

PARISH LIAISON MEETING

Minutes of the Meeting held

Wednesday, 30th May, 2018, 6.30 pm

Councillors: Councillor Karen Walker (Chairman), Councillor Tim Warren (Cabinet Member), Councillor Charles Gerrish (Cabinet Member), Councillor Paul May (Cabinet Member), Councillor Paul Myers (Cabinet Member), Councillor Vic Pritchard (Cabinet Member) and Councillor Karen Warrington (Cabinet Member)

Parish Representatives: Rosemary Naish (Chair, B&NES ALCA) and Clive Fricker (Vice-Chair, B&NES ALCA) and representatives of Batheaston PC, Camerton PC, Chew Magna PC, Chew Stoke PC, Clutton PC, Compton Dando PC, Compton Martin PC, Corston PC, Dunkerton & Tunley PC, Englishcombe PC, Farmborough PC, Freshford PC, High Littleton PC, Keynsham TC, Monkton Combe PC, Peasedown St John PC, Priston PC, Publow PC, Shoscombe PC, South Stoke PC, Stanton Drew PC, Timsbury PC, Ubley PC, West Harptree PC, Whitchurch PC

Also in attendance: Martin Shields (Corporate Director), David Trethewey (Director of Partnerships and Corporate Services), Andy Thomas (Head of Strategy, Engagement & Marketing), Chantal Young (HR Business Partner - Organisational Development) and Sara Dixon (Locality Manager)

1 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Tim Warren, welcomed Councillor Karen Walker to her first Parish Liaison Meeting since her appointment as Chair of Bath and North East Somerset Council.

Councillor Walker welcomed delegates to the meeting.

2 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

The Democratic Services Officer advised the meeting of the procedure.

3 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cabinet Members Councillor Bob Goodman and Councillor Mark Shelford, B&NES Chief Executive Ashley Ayre and Trudi Gillbank, Clerk of Farmborough PC.

4 URGENT BUSINESS AS AGREED BY THE CHAIR

There was none.

5 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the Parish Liaison Meeting of 28th February 2018 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

6 UPDATE FROM THE LEADER OF BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET COUNCIL, COUNCILLOR TIM WARREN

Councillor Warren had been requested by Timsbury PC to speak about the possibility of the West of England Combined Authority franchising bus services. He said that he lived in the country and was aware how limited rural bus services were. He gave an example of how the timetabling and lack of public transport provision causes difficulties for local people travelling to the larger towns and cities.

At the present time bus services are deregulated. The operator has freedom to introduce new routes and drop existing ones. The Council can subsidise routes that operators find unprofitable. However, as Council finances become tighter, this is becoming more difficult. Adult Care and Children's services now account for 80% of the Council Budget. The West of England Combined Authority will have the option of franchising bus services. Transport for Greater Manchester is already preparing an assessment of a proposed bus franchising scheme. WECA will be discussing the bus strategy over the next few months. They will be able to decide which routes to support from its central budget. From discussions he had with the WECA mayor, he believed that he was in favour of a bus franchising scheme.

At present he believed that buses were often not efficiently deployed in rural areas. Sometimes in the Chew Valley a full-size bus would be carrying only 3-4 passengers to and from work in Bristol. It would actually be cheaper to provide taxis for them. He favoured the idea of a shuttle service in the Valley, perhaps provided by an electric vehicle, picking passengers up and dropping them off to join the main bus routes.

In conclusion, he said he was in favour of bus franchising, and hoped that further consideration will be given to a proposal across the West of England.

A delegate asked whether there were any alternatives to franchising. Councillor Warren replied that as far as he could see the only alternative was to remain with the deregulated system that exists now, and that either there were large fare increases on rural routes or services were discontinued.

The Chair thanked Councillor Warren for his update.

7 APPRENTICESHIPS - AN OPPORTUNITY FOR PARISHES

Chantal Young, B&NES HR Partner – Organisational Development, gave a presentation on apprenticeships.

She said that many of us have fixed ideas about apprenticeships, but since a year ago when the Government introduced the Apprenticeship Levy, the landscape had completely changed. The Council can now recruit for degree apprenticeships in social work, so for the first time did not have to go to universities to find social workers. The Council can offer a professional qualification in social work, and would in the future also be able to do the same for teacher trainees and town planners. The Government has imposed a levy on employers with a pay bill of more than £3m. Employers paying the levy can apply to the Government's apprenticeship service for money to be put into an apprenticeship account to be used to pay for training. For the first time this year the Council can offer some of that

money to partner organisations. This gives the Council an opportunity to offer financial support for apprenticeships to town and parish councils. Parish councils can apply for money to recruit a new employee and pay for their training. A number of examples of apprenticeships that might be useful within parish councils was given on page 17 of the agenda papers. The apprenticeship needed to be a genuine role within the parish council with a contract of employment for at least one year, and the parish council had to pay the salary. Alternatively an apprenticeship could be offered to an existing member of staff, who would remain on the same terms and conditions and take on apprenticeship training. The Council had brought in new staff on apprenticeships and was also using apprenticeships to upskill existing staff. Up to 20% of working hours had to be allowed for learning outside of work, a very broad term which could include attending college, attending meetings, reading, researching or project work. An apprenticeship had to be based on the acquisition of new skills and not just involve a continuation of existing ones. An apprenticeship could be offered to any one of any age.

Chantal showed a video countering myths about apprenticeships. This can be accessed on YouTube at <https://youtu.be/AiD3RZ6WsXw>.

Chantal explained that at this stage the opportunity for the funding of an apprenticeship could only be offered to one employer, in order to test the system, that is to confirm that payments to the training provider can be made through the Council's online apprenticeship account. The Council can help parish councils to find a training provider. There was a limit of 10% of the Council's apprenticeship budget that could be offered to a parish. If parishes wished to explore the possibility of using the apprenticeship scheme, they should contact Lisa Pollard, Apprenticeship Co-ordinator at the Council.

