

BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET

CABINET

These minutes are draft until confirmed as a correct record at the next meeting.

Thursday, 20th May, 2021

Present:

Councillor Kevin Guy	Leader of the Council, Liberal Democrat Group Leader
Councillor Dine Romero	Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, Communities and Culture
Councillor Tim Ball	Cabinet Member for Planning and Licensing
Councillor Richard Samuel	Deputy Council Leader (statutory) and Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Resources
Councillor Sarah Warren	Deputy Council Leader and Cabinet Member for Climate and Sustainable Travel
Councillor David Wood	Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Services
Councillor Tom Davies	Cabinet Member for Adults and Council House Building
Councillor Alison Born	Cabinet Member for Adults and Council House Building
Councillor Manda Rigby	Cabinet Member for Transport

1 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair (Councillor Kevin Guy) welcomed everyone to the meeting.

The Chair invited all Cabinet Members to introduce themselves.

The Chair also informed the meeting that speakers will have their opportunity to address the Cabinet before questions from public and Councillors.

2 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

The Senior Democratic Services Officer drew attention to the evacuation procedure and health and safety notice.

3 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

4 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

5 TO ANNOUNCE ANY URGENT BUSINESS AGREED BY THE CHAIR

The Chair used this opportunity to read out the following statement:

'Before we start the meeting proper, I'd like to give an update on the proposal to introduce charges for certain materials at our recycling centres.

As Leader, and as a common sense guy, I know how important it is both that we listen to residents and that we respond swiftly to changes in circumstance.

Two things have happened since the decision was made to introduce charges for rubble etc at recycling centres.

First, I was elected Leader and I reaffirmed that we are a listening council. Cllr Wood and I have listened to local residents and parish councils who say they are concerned about the unintended consequences of these charges.

Second, circumstances have changed. The government have launched a consultation about consistency in recycling services in England.

Bringing in charges now, only to change them later following government instruction, would be confusing for residents and would add to our officers' administrative burdens.

It would make no sense. And I'm a common sense kind of guy

*That's why I am announcing today that we are **putting on hold** the charges for rubble, plasterboard and tyres at recycling centres.*

Charges will not be introduced next week.

We will look again at how to make alternatives savings to balance the Council's budget. As Liberal Democrats we pride ourselves on being the only party that balances the Councils books every year.

I'm pleased the government is seriously looking at new rules that would mean a 'win-win' for council taxpayers and DIY-ers whilst helping us deliver our recycling and climate emergency commitments.

It's time we started thinking differently about who pays for recycling. We need new funding streams so that council taxpayers in areas such as ours which prioritise recycling of a wide range of materials don't lose out.

So, we will also be lobbying central government for new legislation so that funding to recycle these materials comes from producers rather than council taxpayers.

There is strength in listening to different views, there is wisdom in changing our mind when circumstances change, there is integrity in balancing our books, and there's common sense in the pause to charging we are announcing today'.

6 STATEMENTS, DEPUTATIONS OR PETITIONS FROM PUBLIC OR COUNCILLORS

Malcolm Baldwin read out a statement [a copy of which is attached to the Minutes as Appendix 1 and on the Council's website] where he said that Low Traffic Neighbourhoods and their effective implementation will be a reflection of the positive aspirations for a cleaner, healthier and more economically energised city, for businesses and residents alike, and asked the Cabinet to be consistent with their narrative.

John Chapman addressed the Cabinet by expressing his concerns regarding Blue Badge parking spaces in the city centre and also access for wheelchair users in respect of the City Centre Security report that would be presented to the Cabinet on 23rd June 2021.

Cllr Jess David read out a *statement [a copy of which is attached to the Minutes as Appendix 2 and on the Council's website]* where she asked the Council to revisit its way of managing weeds, in particular usage of weed killers and when the Council cut grass verges and green spaces.

Bob Goodman read out a *statement [a copy of which is attached to the Minutes as Appendix 3 and on the Council's website]* where he expressed his views about the state of the Council and environmental issues in the area.

7 QUESTIONS FROM PUBLIC AND COUNCILLORS

There were 20 questions from Councillors and 1 question from members of the public.

[Copies of the questions and responses, including supplementary questions and responses if any, have been placed on the Minute book as Appendix 4 and are available on the Council's website.]

8 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS CABINET MEETING

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 11th February 2021 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

9 CONSIDERATION OF SINGLE MEMBER ITEMS REQUISITIONED TO CABINET

There were none.

10 MATTERS REFERRED BY POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY BODIES

There were none.

