

# **BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET COUNCIL**

## **MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING**

Tuesday, 21st May, 2019

Present:- **Councillors** Rob Appleyard, Tim Ball, Sarah Bevan, Colin Blackburn, Alison Born, Shelley Bromley, Neil Butters, Vic Clarke, Sue Craig, Paul Crossley, Gerry Curran, Jess David, Tom Davies, Sally Davis, Winston Duguid, Mark Elliott, Michael Evans, Andrew Furse, Kevin Guy, Alan Hale, Liz Hardman, Steve Hedges, Joel Hirst, Lucy Hodge, Duncan Hounsell, Shaun Hughes, Grant Johnson, Dr Kumar, Hal MacFie, Ruth Malloy, Paul May, Matt McCabe, Sarah Moore, Robin Moss, Paul Myers, Lisa O'Brien, Michelle O'Doherty, Bharat Pankhania, Vic Pritchard, Manda Rigby, Dine Romero, Mark Roper, Richard Samuel, Bruce Shearn, Brian Simmons, Alastair Singleton, Shaun Stephenson-McGall, Andy Wait, Karen Walker, Sarah Warren, Karen Warrington, Chris Watt, Ryan Wills, David Wood and Joanna Wright

Apologies for absence: **Councillors** Chris Dando, Douglas Deacon, Eleanor Jackson and June Player

### **1 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE**

The Chair drew attention to the emergency evacuation procedure, as set out on the agenda.

### **2 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN 2019-20**

It was proposed by Councillor Robin Moss, seconded by Councillor Dine Romero, and supported by Councillors Paul Myers and Sarah Bevan then

**RESOLVED** that Councillor Eleanor Jackson be elected Chair of the Council for the Council year 2019/20.

It was announced that, as the new Chair was unavailable for this meeting, separate arrangements had been made regarding her declaration and acceptance of office.

[By previous agreement from Group Leaders, Councillor Karen Walker continued to chair this meeting until its conclusion.]

### **3 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN 2019-20**

It was proposed by Councillor Rob Appleyard, seconded by Councillor Bruce Shearn, and

**RESOLVED** that Councillor Andy Furse be elected Vice-Chairman of the Council for the Council year 2019/20.

Councillor Furse made and signed his Declaration of Acceptance of Office, received the Chain of Office from Councillor Karen Walker and thanked the Council for his appointment.

[Notes;

1. A nomination from Councillor Paul Myers, seconded by Councillor Robin Moss, that Councillor Lisa O'Brien be nominated was lost on a vote of 17 for, 37 against.
2. Following the nomination of Councillor Andy Furse (after Councillor Lisa O'Brien had already been nominated), a debate took place on the merits of this course of action. The Monitoring Officer's view was sought and she confirmed that it was a break from the convention that had operated for the last 12 years (with an agreed chairing rota that listed the next Vice-Chair as a Conservative position), but it was only a convention.]

#### **4 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The Monitoring Officer issued a general dispensation to enable Members with an interest in the Avon Pension Fund to be able to take part in debate and vote on agenda item 11 – Appointment of Committees and Panels.

The Monitoring Officer issued a further general dispensation to enable Members with roles as Parish and Town Councillors to be able to take part in debate and vote on agenda item 12 – Parish Charter Review.

Councillor Steve Hedges declared an 'other' interest in minute item 9 (Portfolio announcements) as his wife works for MENCAP.

Councillor Duncan Hounsell declared an 'other' interest in minute item 11 as a Parish Councillor (this declaration was covered by the earlier general dispensation.)

Councillor Ruth Malloy declared an 'other' interest in minute item 14 as a committee member of Love Weston Library, a volunteer at the RUH and a volunteer at Love Weston Café.

Councillor Joel Hirst declared an 'other' interest in minute items 9 and 10 as an AWP employee.

Councillor Andy Wait declared an interest in all items as his wife works for B&NES.

#### **5 MINUTES - 14TH MARCH 2019**

On a motion from Councillor Steve Hedges, seconded by Councillor Tim Ball, it was

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of 14<sup>th</sup> March 2019 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

#### **6 ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL OR FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

Councillor Andy Furse presented Councillor Karen Walker with her past Chairman's badge and handed her the badge for the Former Chairman's Consort.

