



**Note of the meeting of the Keynsham Area Forum
held on Monday, 3rd December, 2018
in Community Space, Keynsham - Market Walk, Keynsham**

Meeting Attendance

In Attendance
Councillor Sally Davis
Charles Gerrish
Councillor Alan Hale
Councillor Lisa O'Brien
Councillor Brian Simmons
Councillor Karen Warrington

Apologies Received from
Bryan Organ

1. Minutes Keynsham Area Forum 3-12-18

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Final Minutes of the
Keynsham Area Forum
 3rd December 2018, 6.30pm
 Community Space, Market Walk, Keynsham BS31 1HA

Present

Name	Organisation Represented
Cllr Alan Hale	B&NES Ward Councillor, Chair of the Forum
Adrian Inker	Vice Chair of the Forum and Community@67
Ashley Ayre	Chief Executive, B&NES
Cllr Keith Baker	Keynsham Town Council
Ray Buchanan	Resident
Roger Busby	Civic Society
Caitlin Brennan	Keynsham NOW
Sheila Crocombe	Keynsham Action Network
Cllr Sally Davis	B&NES Ward Councillor, Farmborough
Sara Dixon	Locality Manager, B&NES
Cllr Dawn Drury	Chair – Compton Dando Parish Council
PC James Evans	Beat Manager, Keynsham – Avon and Somerset Police
Cllr Clive Fricker	Keynsham Town Council
Cllr Charles Gerrish	B&NES Ward Councillor, Keynsham North and Cabinet Member for Finance and Efficiency
Mike Hammond	Resident
Chris Hounsell	Saltford Business Network
Cllr Duncan Hounsell	Saltford Parish Council
Kathleen Hovland	Keynsham Action Network
Ray McAdam	Saltford Resident
Tony Mitchell	Resident/Transition Keynsham
Cllr Paul Myers	Cabinet Member for Economic and Community Regeneration
Hazel Mitchell	Resident/Transition Keynsham
Jenny Morgan	Resident
Peter Morgan	Resident
Cllr Lisa O'Brien	B&NES Ward Councillor, Keynsham South
Donna Parham	Interim Director, Finance – B&NES
Cllr Vic Pritchard	B&NES Cabinet Member for Adult Care, Health and Wellbeing
Becky Reynolds	Public Health, B&NES
Catherine Robinson	St Monica's Trust Ace Neighbours
Jane Shayler	Director Integrated Commissioning, B&NES
Paul Sheehan	Public Health, B&NES
Martin Shields	Corporate Director, B&NES
Cllr Brian Simmons	B&NES Ward Councillor, Keynsham North
Cllr John Twist	Corston Parish Council
Andy Wait	Keynsham NOW
Kevin Ward	Resident
Cllr Tim Warren	Leader – B&NES
Cllr Karen Warrington	B&NES Cabinet Member for Transformation and Customer Services
Diana White	B&NES Resident
Alison Wells	Community Engagement Officer, B&NES

Apologies

Name	Organisation Represented
David Clarke	Keynsham and Saltford Churches Together
Cllr Bryan Organ	B&NES Ward Councillor, Keynsham East