In response to questions from delegates Chantal said:

- Apprenticeships can be part-time jobs, though there had to be a minimum of, she thought, 16 hours work and 20% of the part time hours have to be allowed for off-the-job training.
- Only one employer can be funded and there were criteria for what roles could be apprenticeships. The parish council must be the employer. If more than one parish applied and they all met the criteria, there would have to be a selection process.

The Chair thanked Chantal for her presentation.

8 UPDATE ON CHANGING TOGETHER

David Trethewey, Director – Partnerships and Corporate Services, gave a presentation. A copy of his PowerPoint slides is attached as Appendix 1 to these minutes.

He reminded delegates that there had been a series of conversations with parishes during the previous autumn about the challenges the Council was facing and the impact on services and the structure of the Council. There was a cumulative funding gap. The Government's grant to the Council would disappear altogether, so the Council would have to fund services from its own resources, including council tax,

business rates, income from property and income from tourism. However, there was a growing demand for Council services and the most vulnerable had to be protected. A budget strategy had been set in February.

Restructuring had begun with senior staff. In total Council staff would be reduced by approximately 300.

Social Care and Children's Services now accounted for 80% of the Council's budget.

Tim Warren, Leader of the Council, said that the development of the Changing Together strategy had been an enormous challenge for staff. He wished to thank all the staff for their commitment over a very difficult period.

The Chair thanked David for his presentation.

9 UPDATE FROM THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY REGENERATION, COUNCILLOR PAUL MYERS

Councillor Myers updated the meeting.

Parish Sweeper Scheme

The costs of the scheme had to be reduced by £80k by 2019-20. The scheme has been discussed several times at the Parish Liaison Meeting, and a working group of parishes met with the Council on 5th March and 27th April to consider:

- the potential impact on parish precepts;
- the baseline service which the Council will provide to all parishes;
- how to make the best use of digital approaches (e.g. Fix My Street) and partnership opportunities.

There is now a defined service level for all parishes. The working group suggested that parishes that wished to continue with the scheme should be allowed to do so, but analysis showed that smaller parishes wishing to do so would have to take steps that could result in a 44% increase in parish precepts in a single year, which is not acceptable. The following proposal, supported by the working group, will offer a transitional arrangement for those already in the scheme who wish to continue it after the subsidy ends by funding their own Parish Sweeper. In order to do so parishes would need to substantially increase their precept. The proposal is:

- Parishes facing a precept rise of 30% or more next year would have Council funding reduced over 3 years (or 2 if they prefer).
- Parishes facing a precept rise of between 10 and 30% next year would have Council funding reduced over 2 years.

- Parishes facing a precept rise of up to 10% next year would have no phased reduction.

This proposal will be considered by the Cabinet Member for Finance and Efficiency within the next few months.

People attending the working group meetings had asked about the situation in Bath, which is not parished. Areas in Bath with high footfall (such as local shopping centres) do receive more regular attention. The Bath Improvement District works in partnership with the Council to augment cleansing in the city centre with their own equipment and rangers.

A delegate asked whether parishes which had already increased precepts this year by a large amount in anticipation of increased costs relating to the scheme would be able to benefit from the transition arrangement. Councillor Myers said he could not answer this at the moment, but he would consult and report back.

Community Asset Transfer (Midsomer Norton Town Council)

Midsomer Norton's representatives to ALCA had suggested that the transfer of the Town Hall to the Town Council is taking too long and seems very difficult. Councillor Myers said that his position on B&NES and the Town Council made him feel well-qualified to address their concerns. He agreed it had taken a long time – he had begun discussing it as a Town Councillor in 2006. The Quirk report on community management and ownership of assets was published in 2007. At that time the Council did not have a transfer policy and the original offer was for the Town Council to buy the Town Hall as a single building for £500,000, which was totally impossible. Under the succeeding Council administration there was still no transfer policy, just a list of 11 buildings which were candidates for transfer. Each one was very different and there were no ground rules, so every case involved a great deal of work. The Council had learnt lessons from Beacon Hall and other transfers, and had realised that there should be explicit rules and procedures for the process, and that the types of body to which community assets can be transferred should be defined. In general it does not seem right to transfer major capital assets to community groups governed only by their own constitutions. Towns and parishes have a statutory basis. There are issues of probity relating to the disposal of public assets, and public assets should only be transferred when there is evidence of a quantifiable benefit to the community. He believed that a firm basis for a policy was now emerging. Perhaps there might be an agenda item at a future Parish Liaison Meeting before the policy is finalised.

Fix My Street

An update had been requested by Tunley PC.

Councillor Myers gave a presentation. A copy of his PowerPoint slides is attached as Appendix 2 to these minutes. He explained that Fix My Street had begun as a campaigning website and had proved so successful that its creators had produced a software program for Councils to allow residents could log issues.

A bespoke version had been developed for B&NES, which can be accessed at:
<https://fix.bathnes.gov.uk/>

Residents will eventually be able to use it to report directly to the relevant service such issues as litter, potholes, street lamps not working, obstruction on roads, flooding and blocked drains, faulty street furniture and grit bins and problems at bus shelters. Town and parish clerks can access the system to see all the problems reported in their parish. Issues previously reported via Council Connect will be included. It should not only help residents, but also improve partnership working between parishes and the Council. It should eliminate much duplication and confusion and help resolve uncertainty about the ownership of assets. Issues can still be reported via Council Connect, but people using smartphones to report issues to Fix My Street can include photographs.