It was proposed by Councillor Dine Romero, seconded by Councillor Paul Myers, supported by Councillors Karen Walker and Robin Moss and

**RESOLVED** that this Council places on record its appreciation of the services performed by Councillor Karen Walker in the office of Chairman of the Council for 2018/19.

The Chair then;

1. Announced that she would make her speech at the end of the meeting;
2. Welcomed and congratulated all newly elected Councillors and invited the Council to place on record its appreciation of the past service given by the Members who retired following the election;
3. Invited the Council to note the appointment of Councillor Dine Romero as Liberal Democrat Group Leader, Councillor Paul Myers as Conservative Group Leader, Councillor Karen Walker as Independent Group Spokesperson and Councillor Robin Moss as Labour Group Leader;
4. Welcomed the Digital Apprentices who were present at the meeting;
5. Reminded everyone to switch off their mobile phone or switch to silent, and explained that some Councillors were accessing their meeting papers via iPads;
6. Announced that the meeting was being webcast and invited anyone who did not wish to be filmed to make themselves known to the camera operators.

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

There were no items of urgent business.

## **8 NOTIFICATION OF MEMBERS ELECTED ON 2ND MAY 2019**

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

**RESOLVED** to note the notification of Members elected on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2019.

## **9 APPOINTMENT OF LEADER**

The Council is required to elect a Councillor to be the Leader of the Council for the 4 year term from May 2019 AGM to May 2023 AGM.

On a motion from Councillor Richard Samuel, seconded by Councillor Paul Myers, it was

### **RESOLVED**

1. That Councillor Dine Romero be appointed Leader;
2. That all decisions regarding the appointment of a Deputy Leader, Cabinet Members and portfolios, the executive delegation scheme and frequency of

Cabinet meetings are decisions solely for the Leader to make and publicise in due course.

*[Notes;*

- 1. The above resolution was carried with 40 Councillors voting in favour, 1 Councillor voting against and 13 Councillors abstaining.]*

## **10 APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES AND PANELS AND OTHER ANNUAL BUSINESS**

The Council considered a report concerning its non-executive and regulatory committee arrangements for the Council Year May 2019 to May 2020 and associated annual business.

On a motion from Councillor Dine Romero, seconded by Councillor Richard Samuel, it was (unanimously);

### **RESOLVED**

1. To approve a structure for non-executive and regulatory decision making, and the scrutiny function as set out in the Constitution and attached at Appendix 1;
2. To approve the terms of reference for Committees and Panels etc as set out in Appendix 2 to the report and constitute those bodies accordingly including;
  - a. Renaming the Development Management Committee as the 'Planning Committee', to improve public comprehension and transparency;
  - b. Renaming the Climate Change & Sustainability PDS Panel as the 'Climate Emergency & Sustainability' PDS Panel to highlight the urgent need for action;
3. To approve the appointment of Members to the Committees and Panels in accordance with the requirements of political proportionality, as outlined in the revised political proportionality table, and the nominations made by the political groups (whilst affirming the non-proportional basis of operating for the Licensing Sub-Committee as explained in paragraph 5.3);
4. With regard to the Avon Pension Fund Committee, to agree;
  - a. Bath and North East Somerset Council will be represented by 5 members on the Committee;
  - b. The addition of a further Independent Member to the Committee;
  - c. The addition of an Academy Representative to the Committee;
  - d. The establishment of a Brunel Working Group as a sub group of the Committee;