		Action
1.	Welcome from the Chair, Cllr Alan Hale	
1.1	AH welcomed those present to the meeting which will provide an opportunity to hear about the Council's budget and ask questions. He reminded all to sign in.	
1.2	AH thanked everyone who took part in the Local Plan drop in sessions. There is one further session on 5th December at Temple Cloud Village Hall from 4.00pm – 7.00pm. The main focus will be on the Local Plan 'non-strategic' housing options (one of which includes locations at Clutton and Temple Cloud) plus the Whitchurch SDL and transport issues relating to A4/A37 and Bristol link.	
2.	To note apologies, agree notes of the 25th September meeting and matters arising	
2.1	Apologies as above.	
2.2	The notes were agreed as a true record and there were no matters arising.	
3.	Update from the Police	
3.1	AH welcomed PC James Evans. JE said there is now 2.5 police officers in Keynsham and a new Beat Manager has been appointed for the Chew Valley.	
3.2	JE said comparing crime statistics for this time last year, he is pleased to report that these are down. However, the Police has changed the way in which crimes are recorded so this may be a factor.	
3.3	Going through the figures, JE explained that it is common at this time of year to see an increase in thefts of tools from sheds etc as a result of people trying to fund Christmas. The figures for violence against a person can relate to quarrels and arguments. The arson relates to a bin fire in the park. Robbery is down from 9 to 0.	
3.4	In terms of drugs, there have been instances of dealers targeting each other. They are stealing wares and reporting the theft to the Police. This has reduced over the past year.	
3.5	The Winter Festival is a drain on Police resources. However, it went well with no incidents. DD thanked the Police for their support with the event.	
3.6	JE said the Police have been responding to complaints regarding vehicles with excessive weight and width using certain routes and targeting these.	
	<u>Questions and Answers</u>	
3.7	Q1: It is good to see a reduction in crime figures but how many incidents do the Police actually attend? It has been reported in the press that the Met only attend about 50% of them. A1: The Police generally attend all burglaries reported. However, they are unable to attend incidents where there are no lines of enquiry.	
3.8	Q2: What is the Police's view of the crimes crossing outside Sainsbury's? There was an accident there recently and it was raised at the Public Realm	

	engagement sessions. A2: The incident in question was due to a driver taking evasive action. There is probably no difference in accident rates than with a more substantive crossing.	
3.9	AH thanked JE for attending. AH said he was present when the accident referred to took place and it was not related to the crossing itself.	
4.	Priorities for discussion in 2019	
4.1	AH said the Annual Report was circulated with the Agenda and gives an overview of items discussed over the past year. He asked whether there were any suggestions for topics for the coming year. There was no response. AH said if anyone suggestions for topics or Community Showcase items, let Alison or Sara know.	ALL
5.	Working Together: Our Budget, Our Plans and Our Communities	
5.1	See Appendix 1 for the Budget Presentation and questions and answers arising. Following the budget presentation there was a discussion on the Council's Consultation processes as follows:	
5.2	AWait said the consultations on the High Street and new housing developments have been very good for those that participated but it can be difficult to engage the general public – social media may help.	
5.3	AI said the public may feel that Council decisions are 'fait accomplis' and they have limited influence. It may be best to start early in the process getting input to help identify issues. There will always be those that object though – it is not easy.	
5.4	DD said the Town Council uses social media and received over 5,000 responses on one occasion. The Town Council is happy to promote B&NES consultations but having the dates as early as possible would assist. MH said those not on Facebook do miss out. DD said that the Town Council also e-mails around 200 local community groups and makes use of noticeboards. It is important that people help by disseminating information that they receive.	
5.5	PM said another issue is with people not reading information provided. For example, some thought the Clean Air Zone would be implemented straight away. The wrong facts about other issues have also been circulated. AWait said it is important to keep reiterating messages as they do get lost in the deluge of information people receive now.	
5.6	Adrian Inker and Mike Hammond offered to represent the Keynsham Area Forum on a on a group to take the matter forward.	

AGM

6.	Notes of the Previous AGM and Matters Arising	
6.1	The notes of the AGM held on 30 th November 2018 were agreed as true record. There were no matters arising.	

7.	Chair's Annual Review	
7.1	Copies of this had been circulated with the meeting papers and hard copies were available. AH asked for comments – there was none.	
8.	Review and Amend, if required, Terms of Reference	
8.1	AH said that three new groups had been proposed as members as follows: DAA Keynsham and Saltford Farmborough Community Shop St Monica's Trust	
8.2	AH asked if there were any comments or further suggestions. There was none. It was agreed to accept the organisations above as new members.	AW/SD
9.	Election of the Chair and Vice Chair and election to Partnership bodies if required	
9.1	AH handed over to Sara Dixon for the election. SD said that nominations had been received for Alan Hale as Chair and Adrian Inker as Vice Chair. A vote was taken which returned them to these roles.	
9.2	SD thanked Alan Hale and Adrian Inker for their support over the year – as well as Chairing the Forum meetings, they also attend meetings with the Chairs and Vice Chairs of the other Forums during the year and meet with officers to set the Forum agendas. There was a round of applause for AH and AI.	

Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for 20th February 2019, 6.30pm at Keynsham Community Space.

