class 165 turbos are going refurbished. Michelle Scogings (Network Rail) explained that the designs for the platform at Bath Spa station have been developed and submitted. She explained that the 165 turbos are being refurbished but to ask GWR for details.

Councillor Goodman explained that he is on the joint scrutiny for the West of England and stated that the Panel should reinforce to the Cabinet Member for Transport, Councillor Clarke that pressure should be put on the Government to prioritise electrification. Councillor Bull asked what reason Network Rail was given for the delay – the Network Rail representative explained that some of the deferral of money will help develop Bristol East and the developing capacity is developed first and then wires go up – this is the most efficient way to do it. The non-visible enabling work is being done. Councillor Hale asked if the electrification will be done by 2019 – the Network Rail representative explained that the control period (funding cycle) is 2019-24 so it will be during that time.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Panel will write to Ministers (Christ Grayling and Paul Maynard) to keep up the pressure for electrification.

## **126 WARM WATER SWIMMING**

The Panel received a presentation on 'Warm Water Swimming in Bath and North East Somerset' from Marc Higgins Team Manager – Leisure and Business Development which covered the following issues:

- The Issue
- Partner Agencies
- The Requests 1, 2 and 3
- Other Options considered
- Additional costs
- Industry Guidance – PWTAG
- Summary

Panel members made the following points and asked the following questions:

Councillor Hale noted that the consultation does not align with what WWISE are asking for and seems more relevant to competitive swimming. The officer explained that Sport England and the ASA do in fact have the remit for swimming for disabled people and they have said that there is no business case for including the type of facility requested by WWISE. The recommendation is about reasonable adjustment.

Councillor Hale asked if there is scope at either Bath or Keynsham to make one (training) pool into a warm water facility. The officer explained that this would cost £1million and a loss of funding if this is done in Bath.

Councillor Simmons suggested that WWISE set up a charity to provide what is requested as it will not stand up to public funding at the moment. Samantha Jones, Inclusive Communities Officer explained that the authority has to be sure that there is enough need for a facility such as this as it is responsible for spending public money and balancing the needs of all groups. She added that there are two groups - Independent Equalities Advisory Group and Bath Access Group already in existence which could be attended by the WWISE members should there be any future issues for discussion.

Councillor Butters thanked Susan Charles and Pamela Galloway for their work on this. Councillor Bull stated that he is sorry the request is irreconcilable.

## **127 CABINET MEMBER UPDATE**

The Cabinet Member for Transport, Councillor Anthony Clarke updated the Panel on the following:

- The authority has applied for money from DEFRA for a clean air zone under new legislation;
- Consultation on Joint Spatial and Transport Plan has come to an end;
- Siting of the East of Bath Park and Ride will be considered at the Cabinet meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> January 2017 – the Transport Delivery Plan can then be looked at.

Panel members asked the following questions:

Councillor Gilchrist asked about progress regarding Widcombe Subway – the Cabinet Member will report back.

Councillor Bull asked about progress on A36-A46 link road. The Cabinet Member explained that the present economic position is being put together. The Strategic Director added that discussions with the DFT and Highways England are ongoing, this does not assume any design.

**128 PANEL WORKPLAN**

The Panel noted the workplan with the following additions:

- Parking Review
- Future Use of Shared Space on the roads

The meeting ended at 7.55 pm

Chair(person) .....

Date Confirmed and Signed .....

**Prepared by Democratic Services**

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## **WWISE Presentation to Communities, Transport & Environment Committee - 16<sup>th</sup> Jan 2017**

**Susan Charles**

The Remedial Swimming Consultative Group was set up by the Council in 2004 following which funding was given by the 'Get Active Team' to set up the WWISE Network to identify the need for a warm water pool.

The need which was identified was for a small warm water pool from 90 – 1.2/1.3m deep (3ft – 4'6"/5') at a temperature of 32°C which was fully accessible to all ages.

In 2014 we addressed various Council committees and were then in discussions with the consultants negotiating the new contract stressing the need for such a pool.

In 2015 there was a change of Administration with a change of Cabinet member responsible for leisure, and a contract was set up with GLL. After the design for the refurbishment was brought out in March 2016 we were invited to talk with Jason Curtis, GLL area manager for Leisure Facilities, who said he would arrange for us to meet with the designers & architects. However, this meeting never happened despite constant phone calls which were never answered or returned.

Therefore we came back to you and the other relevant committees who were just as surprised as we were that the pool was not in the plans.

In August 2016 we were formally told not to discuss with anyone in the Council concerned with this subject even though we did not understand why.