He said that Fix My Street was being given a “soft launch”, because there was a concern that there might be a tsunami of issues being reported, which might overload the system. He asked delegates to exercise restraint in reporting issues for the time being, and thanked those who had participated in testing for their invaluable feedback. In response to a comment from a delegate, he said that if an issue was reported about a Council asset and it was not remediable, that would be a clear statement to that effect on Fix My Street; this was better than reports about problems just disappearing into a black hole.

Councillor Myers said that the system diagnostics would enable people making an excessive number of complaints to be identified. Responding to concern from delegates about the current lack of publicity for Fix My Street, he referred to his previous comment about a “soft launch”, and promised that the level of publicity would be increased as confidence grew in the capacity of the system.

Martin Shields, Corporate Director, said that Fix My Street had already gone live for highways issues. Those accessing the website did not have to log a report, but could just view reports already logged, which sometimes included photographs of the problem and information from the service on the state of play on dealing with it, which might include comments from a Highway Engineer after a site visit.

General Data Protection Regulation

This issue had been raised by Dunkerton and Tunley PC, who had asked whether there would be numerous requests coming from B&NES about the publication of parish details on the Council’s website. Cllr Myers replied that:

- The Council’s staff use a variety of e-mail lists for meetings, newsletters etc., so parishes may have received communications from different departments.
- The legislation came into force on 25th May, so the number of communications from the Council in relation to it should decrease.
- There is guidance on GDPR available on the Information Commissioner’s Office website, the link to which is: <https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-the-general-data-protection-regulation-gdpr/>.
- If parishes have concerns about their own contact information published on the B&NES website, this can be amended. Email: [connecting](mailto:connecting@barnet.gov.uk)

communities@bathnes.gov.uk if you would like to see any changes. Further information about Connecting Communities can be viewed on the Council's website at: <http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/services/neighbourhoods-and-community-safety/localism-and-community-planning>.

- NALC have provided a general toolkit for parishes on GDPR. Speak to Rosemary Naish, Chair of ALCA B&NES, or Deborah White, Secretary, for more information.

Calculation of Tax Base for Council Tax/Precept Setting (Keynsham Town Council)

Keynsham TC had asked the following question:

How is the tax base calculated for council tax/precept setting? Housing numbers have increased significantly in Keynsham, but the figures do not seem to correspond.

Corporate Finance, B&NES, had provided the following response, which was circulated to delegates.

The Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base) Regulations 2012 specify formulate for calculating the council tax base. The tax base calculation is determined annually by identifying the number of properties liable to be levied and the banding in which the properties are placed and then by applying relevant exemptions, discounts (e.g. Single Occupier discounts), including the local council tax support scheme and banding reductions.

*The information is compiled for each parish using information on dwellings registered on the Council Tax system and the authority's tax base is built up from these bands. The resultant figures are then adjusted to allow a provision for growth in respect of the larger parishes and any anticipated losses on collection. The information must be agreed and notified to preceptors between **1st December and 31st January** in the financial year preceding that to which the tax base applies.*

The provision for growth is based on estimates using Planning information of anticipated new build delivery for the coming year. This figure needs to take into consideration that council tax will only become chargeable as properties become occupied and is risk adjusted to allow for any potential delays, council tax exemptions and discounts that might apply to the new dwellings.

In respect of Keynsham's tax base for 2018/19 the following table provides a summary of the calculation, showing that 99.50 Band D equivalents were added for the full year:

	2018/19 Taxbase Calculations (Band D Equivalent Properties)
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<i>Council Tax Base – including impact of exemptions and discounts</i>	<i>6474.06</i>
<i>Local Council Tax Support Scheme</i>	<i>-585.62</i>
<i>Estimate New Homes Growth – Band D Equivalent</i>	<i>99.50</i>
<i>Sub Total</i>	<i>5987.94</i>
<i>Estimated Collection Rate</i>	<i>98.75%</i>
<i>Final Council Tax Base 2018/19</i>	<i>5913.09</i>

The tax base for 2019/20 will reflect the actual number of additions in 2018/19 plus an estimate of new builds for 2019/20.

Parish Charter Update

The revised Parish Charter has now been agreed by Cabinet and was endorsed by Cabinet at its May AGM.

- The Council has committed to staff training to improve their understanding and encourage more effective partnership working with parishes and other partners.
- The Council has also committed to reviewing the Charter throughout the coming year to monitor its effectiveness.
- The Charter is a framework document and will only 'live' through the relationship between the Council and the parishes.
- Parish Liaison meetings have a key role to play in building this relationship.

Next steps

- We have in place a small working group to oversee the revision of the Charter and monitor its effectiveness.
- To bring together the Charter and our Parish Liaison discussions we would like to extend the role of this group to set the agendas for Parish Liaison.
- We like the parishes to be re-elected on this group. Up to six representatives from various-sized parishes. The appointments will be for one year.
- Currently the agendas are set by a discussion with the Chair of ALCA. We would propose that the Chair of ALCA is also a representative.
- The appointments could be considered at the ALCA AGM when they consider the Parish Charter.
- The following parish representatives to the monitoring group had been elected at the last ALCA meeting: Dawn Drury, Clive Fricker, Cheryl Scott, Martin Robinson and Rosemary Naish.
- Feedback from parishes on the working of the new Charter was welcome.

- He thanked the members of the Parish Charter working group for their hard work.

Bath Tourism Plus

Councillor Myers noted that a new Chair had been appointed to Bath Tourism Plus. Councillor Myers said that one of his own objectives was to promote tourism in North East Somerset. Talks with Visit Somerset relating to this objective were well advanced, and he hoped to be able to make an announcement fairly soon.

The Chair thanked Councillor Myers for the update.

10 COMMUNITY LIBRARIES UPDATE

Councillor Karen Warrington updated the meeting.