- e. And consequent amendments to the Terms of Reference to incorporate these changes;
5. To appoint as Chairs of such bodies, those Councillors as may from time to time be nominated by the political group to whom the chairmanship of the body is allocated;
6. To authorise the Monitoring Officer to fill any casual vacancies in membership of all the bodies constituted and vacancy in the office of Chair of such bodies in accordance with the wishes of the political groups and the allocation of chairing entitlements made at this meeting;
7. To determine the bodies on which independent members (if any) are to have seats as either voting or non-voting members and appoint such members accordingly;
8. To authorise the Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Chairs of the Policy Development & Scrutiny Panels, to constitute and support any required Panel joint working as outlined in paragraph 6.1;
9. To appoint members to Avon Fire Authority on a proportionality basis to be determined;
10. To approve the allocation of Political Assistants to eligible groups as set out in Section 8, and instruct the Chief Executive, in consultation with Group Leaders, to make provision for support to the remaining groups;
11. To note, in light of the decision taken earlier on the agenda to appoint a Leader, that the Leader will publish in due course, a scheme of delegation of executive functions;
12. To note the urgent executive decisions that have been taken in the last municipal year, as set out in paragraph 9.2;
13. To note the position regarding the frequency of meetings (as set out in Section 10) as the basis for enabling the diary of meetings to be prepared, and to authorise the Monitoring Officer to project dates forward and prepare the diary on this basis;
14. To note that an Independent Panel to consider members' allowances will be convened and will report its recommendations in due course;
15. To instruct the Monitoring Officer, in consultation with Group Leaders, to make appointments on non-executive outside bodies and note that the Leader or Cabinet Members will do so for executive outside bodies;
16. To authorise the Monitoring Officer to make and publicise any amendment to the Council's Constitution required, or take any other necessary action, as a result of decisions taken at this meeting on this and other reports within the agenda, or otherwise as required by law.

17. To note that further proposals and practices regarding improving public engagement with residents in Bath and North East Somerset will be brought forward, including:

- a. Measures to improve openness and transparency, making the Council more accessible and accountable;
- b. Consultation on strengthening and improving representation, including a review of the Bath City Forum and measures to involve younger people in consultations, decisions, and scrutiny;
- c. Proposals to improve decision-making, including devolution and piloting new decision-making methods, such as Citizens' Juries, as well as strengthening the involvement of Residents' Associations and Parish and Town Councils.

## **11 PARISH CHARTER REVIEW**

The Council considered a report on the progress made so far on the implementation of the Parish Charter which was adopted by Cabinet in April 2018 and endorsed by Council in May 2018 following a period of consultation with all parishes across the district.

On a motion from Councillor Paul Myers, seconded by Councillor Neil Butters, it was (unanimously)

### **RESOLVED**

1. To note the progress report on the Parish Charter commitments attached in Appendix 1 to the report.
2. That a working group of Council and parish representatives be established to:
  - Review and update the Terms of Reference for Parish Liaison to reflect the new ways of working under the Parish Charter.
  - Report back to Full Council as appropriate with proposals and recommendations.

## **12 PLEDGE TO CHILDREN IN CARE**

The Council considered a report seeking its affirmation of the commitment to the Bath and North East Somerset Council Pledge to Children and Young People in Care and Care Leavers.

Following local elections, the new Council was invited to affirm its commitment to the Pledge;

[https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/siteimages/Children-and-Young-People/Children-in-Care/the\\_pledge.pdf](https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/siteimages/Children-and-Young-People/Children-in-Care/the_pledge.pdf)

On a motion from Councillor Kevin Guy, seconded by Councillor Chris Watt, it was (unanimously)

**RESOLVED** to approve the Bath and North East Somerset Council Pledge to Children and Young People in Care and Care Leavers.

### **13 CODE OF CONDUCT - AMENDMENTS REGARDING COUNCILLOR ROLE DESCRIPTIONS AND GIFTS & HOSPITALITY GUIDANCE**

The Council considered a report regarding the Standards Committee recommendation that the Code of Conduct be amended to reference the Councillor Role Descriptions and that Council adopt the updated Councillors' Gifts and Hospitality Guidance (Appendix A).

On a motion from Councillor Dine Romero, seconded by Councillor Sarah Bevan, it was (unanimously)

#### **RESOLVED**

1. That, on a recommendation from the Standards Committee, the Code of Conduct be amended to include the following paragraph;

“Members should have regard to the Role Descriptions that have been adopted. Any Councillor complaints considered by the Standards Committee may use these as information;”

2. That Council adopt the Councillors' Gifts and Hospitality Guidance as part of the Code of Conduct as recommended by the Standards Committee.