This will be followed in March by the pre-election period (purdah) in the run up to the local elections in May. The Forum will reconvene after this.

Presentation: Working Together: Our Budget, Our Plans and Our Communities

Presenters: Cllr Charles Gerrish – Cabinet Member for Finance and Efficiency
Ashley Ayre – Chief Executive, B&NES
Martin Shields – Corporate Director, B&NES

Slide	Comment
Title Slide	Working Together on... Our budget, our plans and our communities
Slide 1 – Introductions and Welcome	MS thanked the Forum for their attendance and hopes that this presentation will encourage the community to become more involved. The Council is keen to build a stronger relationship between officers, Councillors, residents and businesses. He handed over to Cllr Charles Gerrish.
Slide 2 – Overview	CG gave an overview of what the presentation would cover.
Slides 3 and 4 – Feedback from last year and key issues from last year	One of the key issues raised at last year's Budget Presentation was lobbying of Government to assist the Council in resolving its challenges. The Council has passed a formal document to send to Government. The Council's key message is protecting the most vulnerable.
Slides 5 and 6 – This year's finances – 2018/19 and Council Tax	This slide shows where each £1 raised from Council Tax is spent. The Council also collects the funds on behalf of the Police, Avon Fire Authority and precepts on behalf of Parish Councils and the Charter Trustees of the City of Bath.
Slide 7 – Income	This pie chart shows where the Council gets its income – Council Tax accounts for just 26.2% of this.
Slide 8 – Council Tax spent	This table illustrates how each £1 of Council Tax is spent. 81.6p in every £1 is spent on Adult and Children's Social Care. This leaves little to spend on the other services the Council delivers. The Council is fortunate to generate income from attractions such as the Roman Baths. There is an impression that this gets spent in Bath but is not true – it equates to £80 off every Council Tax bill so the whole district benefits. However, the table does demonstrate how little is left to spend on highways, potholes etc.
Slides 9 and 10 – The last 12 months	Over the last 12 months, the Roman Baths had a record number of visitors and the Victoria Art Gallery has already met its annual target. There was also an increase in revenue from the Council's property portfolio. The Council has launched its own housing company and is developing homes from its old offices in Keynsham – 200 enquiries on these have already been received. The profits will form part of the Council's revenue. However, despite successes, the Council has had to reduce services such as grass cutting on land we do not own. The Council has also withdrawn its Arts Development service and reduced the amount of office accommodation it uses due to lower numbers of staff. It may be possible to sub-let some of this space to generate income. The Council has also renegotiated the cost of some social care places.

<p>Slide 11 – We have also</p>	<p>The Council has agreed its ‘ask’ of central Government which will help it to become more self-sufficient. This includes a request for powers to levy a ‘Tourism Tax’ on visitors in the form of a modest fee for overnight stays – other Councils are asking for similar powers. Air B&B is a growing issue with properties being bought specifically for this purpose. As a result, there is a loss of family homes and in some cases, nuisance caused, limited safety measures – all with no business tax levied.</p> <p>The two Universities in Bath result in a loss of both Council Tax and Business Rates. It is calculated that the Council loses £3m in Council Tax as students, quite rightly, do not have to pay but the landlords do not either. The Council estimates that 3,000 homes have been lost to houses of multiple occupation for students. Some business premises have also been lost to development as student accommodation, resulting in a loss of business rates.</p> <p>The Council is working with the Local Government Association on this and the Government announced in their Autumn Statement support on business rates for small retailers affected by on-line sales with Councils to be recompensed for the subsequent loss of business rates.</p>
<p>Slide 12 – A special thank you: together, we</p>	<p>Fix My Street has proved popular with residents and Parish Councils for reporting small, local issues. It facilitates faster reporting of issues direct to the relevant officers and a direct method of feedback from the Council. In the last month, 687 issues reported have been addressed.</p> <p>4 Community Libraries have opened – unlike other authorities, Bath & North East Somerset Council has supported improvements to library services by working in partnership with the community. The libraries are situated in Bishop Sutton, Paulton, Timsbury and Weston. The Council is also working with a group in Oldfield Park and is keen to work with local communities to improve a range of local services.</p> <p>Thanks to the efforts of residents, there has been an increase in recycling rates from 40% to 60%. We all know neighbours who may still not recycle all they could, so please do support them. It costs the Council £1,000 for every lorry load of refuse sent to landfill but £100 of income is generated for every lorry load of recycling, which benefits all residents.</p>
<p>Slides 13 and 14 – The year ahead 2019/20 and The National Context</p>	<p>This sets out some of the funding the Government is allocating. This includes £84m over 5 years for Children and Young People’s social care. However, B&NES is not one of the 20 Councils that will benefit from this.</p> <p>There is funding from the West of England Combined Authority (WECA) for roads – the improvements at the ‘2-headed man’ at Marksbury has resulted in faster journey times.</p>
<p>Slide 15 – Our budget 2019/20</p>	<p>The Council has identified £10m of savings but still has £6.1m of savings to find. This is after a 1% increase in Council Tax to support adult social care. Over 3 years, Councils can increase Council Tax up to 6% to specifically support social care. The Council has taken 5% in previous years so the maximum of this precept for the coming financial year is 1%.</p> <p>The Council has not announced a Council Tax rise as yet but it is realistic to expect one.</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;">Page 8</p>
<p>Slide 16 – 2019/20</p>	<p>This slide sets out how the Council hopes to achieve savings which</p>