The one-stop located in Keynsham Library was working well. The one-stop and library in Midsomer Norton looked absolutely stunning; she encouraged delegates to visit it. The second stage of the Bath library and one-stop project was under way. There were 5 branch libraries and it was hoped that local communities would take over their running. Saltford library was being taken on by a community group and would include a post office, a facility that had been lost to the village last December and which should help make the library viable. Consultations were ongoing with Paulton Parish Council about them taking on the library. Volunteers were being sought to run Moorland Road Library. There is a programme to encourage the establishment of new community libraries, and the Council is engaging with communities to enable them to do so. £275,000 had been allocated for new libraries, with £5,000 available for each scheme. Help will be given with training and some services, to ensure that schemes are viable and sustainable. There is a national network of community libraries which can provide support. It is anticipated that there could be up to five new community libraries, mostly in rural areas, including Bishop Sutton and Chew Valley School. Responding to a question from a delegate, she said that the mobile library service will continue. At present there is only one driver for the mobile library, which limits the service it can provide. There will be consultation with communities about the mobile library. The opening of new community libraries will mean that the mobile library will be able to stop longer at places without a library.

The Chair noted she would be officially opening Midsomer Norton Library and One-Stop Shop on 4th June. She thanked Councillor Warrington for her update.

11 SUGGESTED FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Rosemary Naish, Chair of B&NES ALCA, noted that there would elections for a new B&NES Council in May 2019 and that purdah would start in March and that, so that town and parish councils would need to be careful about their agendas and discussions at their April meetings. She suggested that the B&NES should attend the next PLM and give guidance.

Delegates noted this information.

12 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Delegates noted the next scheduled Parish Liaison Meetings were on 24 October 2018 and 20th February 2019.

The meeting ended at 7.49 pm

Chair(person)