11 SINGLE MEMBER CABINET DECISIONS TAKEN SINCE PREVIOUS CABINET MEETING

The Cabinet agreed to note the report.

12 HERITAGE SERVICES REVISED BUSINESS PLAN

Councillor Richard Samuel introduced the report by saying that it was a very difficult year for Heritage Services. Tourism has largely collapsed in many parts of the

country and has affected almost every Council. Some of the Heritage Services staff members had to be furloughed for some time, whilst others had been redeployed in helping with food parcels and at the vaccination site at the Pavilion. In so many ways the health of the Council's finances are impacted by the Heritage Services; Roman Baths had over 1 million visitors before the pandemic and other sites, like Victoria Art Gallery, had also contributed to the Council's finances. This report is about looking forward and how the Heritage Services could return to a normal level of operation. The plan details the whole concept of proper business planning, looking ahead at the investment and numbers of visitors to Council's sites. In terms of the Fashion Museum – the National Trust was always likely to exercise its option to break the lease that the Council held for the Assembly Rooms. Therefore, a new site for the Fashion Museum would need to be acquired by March 2023. Councillor Samuel expressed his hope that a tangible proposal for a new site for the Fashion Museum would be an improvement in comparison to the current location.

Councillor Richard Samuel moved the recommendations.

Councillor Dine Romero seconded the motion by saying that Heritage Services, in normal times, have been the bedrock of the Council's finances. Heritage Services provided the lifeblood for the services this Council provides, especially for the most vulnerable in our community. Due to lockdown, the sudden loss of visitors has hit the area's economy hard during the last 15 months. Councillor Romero also said that she would be looking forward to a new location for the Fashion Museum within the city, and that she would be working closely with Councillor Samuel on this matter.

The rest of the Cabinet recognised the difficult 15 months that Heritage Services endured during the pandemic and lockdown, the importance of the location for the new venue for Fashion Museum, and the aim of the proposed Heritage Services Business Plan.

RESOLVED (unanimously) that the Cabinet agreed to:

- 1) Approve the Heritage Services Business Plan 2021-2026;
- 2) Confirm that it wishes Heritage Services to continue to work to the business principles agreed by the Council Executive in 2004, as amended;
- 3) Confirm that it wishes to relocate the Fashion Museum with a supporting Collections Centre subject to a satisfactory business case being prepared.

13 MODERN SLAVERY

Councillor Richard Samuel introduced the report by saying that there were still exploitation of people taking place in our society, in all places at all times, and that the Modern Slavery Act that was passed in 2015 was an attempt to try and shift the debate towards a position where this was unacceptable in the UK and our society. The Council has a small but important part to play in that role, and the Cabinet has been asked to sign up a statement that was attached to the report, which was about highlighting Council's commitment to tackling issues. The Council, as a big public service provider in Bath and East Somerset was trying to create an environment where Council officers, who were involved in Council procurement, begin to exercise the economic power that the Council has as a procurer of services, to drive out slavery in the supply chains that provide services to the Council. The Council's commitment would be to carry out research on the high-risk supply chain areas identified and draw up a plan on how to engage with key suppliers to find out what

they were currently doing to eliminate Modern Slavery in their sub-contracts. The Council would also consider how due diligence can be continued throughout the contract as part of good contract management and not just as part of a tender process. A process of auditing of supplier contracts would be developed.

Councillor Richard Samuel moved the recommendations.

Councillor Alison Born seconded the motion by welcoming the report and the statement.

Councillor Dine Romero welcomed the report and added that not so long ago she chaired a well-attended webinar about modern slavery, which included police representatives. Some people were not aware that modern slavery was happening on our doorsteps and Bath and North East Somerset Council would continue to fight against it. Councillor Romero invited everyone to contact the Council straight away if they had any concerns on this matter.

RESOLVED (unanimously) that the Cabinet agreed to:

Sign off and publication of the Council's Modern Slavery Statement 2021/2022 by the Leader of the Council and Chief Executive and publication in a prominent location on the Council's Website.

14 CORPORATE STRATEGY AND COVID RESPONSE UPDATE

Councillor Richard Samuel introduced the report by saying that this document should have appeared at the end of each year of the current administration. This report covered a two-year period due to the pandemic. Councillor Samuel added that he hoped that this report would be presented to the Cabinet again next year and at the end of this administration's term to summaries what was achieved corporately by the Council over the four-year period. This was quite a comprehensive report covering what has been done in such difficult circumstances, over the last 18 months. The Council has gone through an enormous amount of change in the last two years including a completely new senior management team.