Budget Savings	<p>includes, renegotiating with our suppliers. The Council has had some success with this but it is not easy due to inflation.</p> <p>Reducing spend on Youth Services sounds harsh but a new staff mutual is being established which means they will be able to attract external funding which the Council is not able to access. Youth Workers will continue to be supported with this.</p> <p>The Parish Sweeper scheme will cease. This only applied to 16 Parishes and involved subsidising them with funding to pay for their own sweeper. The scheme was not fair on Parishes not benefitting and will be phased out over 3 years so the affected communities have time to adjust.</p> <p>If funding from the Government is phased out, the department of the Council that benefitted has to bear the loss. This includes a Public Health Grant which is being reduced. However, there are good news stories such as a fall in the number of teenage pregnancies.</p> <p>Shared services include working in partnership on services with North Somerset Council such as Audit West. This also helps generate income by offering the service to Parishes.</p> <p>The Council will review the use of agency workers and contractor spend.</p> <p>In terms of the capital programme, this will focus on substantial developments rather than the smaller, time consuming projects.</p>
Slide 17 – The long-term challenge remains	<p>Over the next 5 years, the Council needs to save a further £50m. This can be offset by increases in income and Council Tax. However, it will be a challenge for any future administration. The Council has saved £55m between 2013 and 2018.</p> <p>The Government will withdraw its Revenue Support Grant to Councils in 2020/21.</p> <p>Demand and demographic pressure refers to the fact that people are living longer, with more complex needs, requiring more support from Local Authorities.</p>
Slide 18 – Cumulative Budget Gap	<p>This table shows that the likely gap in funding and demand for services until 2022/23.</p>
Slide 19 – Demand Pressure: Looked after children	<p>In the last 5 years, the number of looked after children has increased by 40% to 191. Of these, the 21 with the most complex needs cost £3.2m alone. They often have to travel outside B&NES for specialist care. The Council has lost some local foster carers so are having to make use of agencies which have higher costs. The Council has a statutory duty to provide these services.</p>
Slides 20 and 21 – Our Plan	<p>The Council wants to be self-sufficient. It has been supported by national funding which will cease - instead, we want the Government to help us with powers to do things differently. For example, the Council has the highest number of Listed Buildings in its district outside Westminster. Owners of these do not pay a fee for planning applications even though the Council has to employ staff to deal with them, so the ability to charge is one of the requests to Government.</p>