Date Confirmed and Signed

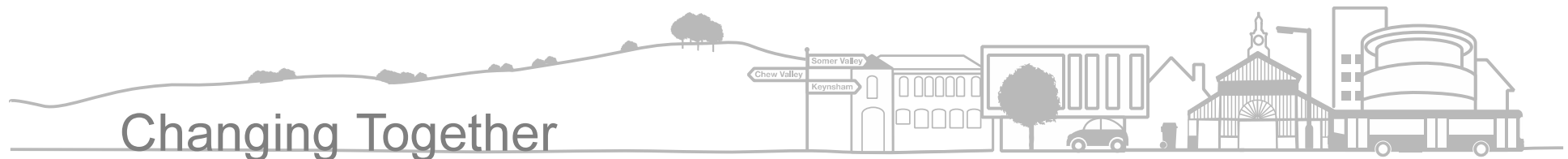
Prepared by Democratic Services

Changing Together

Presentation to Parish Liaison, 30 May 2018

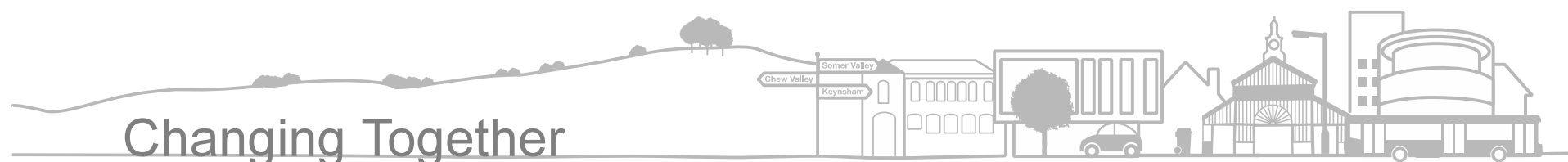
David Trethewey

Director Partnerships and Corporate Services

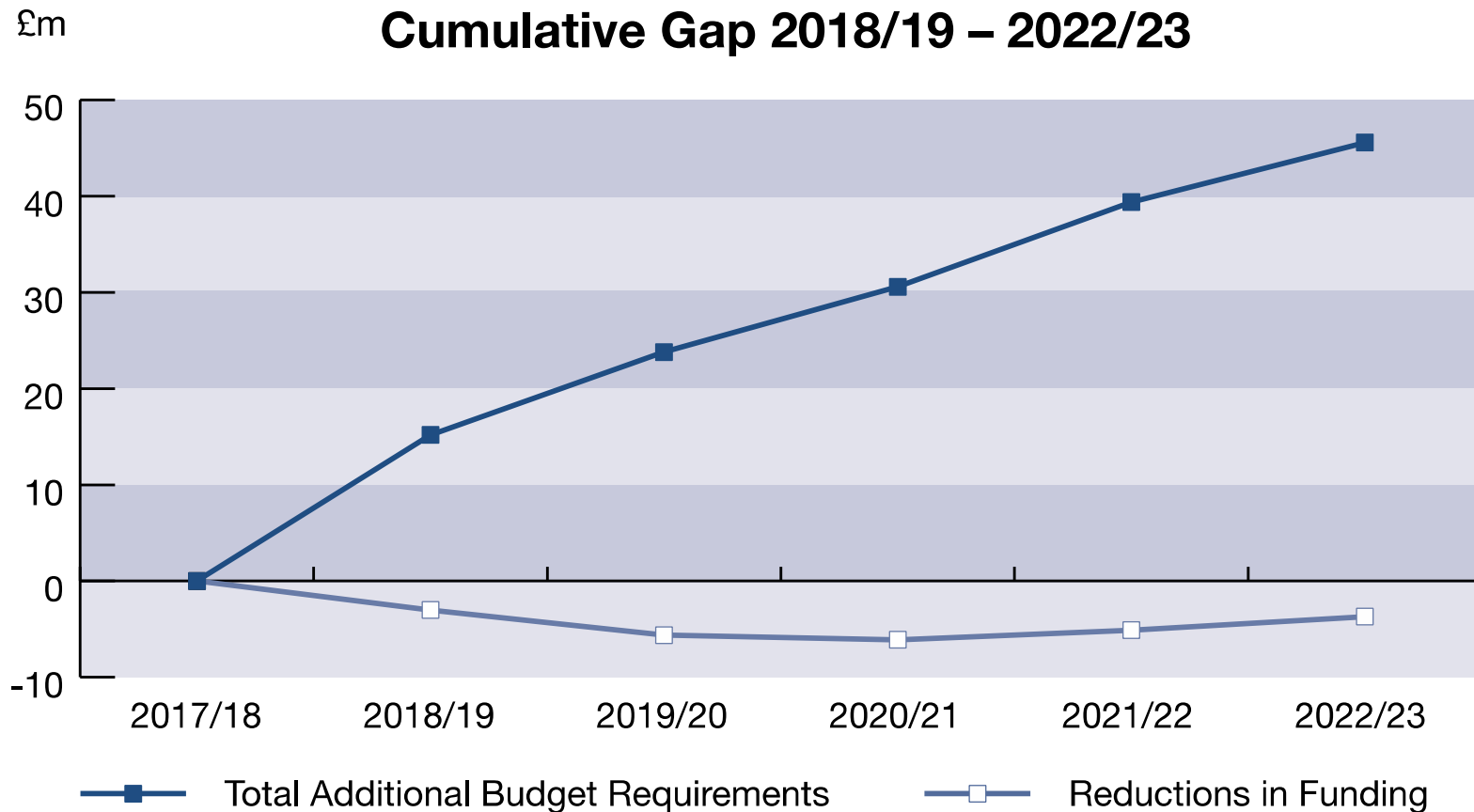


What we'll discuss

- The pressures and challenges we all face
- The Council's changing role
- What we're doing about this
- The next steps for Changing Together
- Working in different ways
- Collaboration and joint working



Why do we need to change?

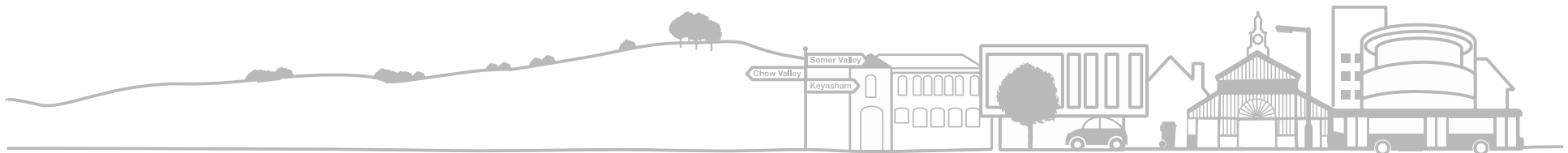


Changing Together



Changing Together

- **Why** - Facing unprecedented financial challenges with increasing demand for services and reduced funding, current funding shortfall of **£16 million** to 2020.
- **What** - The Changing Together Programme provides the operating framework that will manage the Council's change process.
- **How** - The Changing Together Programme will address the Council's budget gap, and introduce a new Council structure supported by smarter ways of working.
- **When** - Delivery of the Budget Strategy and Senior Management Restructure completed by **30th June 2018**. Next steps include CCG integration and wider Council restructuring and further savings for 19/20



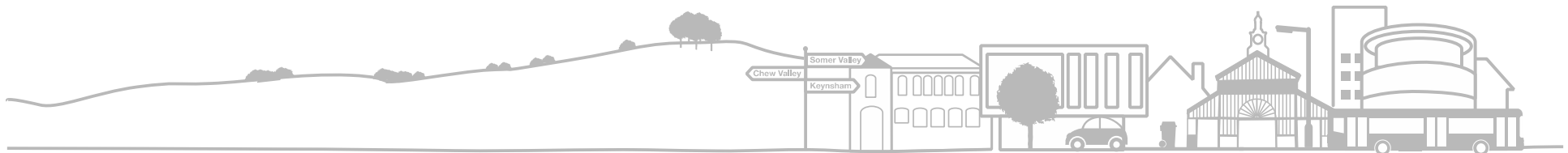
Changing Together- our new approach and role

Our Approach

- Clear decisions about **priorities**
- **New and better ways** to work with residents, partners, voluntary organisations and parishes
- **Managing demand** into the future
- **Becoming more self- sufficient**

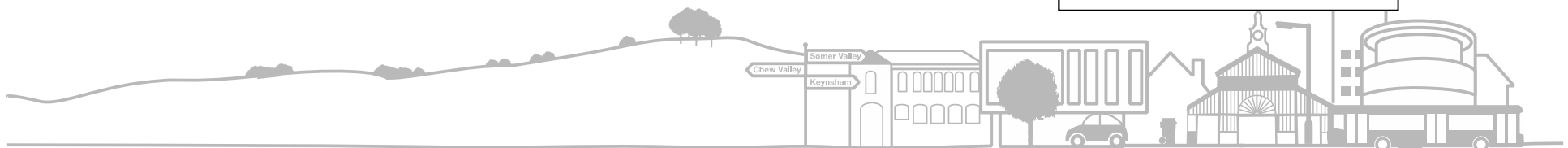
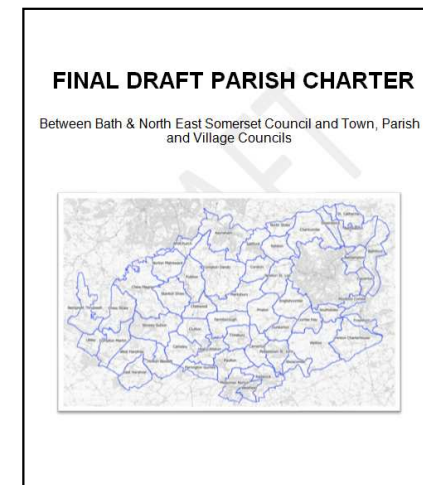
Our Role