### **14 QUESTIONS, STATEMENTS, PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

Statements were made by the following members of public;

Andrew Dickens from the Lower Common East Allotment Association made a statement regarding the Association's rights, a full copy of which is available on the Council's Minute book and attached to the online minutes. Councillor Dine Romero asked if Andrew would like to meet with a view to resolving this ongoing issue, to which Andrew responded that he wanted to be co-operative. Councillor Sarah Bevan asked if Andrew had received a letter from the previous Leader to which he replied that he had not.

Luke Emmett made a statement regarding public engagement with the Council, a full copy of which is available on the Council's Minute book and attached to the online minutes. Councillor Dine Romero asked Luke how their offer of more inclusive

decision making had been received; to which he replied that it had been received very well and was considered a very positive first step.

Vishaka Robinson made a statement regarding plans for Parkside Children's Centre, a full copy of which is available on the Council's Minute book and attached to the online minutes. Councillor Kevin Guy noted Vishaka's questions and asked if she would like to meet with him and the relevant officer, to which she replied that she would. Councillor Paul May asked if Vishaka was aware that the Centre was being re-located due to repair problems, to which she responded that she was aware but that it was being moved to a smaller location with less outdoor space. Councillor Liz Hardman asked if Vishaka considered that moving it to a smaller site would result in fewer parents accessing its services, to which she responded that there were definitely concerns as the current centre was so well used, and some current users live in flats so outdoor space was very important.

Jane Middleton made a statement calling on Councillors to make a Food Poverty Action plan, a full copy of which is available on the Council's Minute book and attached to the online minutes. Councillor Richard Samuel asked Jane what else she considered the Council could do to add to the excellent work already being undertaken by the voluntary sector. Jane replied that there was already a heavy burden on the voluntary sector and it was not right to leave this all to charity which was a patchwork solution. She suggested the Council could get in touch with other Councils who have already adopted a Food Poverty Action plan. Councillor Alan Hale asked if Jane was aware that meetings had been taking place for the last 3-4 years between the Welfare team and Bath, Somer Valley and Keynsham foodbanks. Jane replied that she had not been aware, but that it should not just be left to charity. Councillor Colin Blackburn made reference to the 4500 emergency parcels and asked if Jane was aware of how many children were affected by food poverty across B&NES. Jane replied that she didn't have the exact number as there was no measurement of food poverty but that 1300 parcels were issued to families with children. It was vital though to establish the scale of the problem. Councillor Liz Hardman thanked Jane for her suggestions and asked if Jane considered they should be concentrating on poverty in general, rather than just food poverty. Jane agreed that all poverty should be addressed but that food poverty was the extreme manifestation of poverty and needed a separate strategy.

Dave Searby made a statement as a member of the Bath Extinction Rebellion group, a full copy of which is available on the Council's Minute book and attached to the online minutes. Councillor Sarah Warren referred to the Liberal Democrat intention to establish a Citizen's Panel on this issue and asked what Dave anticipated would be the advantages to B&NES of this approach. Dave responded that he considered this would move the issue from being a special interest topic to giving ownership to the public, enabling it to be taken forward.

The Chair thanked all the speakers and referred their statements to the relevant Cabinet Members.

## **15 QUESTIONS, STATEMENTS, PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS FROM COUNCILLORS**

There were none.

The meeting ended at 8.16 pm

Chairman .....

Date Confirmed and Signed .....

**Prepared by Democratic Services**

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## POLITICAL PROPORTIONALITY TABLE – MAY 2019

Compulsory cumulative proportionality	Number on Committee	Liberal Democrat 63%	Conservative 19%	Independent 10%	Labour 8%	Chair Allocation	Vice Chair Allocation	Co-opted members
Corporate PD&S	9	6	2	1	0	CON	LD	
Climate Emergency & Sustainability PD&S	9	6	1	1	1	IND	LD	
Children, Health & Wellbeing PD&S	9	6	2	0	1	CON	LD	4?
Planning Committee	10	6	2	1	1	LD		
Corporate Audit Committee	5	3	1	1	0	LD		1
Avon Pension Fund Committee	5	3	0	1	1	LD	LD	12 voting, 3 non voting
Employment Committee	3	2	1	0	0	LD		
Standards Committee	5	3	1	1	0	LD		6 non voting
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4</b>			