	<p>There are some services that the Council will have to stop delivering and a need to re-focus.</p> <p>The switch to LED Street Lighting has reduced the electricity bill.</p> <p>There will be further integration with the CCG (Clinical Commissioning Group) and they are also looking at how to make savings. An example is a unit at the RUH to deal with minor falls at home. A team will assess whether the patient can remain there with support, which saves on an ambulance being called and a hospital stay.</p> <p>The Council will increasingly become an 'enabler'. It was the AGM of SWAN this week and they thanked their volunteer drivers who contribute to people being able to continue living in their own homes. This is an example of a community organisation supported by the Council that benefits us all.</p>
Slide 22 – Looking further ahead – our priorities	<p>The Council's priorities are:</p> <p>Protecting and caring for our most vulnerable Nurturing residents' health, safety and wellbeing Providing ways for everyone in the community to reach their potential</p>
Slides 23, 24 and 25 – More of this please!	<p>Compassionate Communities: A number of our voluntary organisations are coming together, building a database of support available and making sure GPs have access to this. Many of those attending doctors' surgeries are not physically ill but do need support – some are lonely or in need of mental health support. Frome has already successfully adopted this model and it links with existing initiatives in Keynsham.</p> <p>Recycling: Schools have become involved in energy saving initiatives which results in lower bills for them. Community@67 is a community facility situated in a deprived part of Keynsham offering a range of activities and services, including training in the use of IT which helps people access a range of on-line information and services.</p> <p>Project Search: This is a Council supported apprenticeship scheme for young people with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND). Of a group of 9, 8 have now found employment. This reduces the number of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET).</p>
Slide 26 – We need to be clearer about	<p>The Council needs to be clearer about what can be delivered realistically within foreseeable resources. Cllr Myers will speak further on engagement with communities at the end of this presentation.</p> <p>Wigan, another Unitary Authority in the North of England, has published 'How We Work Together' which sets out what residents can expect from the Council but also what the community can do to assist.</p> <p>We already have a Parish Charter which helps clarify the roles of the Council and the parishes and aims to reduce duplication.</p>
Slide 27 – Protecting and caring for our most vulnerable	<p>These slides set out some examples of how the Council and community might work together. The Council will support people with health and care needs to stay in their own homes. The community can help support this by being good neighbours – checking on the elderly and vulnerable and making sure they have human contact.</p>

Slide 28 – Nurturing residents’ health, safety and wellbeing	The Council will support health and safety, public health and refuse collection. Residents can assist by promoting health and prevention as well as recycling correctly and getting involved in local litter picking.
Slide 29 – Providing ways for everyone in the community to reach their potential	The Council will promote a strong local economy, affordable homes and local transport. It will focus on supporting young people to develop their skills. The community can assist in a range of ways including volunteering. The Council is particularly keen to encourage more people to foster which helps prevent local young people going into care further away.
Slide 30 – Summary	The Council has achieved a lot and has a plan.
Slide 31 – Questions? What would a ‘Bath and North East Somerset Deal’ look like?	<i>See below for questions raised following the presentation.</i>
Slide 32 – Next steps and looking ahead	<p>This sets out the forthcoming timeline for the budget and the NHS Commissioning Alliance up to the local elections in May.</p> <p>There will be a reduction in the number of Councillors from 65 to 59 and changes to Ward Boundaries and Polling Stations.</p>
Slide 33 – Consultation on Consultation	CG handed over to Cllr Paul Myers. PM said that, a few months ago, the Bath City Forum raised concerns regarding the Council’s consultation process and put forward an alternative. However, the Council needs to take account of the views of the other Forums as well. You will be aware of press coverage on issues such as the East of Bath Park and Ride; Foxhill redevelopment; proposed Bath Library relocation; the Clean Air Zone and other issues. What may seem to the Council and its partners a straightforward proposal can escalate in unforeseen ways. For example, locally, ceasing to stop cutting grass on land the Council does not own may seem like a common-sense decision when funding resources are limited. However, it causes issues where small pieces of land on housing estates are not adopted. When matters escalate, communications often break down and serious complications, such as judicial reviews, may result.
Slide 34 – Consultation Landscape = Complex	<p>This diagram illustrates the various parties involved and how relatively simply issues can become complex. The Council is seeking to understand how it can make things better and how we can work together, recognising statutory duties and process as well.</p> <p>PM said he would be interested to hear what experiences Forum members have had with regard to Council consultation - what you like and dislike about the way in which the Council consults.</p> <p>He is seeking 2 volunteers from each Forum to sit with officers and talk it through.</p>

Questions on the budget following the presentation

Q1: The media have led us to believe the Council will make an extra contribution to Policing – is this true?