- Protecting and caring for our most vulnerable
- Nurturing residents' health, safety and wellbeing
- Providing ways for everyone in the community to reach their full potential



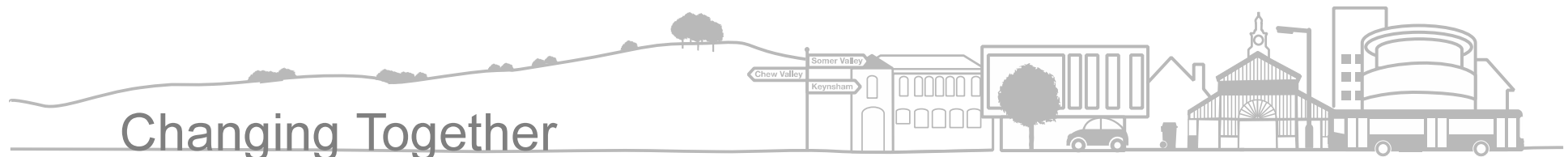
Changing Together: Progress so Far

- The Council's 2018/19 Budget
 - 2018/19 Capital programme **£217m** with **151** schemes
 - Challenge - **£7.1m** staffing savings to deliver in 2018/19
- The Council's Operational Plan setting out savings proposals
- Working better with partners and communities
 - Parish Charter adopted by Council
- A revised structure for the Council
 - Reductions in senior management
 - Better corporate working
 - Further staffing reductions



How do we propose to do this?

- We'll need to become smaller – reducing staff by around 300 FTE (out of 2000 FTE)
- We will revise/reduce management structures, starting with senior management
- We remain committed to protecting our children and young people and other essential front line services.
- We'll look at more efficient ways to work with partners



Our new Leadership team

Proposed Management Structure from 01.07.18

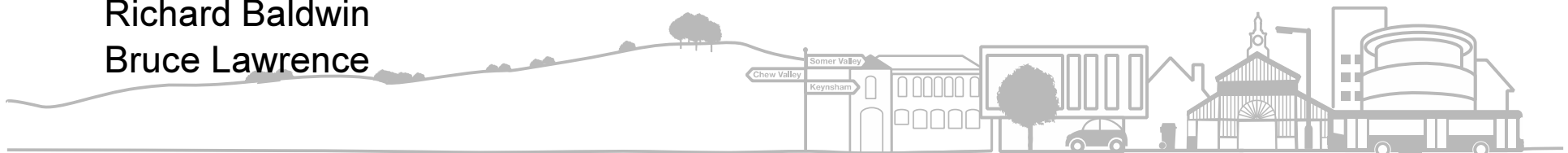
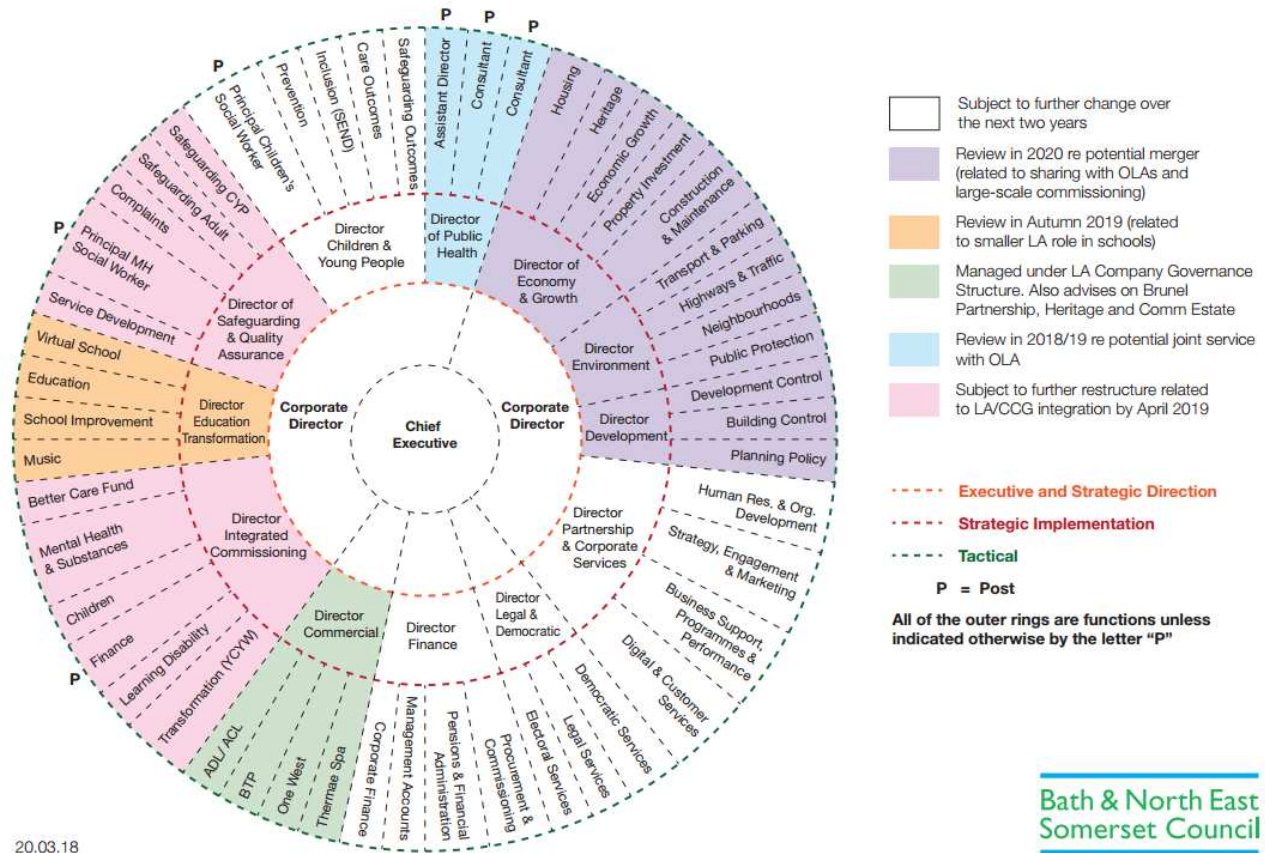
Chief Executive
Ashley Ayre