The BANES Water Engineer concerned says there is no technical problem in including such a facility and identified several possible area in the Bath Leisure Centre, but he had not been consulted by GLL.

WE are reliably informed the the money for this would come from the capital budget, rather than the current budget

So, in the new design we will have a main pool at 28°C suitable to fast swimming, keeping fit & galas. A gym suitable for the more able bodied to maintain health & mobility, losing weight, preventing heart disease, diabetes etc as we are all encourage to do. So, a small warm water pool for the less able for gentle swimming, exercise & relaxation to maintain health & independence would seem like a good facility in this day & age. Not a medical facility but one for social & recreation.

Instead this group of people are being discriminated against despite the Council's Health & Wellbeing and Fit for Life strategies as well as the Children & Young People's Plan.

In paragraph 4 on the first page of this report it says the Council is committed to provide facilities that support people to live healthy lifestyles. This group is being neglected.

We ask that you, as councillors, put pressure on GLL and those concerned to find a solution as to how a warm water pool can be included

Thank you

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## **WWISE Network presentation to Communities, Transport & Environment Policy Development & Scrutiny Panel – Jan 16<sup>th</sup> 2017**

While we are pleased that GLL & the Officers have put together such a comprehensive report, we are nevertheless disappointed that it is so confusing & inaccurate and furthermore based on a totally incorrect premise from the outset.

We are not denying that providing a facility for teaching children to swim is vital and that maintaining a 25m pool for holding galas is also important but we believe it is perfectly possible to provide a warm water pool suitable for adults in addition to these important facilities.

Let's be clear from the start about who needs this warm water pool. Yes, some are severely disabled people who need carers to be able to access the water, but there are also a multitude of people living with long-term conditions who are less disabled than this. They include the ever increasing older population living with painful conditions such as arthritis and back pain - & let's face it that could be any of us now or in the near future - as well as younger adults with a range of conditions and also those recovering from shorter term illness or injury. These people are independent, but exercising in warm water will help them to regain and then maintain their independence & quality of life without the need to call on the NHS for ongoing treatment.

Let's also be clear about the temperature. We are not talking about 33°C . Such a high temperature is not necessary. How many times have we also stressed that 30°C is too cool – there are a number of pools at this temperature already which are not suitable. The temperature we are talking about is 32°C – exactly the same temperature as the proposed learner/teaching pool.

Furthermore, let's be clear about the depth needed. It is not 1.5m deep. This is too deep as most people are unable to maintain their footing in this depth. However 60 – 90 cm – max waist deep – is too shallow for adults. The depth needed is a max of 1.2 – 1.3m – a mere 30 – 40cm (12 – 15”) deeper than the deepest part of a learner pool.

Numerous examples of alternative facilities are quoted as being readily available but

in reality this is not the case as none satisfy the criteria needed.

Of those in BANES,

- Thermae Spa does not have fully accessible changing facilities and at a cost of £20, even for a BANES resident, can hardly be considered affordable on a regular basis
- Changing facilities at the University Hydro Pool are also not fully accessible and with a minimum 1.4m depth – too deep for the majority. It is also only available for a limited time in the evenings by prior booking.
- Between the school & outside private hire, Three Ways Pool is fully utilised and even if there were availability, you have to hire the whole pool including providing your own poolside staff.
- Likewise Fosseway School which in addition has limited public transport links
- the new hydrotherapy pool at the RUH will replace the pools at the RNHRD and RUH both of which are currently fully utilised with waiting lists of up to 12 months for ongoing self-management. This pool will not provide any additional availability

Of the alternative ways a warm water pool could be included, we were only able to give an indication of the various options that might be possible – we do not have in depth technical knowledge. One further suggestion we did make - raising the area surrounding the proposed learner pool even without building an extension - was discussed with the authors of the report but this has not even been considered. This could provide a pool from 60cm – 1.2 or even 1.3m deep, which would satisfy the need for a learner pool and a warm pool for adults.

A great emphasis is put in the report on the need for moveable floors. These are expensive to install & utilise in practice but, if the pool were the correct depth in the first place, such a floor would be unnecessary.

We ask that you delay making any decision based on this report as we feel it is a grossly inaccurate assessment of the current situation and of the possibilities available in the refurbishment of the Leisure Centre. We cannot afford to overlook this important opportunity to provide such a valuable asset in what is a once in a lifetime major refurbishment project.