- A1: The Council collects the precept for a number of organisations including the Police. They set their own precept. The Council does not fund the Police directly – the precept comes from Council Taxpayers.
- Q2: There is a budget line of £250k for Saltford Station. The Leader of the Council has been quoted as saying that no trains will stop there, so will this budget item be dropped?**
- A2: The Council continues to support the proposal.
- Comment 1: Saltford Parish Council has had a letter from Network Rail contradicting what the Council has said regarding a station's viability.**
- Response 1: The proposal for a station at Saltford is now the responsibility of the West of England Combined Authority (WECA) and the Council has agreed to allocate a budget line. However, WECA is proposing a light rail which will include more stops with such a system.
- Q3: Where will the traffic go if there is light rail on the road?**
- A3: The light rail would run alongside the existing rail line, not on the road.
- Q4: I appreciate the work that Councillors and officers do to produce these budgets. I am dismayed at the £50m cuts over the next 4 – 5 years. The Government has been condemned by the United Nations. I am impressed that Cllr Gerrish is on top of his brief. However, I would have liked to see this information in a booklet beforehand. I propose that a meeting of the citizens of Keynsham be arranged so we can go through the budget and come up with suggestions. There are public loan boards – have we got anything like that? Do we fine bad landlords?**
- A4: Yes we do fine bad landlords and there have been articles in the press about this. The Council does not have any PFI commitments and has reviewed its borrowing but the penalties of paying off loans sometimes outweigh the savings. The last borrowing in October was at a cheaper rate than a loan taken out in April due to the diligent work of officers.
- This Forum is not solely for the citizens of Keynsham but a wider geographic area. The whole point of the Forum meetings is to reach out to the community and there is a limit to what we can resource in terms of organising and holding further meetings. The Forum meetings are also non-political. The budget presentation will be circulated to the Forum and if you have any further questions or suggestions, these can be passed to officers. We will look at how we engage in the future.
- Q5: Is it correct that Business Rates go to Central Government?**
- A5: They did, with a proportion coming back to the Council – around 46% with the rest shared amongst other Local Authorities. When the Council joined WECA we were able to retain them which gave us £2m income. However, there is a review by the Government on the amount of business rates that local councils will be able to retain which has not yet been confirmed.
- Q6: So, if we could retain 100% of Business Rates, we wouldn't have a deficit issue?**
- A6: The budget pressures continue, an example being that the law changed which required Councils to continue to support young people with Special Educational Needs until they are 25, not 18. There are no funds from Government to support this and we do not have the necessary educational facilities within our district. Therefore, we have to pay to transport such students to suitable colleges outside the area.

Comment 2: There has been a reduction in Youth Services annually for years. Keynsham Town Council has taken them over here. It is good to hear about the staff mutual but you haven't told us how this works.

Response 3: The staff mutual will be able to access external funding that the Council cannot. The staff will no longer be employed by the Council and the youth centre buildings the Council own will be run differently – this is how savings will be made. The Council will make a £500k provision to support the mutual.

Q7: So it is being done on a wing and a prayer?

A7: No – a business case has been prepared and will be ratified by the Council.

Comment 3: Charities such as the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) get a grant to help the most vulnerable which you say is one of your priorities. However, if you cut their £5m grant by 10%, there will be a reduction in their services. I have volunteered with them for 12 years and they help a lot of people.

Response 3: We have no plans to re-negotiate our contract with the CAB as part of this budget.

The Government recently announced that the CAB nationally will take on the advisory service for Universal Credit, so they will get funds from central Government. We commission £130m worth of services a year from the third sector and community groups and need to keep this under review but have not reduced the grant to the CAB. However, balancing the books does mean cuts elsewhere. With just over 81p in the pound going on vulnerable children and adults, this is a challenge.

We have just signed with the CAB for the next year and as well as funding, we give them free access to our premises including office space.

Comment 4: The Keynsham Winter Festival took place last week and volunteers from Keynsham Wombles collected just 7 bags of litter. This is astonishing for an event that attracted 6,000 people. In previous years, they have collected 30 bags of litter so the messages around this are filtering through.

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