Corporate Directors

Mike Bowden
Martin Shields

Directors

John Wilkinson
Environmental
Lisa Bartlett
David Trethewey
Maria Lucas
Donna Parham
Tim Richens
Jane Shayler
Margaret Simonds Bird
Lesley Hutchinson
Richard Baldwin
Bruce Lawrence



Council- CCG integration

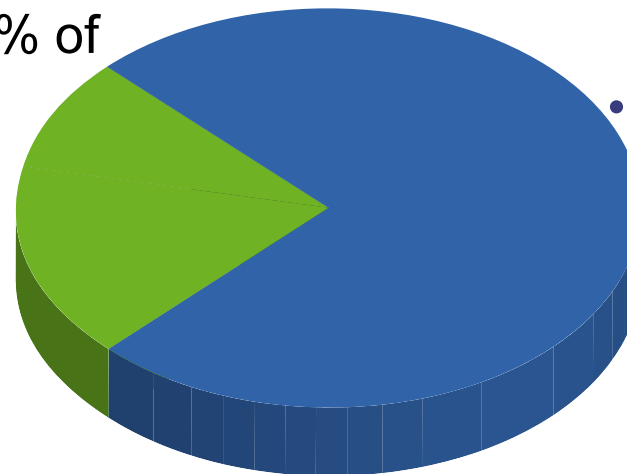
Nearly 80p in every pound spent on Social Care and Children

Council

- 700 employees work in People & Communities
- £85m budget (75% of overall budget)

CCG

- 75 employees
- £261m budget

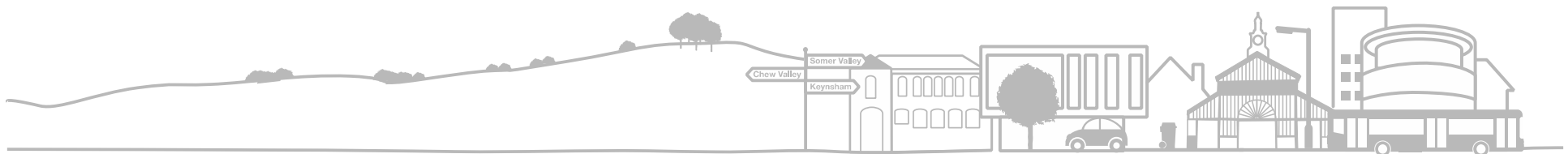


Aims

- Joining up services in an effort to improve efficiencies and reduce costs and duplication
- Freeing up beds – more care at home

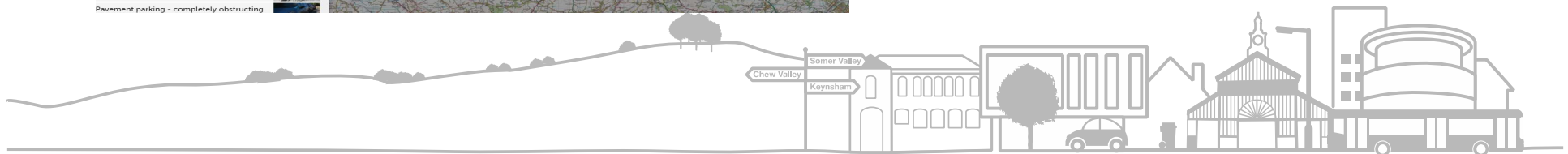
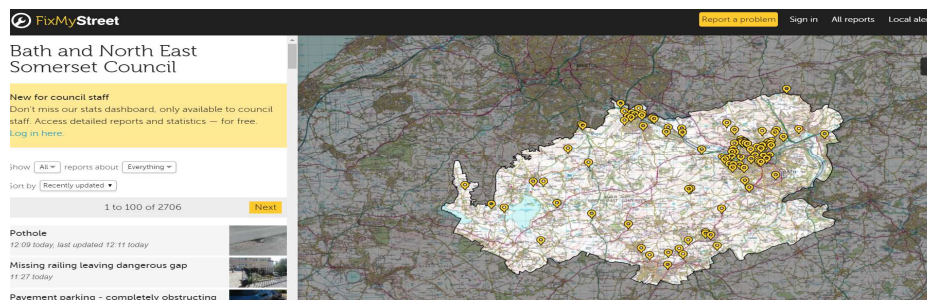
■ Adult Social Care/
Children's Services

■ All other services

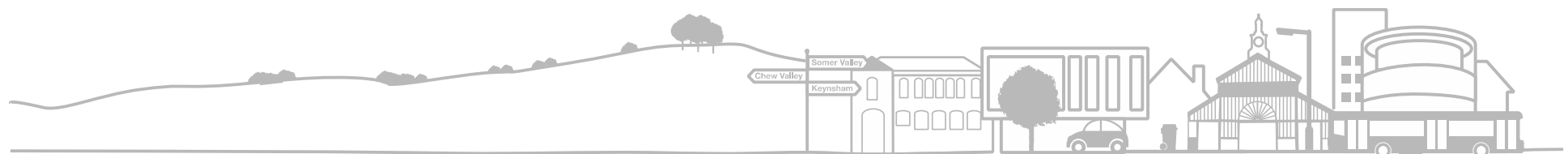


Further savings: impacts

- Better use of Digital and online technologies (£2.8m)
- Delivering Modern Libraries programme and community-run libraries (£800k)
- Efficiencies in public transport spending (£1.1m)
- Re-structuring our Youth Connect services (£500k)
- Increasing income from our commercial estate (£950k)
- Managing growth in Adult Care through better commissioning (£2m)