<b>Compulsory individual proportionality</b>	<b>No. on Cttee</b>	<b>LD</b>	<b>Cons</b>	<b>Ind</b>	<b>Lab</b>			
Licensing Sub-Committee	<b>3</b>	2	1	0	0	<i>LD</i>		
<b>Optional proportionality</b>								
Licensing Committee	<b>11</b>	6	3	1	1	<i>LD</i>		
<b>Fixed memberships</b>								
WECA Overview & Scrutiny Committee	<b>2</b>	2	0	0	0			
WECA Audit Committee	<b>2</b>	2	0	0	0			
Health & Wellbeing Board	<b>2</b>	2 (appropriate Cabinet Members)	1 (observer)	1 (observer)	1 (observer)	<i>Shared between CM &amp; CCG Chair</i>		
Dimensions Investment Panel	<b>3 (Chair &amp; Vice of APF)</b>	2	0	0	1			4
Restructuring Implementation Committee	<b>4</b>	Group Leader	Group Leader	Group Leader	Group Leader			
Charitable Trust Board *	<b>5</b>	1 Cab Mem						
Alice Park Trust *	<b>3</b>							

- CTB - 5 councillors (to include Cabinet member responsible for Community Services) plus 1 Councillor who is not a member of controlling group but appointed by controlling group, plus 3 others)
- APT – 3 Councillors from the membership of the Charitable Trust Board (*excluding the Cab Member*)  
[Ward members(s) for Lambridge as co-opted non-voting members]

## COUNCIL MEETING 21st MAY 2019

### REGISTERED SPEAKERS

- Andrew Dickens  
Re: Lower Common East Allotment Association
- Luke John Emmett  
Re: Bath Deserves Better working with the Council
- Vishaka Robinson  
Re: Parkside Children's Centre
- Jane Middleton  
Re: Food Poverty Action Plan
- David Redgewell  
Re: Transport issues
- Dave Searby  
Re: Citizens' Assembly for Climate Change

**[Statements supplied in advance are attached]**

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## **Council Statement (fifth presentation) Mr Dickens 21 May 2019**

### **Lower Common East Allotment Association**

My name is Mr Dickens, I am a tenant on Lower Common East Allotment and a member of the Lower Common East Allotment Association, which was established in September 2017.

In April 2018 the Council was introduced to the Association and asked to make a routine confirmation that the Association would be treated no less favourably than the other two Allotment Associations already in existence.

In particular, confirmation was sought that the Lower Common East Allotment Association could make use of the Lower Common East allotment site gates and notice board to advertise and promote itself, and could attend the Council's quarterly allotment sub-forum meetings with the other two Allotment Associations where decisions are made that affect Lower Common East Allotment Association members.

The Council has accepted the establishment of the Lower Common East Allotment Association, but has refused to allow it to use the gates and notice board, or attend the sub-forum meetings.

Under current UK and European Law prior approval from a local authority to form an Allotment Association is not required, nor is a local authority able to interfere with the lawful functions and activities of an Allotment Association, nor treat one Allotment Association less favourably than another.

Whilst the Council's 2015 Allotment Management Plan recognises the possible existence of Allotment Associations it does not take proper account of their rights, and this is reflected in the Council's decision.

A reply from the Secretary of State, when taken into consideration with the Council's decision and the rights of the Lower Common East Allotment Association itself, suggests that this matter needs to be brought to the attention of a full Council meeting and this has now been done, for a fifth time.

The Lower Common East Allotment Association is seeking confirmation from the Council, for a fifth time, that it recognises and accepts the Association's right to be treated no less favourably than any other Allotment Association, for a fifth time that it recognises and accepts the Association's right to place notices on the site gates and notice board on Lower Common East Allotment which relate to and promote its activities, and for a fifth time that it recognises and accepts the Association's right to engage with the Council to represent the Association's members where appropriate.

At the last Council meeting, a point of order suggested a vote on the matter. That suggestion was ignored. The leader of the Council stated that there was a letter in the post. There wasn't.

In order to assist the Council, therefore, I have suggested a suitable motion and/or letter for its consideration, both of which are attached to this statement.

Thank you very much.