Pamela Galloway  
Secretary WWISE Network

## Rosemary Naish statement

Clutton recently had a traffic calming scheme, designed & implemented by Highways, put in, which has proved excellent. However we are about to have more highways work-this time a junction on the main through road in the village is to be re-prioritise, to allow a developer to provide access to their proposed development. It is a difficult junction but there are no recorded accidents there, so it is essentially a safe junction. The only reason it is being done is to allow the access, so it is quite right and proper that the developer, pays for it. They have also designed it and will be doing the actual work. We see no problem with this as they are the beneficiaries. What is not right is that until very recently they were also doing their own safety audit. Judge, jury & executioner so to speak. The community have been very concerned by the proposed change and have had two independent highway safety experts look at the design. These experts have said that the proposed junction almost certainly be made to work, but as it is currently designed is actually more dangerous than the existing layout.

Gary Lewis of Highway said, in May 2015, and I quote

The reprioritisation of the junction of Station Road, Maynard Terrace and Clutton Hill does not achieve acceptable carriageway widths, alignment and pedestrian facilities to provide a safe means of access to serve the development, and existing development already served by Maynard Terrace, with consequent additional hazards to all users of the highway. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policy T.24 of the Bath & North East Somerset Local Plan (including minerals and waste policies) Adopted October 2007.

But it is this design that is still going to be implemented.

We know that this junction will be re-prioritised, and we believe that with the correct design it can be done safely. What we can not accept is that a difficult junction should be made more dangerous – as a minimum it must be at a same level of safety as it is at present.

And finally, with the amount of development planned in B&NEs, more road works of this sort will be needed. This panel should make sure that in future no commercial developer, who may be influenced by their bottom-line, should be responsible for safety assessing their own work, and parish councils like our should not have to use our precepts to pay for safety audits.

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**Statement to the CTE Policy and Scrutiny Committee 16<sup>th</sup> January 2017**

**By Mike Parr on behalf of the Save the 6&7 Bus Campaign.**

The petition signed by 2,400 local residents calls for the reinstatement of the subsidy that supported First Bus to run the 6&7 routes serving the Larkhall and Fairfield Park areas of Bath.

These routes provided links between these two areas and between Fairfield Park and the local shopping and community centres in Larkhall.

Four buses were used requiring revenue support from the Council. The routes had run successfully and reliably since they were introduced in 2011. The bus usage in the area had increases during this time.

The Council took the decision to remove the subsidy in July 2016 and this resulted in First devising new routes which separated Fairfield Park from Larkhall and the London Road.

The new service now uses three buses. Since its introduction in September the reliability has been atrocious and after three months James Freeman the Managing Director of First has finally acknowledged that there is a ‘problem with resilience’.

It is our contention that this area of Bath faces a real problem with its bus service that is a direct result of the Council’s decision to remove the revenue support.

We have had a letter from Cllr Clarke following the submission of our petition.

This is our response:

The council took the initiative to approach First with the intention to withdraw the subsidy.

Cllr Clarke states that ‘the new route pattern maintains the same level of service for the majority of user’. This is not the case.

The two routes used to provide a 15 minute service to both Fairfield Park and Larkhall in both directions. It is now 30 minutes. The only area now to benefit from a 15minute frequency is Camden which services the least number of passengers.

Fairfield Park residents now have to to change buses to get to their local shops. This is not acceptable. Fairfield Park is now the only area in Bath that is served by buses that does not have a direct 2-way connection to its local centre.

First are failing to operate the new routes as a viable commercial service.

We are experiencing major reliability problems with missing and late running buses being the norm. This is leading to a reduction in bus usage.

There were no reliability issues with the old routes when 4 buses were used.

The current poor bus service offered by First is having a huge detrimental impact and is not a viable or an acceptable replacement for the old routes.

The Council must accept responsibility for this as they removed the subsidy without appreciating or recognising the special circumstances in this area and the impact it would have.

The Lambridge area of Bath poses problems for commercial bus operations. The nature of the road system with narrow roads and one-way systems means that efficient routing is not possible. That is why council support is required to provide a decent service that meets the needs of local people.



David Redgewell statement to CTE – 16<sup>th</sup> January 2017

Rail & Bus investment - BANES Transport Committee 16th January 2017, Bristol City Council Place Committee 17th January, South Glos. Transport Committee 18th January 2017, Joint Scrutiny on 9th January 2017, Transport Board 13th January 2017, Leader...

SWTN, Railfuture and Bus Users UK are very concerned about cutbacks to the electrification programme to Chippenham with no date for completion to Bristol via Bath or Filton Bank. The lack of investment in Temple Meads apart from 2 platforms for alteration within the IEP programme, the stopping of works at Lawrence Hill bridge and station, the lack of progress on platform extensions at Bath Spa, lack of a step free access programme at Stapleton Road, Lawrence Hill, Nailsea and Weston-Super-Mare (on hold until 2019).