**We think there are four areas where communities
can help make our money go further...**



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Digital by Choice *Report It*

Parish Liaison 30/05/18

New online ***Report It*** options

Report problems with roads and pavements using
the B&NES version of Fix My Street

www.bathnes.gov.uk/reportit

*Visit this address on your desktop computer, tablet,
or mobile phone*

Report problems on the road

Enter a location in Bath and North East Somerset:

e.g. 'BA1 1JQ' or 'Lansdown Grove'

GO

... or locate me automatically

[Report other issues or make enquiries](#)

Report emergencies on 01225 39 40 41 (option 9).

Report problems straight to the service

- Hazards or obstructions on roads and pavements
- Flooding or blocked drains
- Street lighting problems
- Problems with street furniture, grit bins or bus shelters

Click map to report a problem

Show All reports about Everything

Sort by Newest

1 to 100 of 121

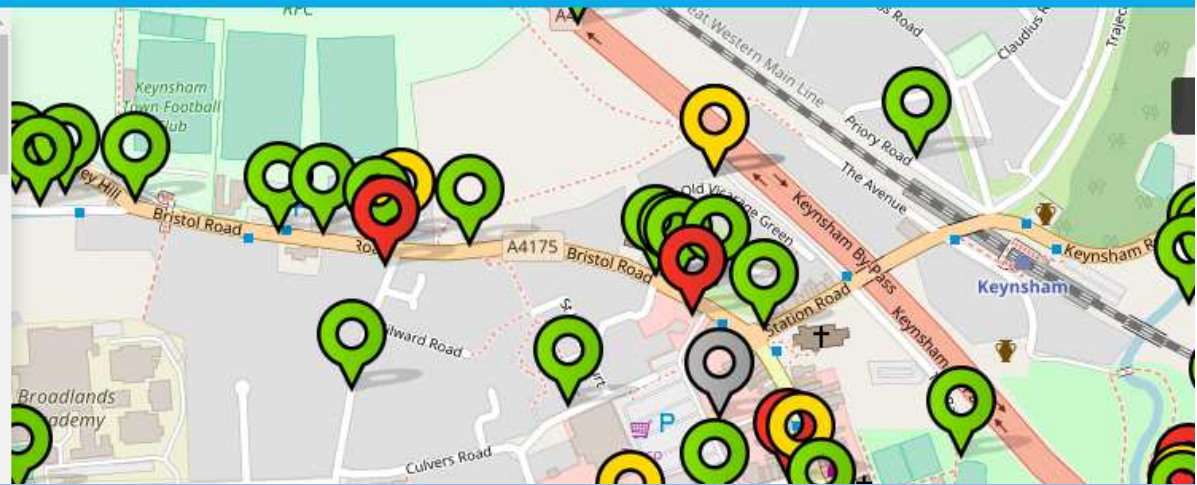
Next

Gravel on cycle lane

08:32, Wednesday, last updated 10:45, Wednesday

Pothole on pavement

11:38, Tuesday, last updated 12:10, Tuesday



Keep up to date

- View progress updates from the service
- Update existing reports if things change
- Reports previously made via Council Connect are being dealt with, but will not appear on the map

Report a problem

Sign in

All reports

Local alerts

Help

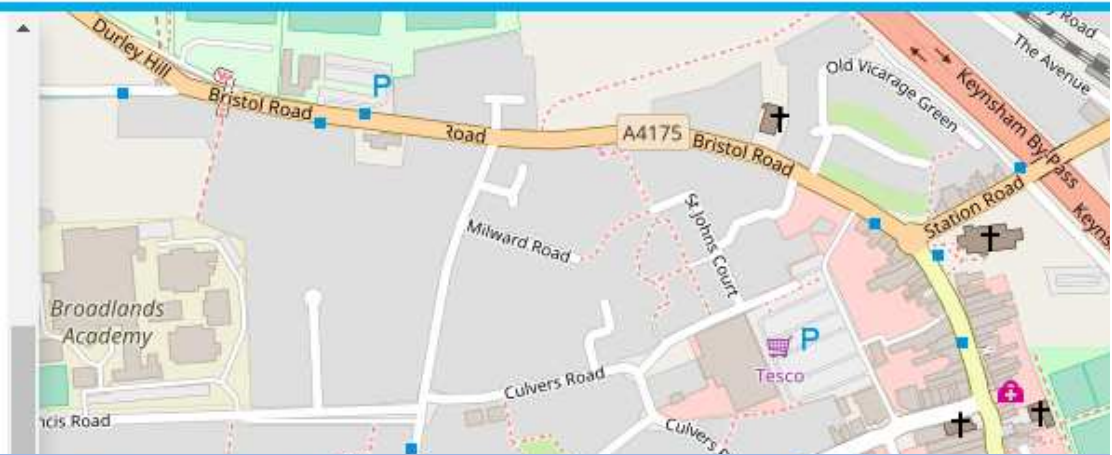
Summarise the problem and location

e.g. 'pothole on Example St, near post box'

Photos

Drag and drop photos here or [click to upload](#)

✓ To help us locate the ✗ Avoid personal information



Help us keep on top of things...

- Pin-point the exact location of a problem
- Add photos and descriptions
- **Report it** online (but call Council Connect in an emergency)

What's next?

More report categories will be appearing soon
including;

Waste Cleansing
Parks & Grounds