21/05/19

**[Possible motion that could be adopted]**

This Council:

1. Recognises and accepts the right of allotment tenants to form allotment associations.
2. Recognises and accepts the right of allotment associations to be treated equally.
3. Recognises and accepts the common practice of allotment associations advertising and promoting themselves on site gates and site notice boards.
4. Recognises and accepts the right of allotment associations to engage with councils.

This Council therefore:

5. Recognises and accepts the existence of the Lower Common East Allotment Association.
6. Recognises and accepts the right of the Lower Common East Allotment Association to be treated no less favourably than any other allotment association.
7. Recognises and accepts the right of the Lower Common East Allotment Association to place notices on the site gates and site notice board on Lower Common East allotment to advertise and promote itself.
8. Recognises and accepts the right of the Lower Common East Allotment Association to engage with the Council on behalf of the Association's members where appropriate.

**[Possible letter that could be sent]**

Mr A C Dickens  
97, Rosewell Court  
Bath  
BA1 2AH

Date

Dear Mr Dickens,

**Lower Common East Allotment Association**

I am writing to you with regard to your statement read out to the Council meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> May 2019 concerning the above Association.

This Council takes its allotment management responsibilities very seriously and recognises the role that allotments play as a leisure and recreational facility as well as the benefits they provide to the health and well-being of communities, to green spaces and wildlife, and to the production of low cost locally produced food in a sustainable way.

It also recognises the important role that allotment associations play in the everyday activities of allotment sites by enabling tenants to get together to discuss gardening and other matters, to obtain discounts on seeds and equipment and to help and support each other as a community group.

The Council therefore welcomes allotment tenants exercising their right to form allotment associations, whether these associations are open to membership from all sites or just one specific site, and encourages the advertising and promoting of an association's activities on site gates and notice boards, in line with accepted practice across the UK.

The Council is delighted to know that tenants on Lower Common East allotment have indeed formed their own site-specific association and is happy to confirm that the Lower Common East Allotment Association has the right to use the site gates and notice board to advertise and promote itself.

The Council also looks forward to inviting an Association representative to the quarterly meetings held between the other two Allotment Associations and the Council's Allotment Management Team.

Yours sincerely,

For and on behalf of Bath and North-East Somerset Council.

## **Luke John Emmett - Speech For Council AGM - 21/05/2019**

Thank you for allowing me to speak here tonight. Firstly, I would like to say a huge thank you to all the candidates and to all of the staff who worked hard behind the scenes on the Local Elections. A huge congratulations must be given to the Liberal Democrats for their outstanding victory, but also commiserations to the outgoing administration.

To say this change of administration is solely down to Brexit is disingenuous to both residents and all of the opposition party candidates who stood for election.

For the past four years residents have approached this council with their concerns. These have all fallen on deaf ears. In contrast, the other parties have consistently engaged with residents in an open and meaningful way. They have actually *listened* to our concerns. They have looked at our evidence, and they have consistently campaigned with us to hold the Council to account. We thank them for that.

We never set out to fight the previous administration. We would have preferred to work with them for the benefit of residents but our offers were constantly ignored. Your failure to acknowledge the damage of the negative campaigns you've run, topped with the attacks on residents by the anonymous troll behind your Twitter account, and your failure to answer questions and concerns when requested have all added fuel to the fire. And this election is the result of that – a result which is entirely of your own making.

I sincerely hope that Bath Deserves Better can now wind-down. However, the Lib Dems have seen the level of scrutiny we have applied to everything, the amount of research we carry out and the vast amount of support we can rally behind us. We expect the same level of scrutiny from this new administration and residents will, if needed, hold this Council to account in exactly the same way we have done with the old one.

Our hope is that we will not need to. I make the Lib Dems the same offer we made the Conservatives. We would love to work with you to make Bath better for everyone. We want to help – please continue to engage with us. You cannot do everything alone. Think what we may be able to achieve together.

Being an elected representative of your community brings with it great power and a great responsibility. But residents also have power. And over the last four years the expression of that power has reverberated around the walls of this chamber, around the streets of Bath in protests, on social media & more recently in the voices of the young.