The lack of progress on funding of East Junction, lack of scope for rolling stock from the Thames Valley and the loss of 9 units to Centro in May 2017 we need a clear rolling stock policy for the Greater Bristol area including the 11-15 HST's. The interface with South West Trains and how these projects fit in with MetroWest phases 1& 2.

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**Update to MetroBus statement.**

Bus service withdrawals in the Fishponds area are causing concern including service 16 being withdrawn at peak times between the UWE and Bristol Parkway causing hardship in Hillfields and the local colleges.

What consultation has taken place on this issue and other bus service changes for MetroBus.

The follow parts of the electrification programme are progressing - Patchway station bridge and shelter, Parkway station new platforms/bus interchange, Bath Spa platform widening, extra platform at Filton Abbey Wood.

David Redgewell South West Transport Network, TSSA and Director of Bus Users (UK)



## **Statement to the 16.1.17 CTE PDS Panel meeting of B&NES Council**

Thank you Chair.

I speak both as an economist with wide-ranging experience in infrastructure development and investment, and as a resident concerned about the enduring economic, environmental and social wellbeing of this locality. It is because of **the importance of infrastructure<sup>1</sup> to this wellbeing** and the associated opportunities, risks and challenges 2017 presents that I'm speaking now to you, the Community, Transport and Environment Panel.

**Not only does West of England devolution bring the prospect of increased infrastructure funding, but such investment has also come to the fore in the national policy-making agenda<sup>2</sup>**, where post Brexit, it is central to an activist fiscal policy and a re-inventing<sup>3</sup> industrial strategy. Furthermore, in order to ensure that such investments do yield the desired economic benefits, HM Treasury has been advocating<sup>4</sup> a more systemic approach to business case development - one that takes seriously infrastructure's interdependencies, uncertainties, and contextual particularities as well as its scale benefits and transformative potential - a contrast indeed to the "predict and provide" approach of the past.

This evolving context brings to the fore the **need for more discerning oversight and scrutiny of the Council's approach to infrastructure investment**, for example in regard to

- **Why, how and when policy and projects are being developed.** I note that the two Directorate Plans on your agenda today are rather ambivalent and/or reticent on this, (albeit understandably so in view of the transfer of relevant functions to the CMA);
- **Progressing the West of England Joint Spatial Plan**, and especially in regard<sup>5</sup> to finalising the mix of transport schemes most likely to transform our economic future, or in determining the trade-off between strategic economic benefits and adverse environmental impacts, or in future-proofing particular projects;
- Constructively questioning the Cabinet on its decision (just 9 days from now) to "promote" a particular site for **P&R East**. As I have already made several statements on this subject, not least that<sup>6</sup> to 23.11.16 Resources PDS in which I highlight 5 areas of major concern about the way this particular infrastructure project is being advanced, suffice it to say here that I hope that all Members, regardless of their party political allegiances, will diligently scrutinise both the strategic rationale and implied business case for P&R East in the light of a political, economic and financial context that is much changed since the approval of the 2014 Getting Around Bath Strategy.

In conclusion, **infrastructure investment is a great opportunity to carve a better future for our locality, but it is far from easy and carries significant dangers**. Get it right, and it will unlock barriers to sustainable development and attract more funding so to do. Get it wrong, or fail to align strategic, economic and business rationales, and you might find yourself with, if not a disaster, at least an HS2 rail project type debacle.

*Nicolette Boater, B.A.(Oxon.), M.Phil.  
Strategist, Economist and Policy Analyst  
adding lasting value at the public private interface*

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1. For the purposes of this statement, I am defining “infrastructure” by its decision-influencing characteristics rather than the sectors to which it is most relevant. Hence my remarks are applicable to infrastructure supporting economic development (such as transport, flood risk management, energy and communications infrastructure), enhancing the environment (waste, air and water quality management etc.) or strengthening communities (schools, hospitals, libraries, courts etc.)

2. As implicit in Theresa May’s 5th May 2016 remarks:

*“An economy that’s fair and where everyone plays by the same rules. That means acting to tackle some of the economy’s structural problems that hold people back. Things like the shortage of affordable homes. The need to make big decisions on – and invest in - our infrastructure. The need to rebalance the economy across sectors and areas in order to spread wealth and prosperity around the country.”*

and even more apparent in those of Chancellor of the Exchequer, Phillip Hammond on 23rd November 2016:

*“I can announce today a new National Productivity Investment Fund of £23 billion to be spent on innovation and infrastructure over the next five years ..... Innovation and infrastructure are at the heart of the government’s economic and industrial strategy, and emerging technologies have the potential to radically improve the way we manage our infrastructure.”*

3. The Government's Green Paper on their Industrial Strategy is expected this month, and it is likely that infrastructure will have a central role to play in driving productivity improvements and innovation.