I would like to remind the Liberal Democrats of four key points:

1. The safeguarding of Bathampton Meadows
2. The safeguarding and investment in our Libraries
3. Continued pressure on Curo to ensure they do not renege on their promises to Foxhill residents to refurbish their homes

4. To work with arts and cultural organisations to see what more can be done to help support them and find external sources of funding

We know that you don't have access to Theresa May's magic money tree. All we ask is that going forwards you do so with transparency and honesty. If you don't know the answer – be brave and admit that. Be honest about the challenges you face rather than sugar-coating the truth. If you can continue to do that, we will be there to work with you, support you, and help find creative solutions to make our city be all it can be.

Bath no longer deserves better. Bath Demands Better. Thank you for your time.

I would like to talk about plans to demolish Parkside Children's Center and replace it with 100 car parking spaces.

I have two key concerns, firstly that we are destroying a historically important community asset and secondly that we are replacing it with car parking spaces - bringing more pollution to an already congested area.

The center provides a huge range of children's health services and parental support and is a social hub for the area. It is proposed that it will move to space approximately half its current size on Charlotte Street.

In his Dec 2018 assessment Adrian Neilson, the council's own Conservation Officer objects saying "The building is a potential heritage asset and of local, community interest". "No demolition of the building shall commence until a detailed heritage assessment of it has been undertaken".

Historic England says "the building is of considerable local interest as a rare surviving example of a purpose-built structure for civilian use in wartime Bath." "Complete demolition of the structure is not supported by an appropriately robust heritage assessment"

Even Highways and traffic says in its consolation response "there appears to be limited justification for the provision of additional parking spaces at the charlotte street car park."

Secondly there is huge concern about the traffic and pollution this move will bring. The proposed area will be short-stay so the 100 spaces will generate a constant flow of traffic. The Charlotte Street Car Park already has capacity for 1056 cars making it the largest car park in central Bath.

And remember that the public consultation on Parkside happened during the clean air zone consultation. At the Parkside consultation I was assured that any extra pollution caused by the spaces would be mitigated by the clean air zone reducing the number of higher emission cars.

But we now no this is not the case as Bath has opted for a watered-down version of the proposed act. From 2020 we will have a class C clean air zone which will see charges for all higher emission vehicles, except cars, driving in the center of Bath.

With this in mind and the fact that Bath must reduce high levels of nitrogen dioxide in the city to within legal limits by 2021 more car parking spaces in its center seems illogical.

If the Parkside Children's Centre is going to be moved (if it has to be moved at all) why not build an electric bike share station in the vacated space, or use it as a food bank as requested by Tim Harris Chair of Bath Foodbank - who is desperately searching for a suitable distribution center? Can we not do something to decrease pollution and benefit our community?

I would like to ask the following questions:

Has a detailed the heritage assessment as requested by Adrian Neilson taken place?

Have another uses been considered for space if the children's center is to move?

Thank you for your time.

Jane Middleton statement

### Why Banes needs a Food Poverty Action Plan

Here in Bath and Northeast Somerset we have a fantastic food culture. We have nationally acclaimed restaurants, we have award-winning food producers and farmers, and that is rightly celebrated.

But it's only half the picture. We have three food banks in Bath. I volunteer at one of them. Last year they gave out over 4,500 emergency food parcels – that's a 36 per cent increase on the previous year. Food banks in NES are also under huge pressure, as more and more people struggle to cope.

Food banks are just the tip of the iceberg. They're where people go when they are at rock bottom, often after enduring months of food insecurity – skipping meals, sending children to school without breakfast, having access only to nutritionally poor foods. I've volunteered in the food bank for five years and I've never met anyone who wanted to be there. People living in food poverty don't like to talk about it – there's a stigma attached. But here in Banes, with our wonderful food culture and no shortage of food, the truth is that some of our neighbours cannot afford to eat.

This growth in food poverty is the result of political decisions made by central government. But you, as local councillors, can take steps to tackle it. So I am here today to ask you to set up a Food Poverty Action plan and to make one of the Policy Development and Scrutiny panels responsible for it. Other councils have done this. It doesn't have to cost a lot of money. It *will* make a difference. But it needs the political will.

What does a food poverty action plan mean? It means you put food poverty at the heart of all your policy making – so every decision you take, you consider its impact on food poverty. It means you measure the extent of food poverty, and you map the resources already available locally, so people know what help is out there. And you set up a partnership with local businesses, charities, universities and statutory agencies. So you are not tackling the issue alone: you are spearheading a community-wide initiative.

Food poverty action plans maximise what's already there – increasing the uptake of free school meals or Healthy Start vouchers, for example, or access to discretionary funds, like the Welfare Support Service. They work with businesses and charities to set up school breakfast clubs or to feed children during the summer holidays. And some councils decide to become Living Wage employers, and encourage local businesses to do likewise. All these actions help combat food poverty.

Cities like Belfast, Cambridge, Cardiff, and many London boroughs have food poverty action plans in place. Why not Bath? It will make a huge difference to the people you represent, and in particular to the many children who are living in poverty.

Food poverty is the most urgent and pressing form of poverty, but it is also the easiest to solve. I ask you to play your part in solving the crisis of hunger here in Banes and to commit to a Food Poverty Action Plan. Please be the council that says enough is enough when it comes to hungry children and adults in our community.

Hello

I am speaking as a member of the Bath Extinction Rebellion group. We recently worked with other groups to persuade BANES to declare a climate emergency.

Alongside the declaration of a climate emergency, setting up of a Citizens' Assembly on climate and ecological justice is one of the three key demands of the Extinction Rebellion group. The purpose of this short talk is to briefly introduce some of the key aspects of Citizens' assemblies. There are links to further information on the electronic version of this talk.

1) What is a Citizens' Assembly?

A Citizens' Assembly is a form of deliberative democracy by which a panel of citizens consider a particular issue.

A detailed "sortition" process is used to impartially select a statistically representative panel of local people. Assemblies then typically meet over 2-4 full weekends, where the members of the panel hear balanced information from experts and stakeholders, deliberate in small groups, and draft and vote on recommendations. There are well developed procedures to ensure that assemblies are conducted in a non-partisan way with independent oversight.

2) Where have Citizens' assemblies been used?

The process of 'deliberative democracy' is already widely in the UK and elsewhere.

In the UK a Citizens' Assembly, facilitated by the well established charity INVOLVE, was recently used by two House of Commons Select Committees to look at long term funding of Adult Social Care.

Outside the UK, citizens' assemblies have been used in countries such as Ireland, Canada, Australia and Germany.

Closer to home, Oxford City Council announced last month that it is establishing a Citizens' Assembly on climate change which will meet in September.

3) We already have councillors elected to take decisions, why do we need another process?

Deliberative democracy is intended to augment, not replace representative democracy.

Citizens' assemblies can be used to address issues that are deemed too controversial and difficult for politicians to deal with successfully.

In recent years, Ireland has used citizens' assemblies to successfully break the deadlock on two controversial issues: legalising same-sex marriage and the repeal of the Eighth Amendment on abortion. Participants were fascinated by the way that the process allowed people to reconsider entrenched opinions and to empathise with people with opposing views. The recommendations of the Citizens' Assembly informed public debate and emboldened politicians to advocate for change regarding these issues.

To conclude, apologies for mentioning the "B" word, but I think that whatever side of the debate you are on, Brexit has clearly demonstrated the failings of both old fashioned referendums (which are not deliberative democracy) and our parliamentary systems to reach consensus. It is time to

try something different.

Links:

Oxford City Councils Citizens' assembly on climate emergency:

[https://www.oxford.gov.uk/news/article/1064/oxford\\_city\\_council\\_to\\_establish\\_uk\\_s\\_first\\_citizens\\_assembly\\_to\\_address\\_climate\\_emergency](https://www.oxford.gov.uk/news/article/1064/oxford_city_council_to_establish_uk_s_first_citizens_assembly_to_address_climate_emergency)

Involve – UK based charity that facilitates Citizens' assemblies:

<https://www.involve.org.uk/about>

<https://www.involve.org.uk/resources/blog/opinion/whats-plan-why-oxford-holding-citizens-assembly-climate-change>

Extinction rebellion podcast on Citizens' assemblies on climate emergency

<https://rebellion.earth/2019/04/29/extinction-rebellion-podcast-episode-3-citizens-assembly/>

Radio 4 analysis podcast on deliberative democracy

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m0002z9g>