4. Following the High Speed2 Rail project debacle, where the strategic and economic case just didn't match up, HM Treasury published a supplement to its Green book (see <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/green-book-supplementary-guidance-valuing-infrastructure-spend> )

laying out how and why across all stages of the project cycle (rationale, objectives, appraisal, monitoring, evaluation and feedback) and especially in business case preparation, economic infrastructure projects should incorporate much more analysis and information regarding the project’s more systemic characteristics and impacts.

5. I provide more detail on this in my response to the November/December 2016 consultations on the Joint Spatial Plan (JSP) and associated transport study. In particular in the JSP I highlighted

- The dangers of the inclusion of Infrastructure as one of the four Strategic Priorities associated with this vision, rather than as a Spatial Implication of the other three strategic priorities;
- The need for more transparency as to the trade-off between strategic economic benefits and adverse location-specific social and environmental impacts and risks
- The need for clearer and more specific strategic rationales for particular locations;
- Suggested a greater role for the communities most effected by and/or most knowledgeable about particular proposed developments to balance conflicting spatial development priorities as and when conflicts emerge.

and in my response to the Joint Transport Study, I

- Requested that more attention to be paid to the risks, unknowns, and scope for multiple outcomes in proposed transport infrastructure investments because of their dependence on multiple individual constrained decisions (for example the adverse impacts P&R might have on the demand for road travel) and the impact of new technology on travel behaviour and expressed desire for more evidence of this being taken into account in the proposed package (for example the impact on the need for P&R of a steady decline in car ownership);
- Strongly supported “financial incentives and financial demand management” measures as a more flexible and future-proof form of investment than the more land-intensive ones;

- 
- Advocated a more incremental approach i.e. a series of changes in accordance with the vision and range of measures identified in the JSP and JTS and less upfront commitment to spending circa £7.5bn in particular ways, remarking that the content of the ambition is more important than “the level of the ambition” given the current lack of information on, and analysis of, the relative costs, benefits and uncertainties associated with particular schemes.

6. This statement together with the detailed footnotes developing and supporting the main arguments, can be viewed here

<https://democracy.bathnes.gov.uk/documents/s44823/Statement%20from%20Nicolette%20Boater.pdf>

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# BUDGET STATEMENT TO BANES COUNCIL REF: THE RELOCATION OF BATH CENTRAL LIBRARY TO LEWIS HOUSE

Author: Paul Stansall RIBA

Relevant experience: background in advising central and local government on workplace transformation, relocation and renewal. Former workplace sustainability adviser

OGC/Treasury; consultant to National Audit Office on value-for-money investigations into government workplace delivery including PFI projects within Whitehall.

Caveat: The author is awaiting the council's response to his FOI request for discovery of all relevant project documents.

Statement and questions:

1. Too many local authorities and central government departments have not allowed enough time and money to develop fit-for-purpose design solutions. Because of the amount of design changes that ensue they encounter cost overruns and late delivery - poor outcomes. The huge but poorly recognised demand from users of Bath Central Library for daily access - circa 1,000 person footfall, needs full and proper consultation. Has the council allowed enough in their budget and timetable for full user consultation and the development of a fit-for-purpose design brief? Will this be addressed?
2. Due diligence would require the council to fully consider the impact - economic and social of withdrawing up to half a million footfalls/visits to the central library per year on the surrounding area. The economic, social and environmental impacts of creating a 'black hole' in the centre of cities is well documented. Bath city centre retail vacancy rates are accelerating. Has this aspect of due diligence been carried out?

Risks:

1. Project overspend, late delivery, poor outcomes for Bath citizens and visitors.
2. History of local authority and central government overruns on IT related projects.
3. Projected savings of £800,000 per annum may need to be independently audited. This figure is believed to be above the current annual library spend. Clarification is called for.
4. Judicial Review and associated costs.

Summary:

Bath Central Library is on the public front line, in a key location. Its contribution to the local economy both visible and hidden e.g. supporting highly successful Bath authors, research students, adult mental health, community cohesion and child and youth education may have been undervalued and ignored in the Council's bottom line. In a World Heritage city renowned for its literary festivals and dependent on cultural tourism, our purpose-built central library needs to remain at the very heart of Bath. A much stronger vision of its key role in the local economy and an upgrading of its 'front line' design are required. The Council's current proposals are at risk of accelerating the economic, social and cultural decline of the city.

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