The general public health response to COVID, had consumed a lot of time and energy and corporate capacity over the last year, and this was a priority for this Council.

Nevertheless, all of this has been achieved within the budgets that the Council set. Despite the massive hits, and cuts that the Council had to make in year two of the budget, and despite the government's underfunding of lost income, the Council did not find itself in a position like Luton Council, which relies very heavily on income from Luton Airport, because the government didn't meet the full cost.

Councillor Samuel concluded his introduction of the report by thanking the Council staff on behalf of the Cabinet

Councillor Richard Samuel moved the recommendations.

Councillor David Wood seconded the motion by saying that the report has shown how much had been achieved in two years despite adverse circumstances, but also showed how much could be done in the next two years. Councillor Wood drew attention to environmental issues in Northeast Somerset which have been taken forward, particularly in planning a new recycling centre in Keynsham. litter picking

blitz on the A roads and B roads of Northeast Somerset, and Council's commitment on fly tipping.

Councillor Tim Ball also welcomed the report and thanked the Council staff for the great work done during the pandemic. Councillor Ball added that it looked like business was going back to normal, and this administration would continue delivering its priorities despite the negative impact from the pandemic.

Councillor Sarah Warren also welcomed the report and highlighted that, despite the pandemic, the Council have continued to act on the climate emergency. The Council had conducted a range of webinars on this matter. The Clean Air Zone had started on 15th March this year, the first in the country outside London. The Council had also secured funding for redeveloping energy efficient homes, developed partnerships with local organisations around ecological emergency and worked with key local businesses on a more localised economy.

Councillor Dine Romero also welcomed the report by saying that funding for free school meals (FSM) has been secured for FSM provision during summer holidays. Councillor Romero said that she was immensely proud of the Council on delivering services to the residents during the pandemic.

RESOLVED (unanimously) that the Cabinet agreed to note the progress on the delivery of the Corporate Strategy and the Council's response to COVID-19 during 2020/21, the details of which are highlighted in the report.

The meeting ended at 7.50 pm

Chair _____

Date Confirmed and Signed _____

Prepared by Democratic Services

Malcolm Baldwin statement at Cabinet on 20 May 2021

I just this evening would like to make a few comments in respect of the Council's approach to "Low Traffic Neighbourhoods" (LTNs).....I emphasise not criticisms, merely comments.

LTNs have created concerns for some but certainly aspirations for many, both for individuals and for a number of residents associations of which CARA my own association is one.

LTNs and their effective implementation will be a reflection of the positive aspirations for a cleaner, healthier and more economically energised city, for businesses and residents alike! Sensitively implemented and effectively monitored, the mandate you have and the enthusiasm you have created amongst many should now not be wasted.

In launching the prospect of LTNs, you have certainly created considerable enthusiasm and aspirations. My message tonight to a newly restructured Cabinet is: let's, please, get on with it, albeit within the 'constraints' of normal consultation processes.

You have the mandatedon't let others convince you otherwise and stay consistent to the 'narrative'!

A number of RAs, enthused by the aims and content of your "Liveable Neighbourhoods Strategy" have invested much time, thought and effort into their LTN proposalslet's not let it be wasted!

Using CARA, my own RA as an example, we consulted approximately 960 households within our catchment area and did so on a detailed basis, with a result of circa 80% being in favour of our concept. We gained support from a number of neighbouring residents associations and yes some concerns expressed from others concerns that are probably reflected in respect of all other LTN proposals for our city.

A number of LTN proposals, I suspect, can add real value to our city. Again, but only as an example, CARA's LTN concept represents 'low hanging fruit' with the enhancements it would bring to a key heritage location and the economic benefits attached to that for our city and local businesses.

A less well recognised social and 'housing' diversity across our catchment area would also be much enhanced by our LTN concept and has much support across our household profile. This is emphatically not the so-called 'posh' end of town - it is socially diverse - worthy of attention!

Our city needs one or two 'inaugural' LTNs, one perhaps simple and one more complex, to validate the strategy and add maximum valuesocially, economically and environmentally.

The Low Traffic Neighbourhood 'genie' is well and truly out of the bottle you've more than wetted our appetites you have raised our aspirations for our city! Great! Fantastic! Now let's act on that vision. Don't get wobbly! Let's all be brave! Try to satisfy everyone and you risk satisfying no one! After all, as residents or as politicians if we were given necks, we were surely meant to stick them out occasionally.

Malcolm Baldwin.

Thank you

I would like to make a short statement about the council's approach to managing weeds, both in our parks and green spaces and on our pavements and roadsides.

There is a growing movement to change the perception of pavement plants as being 'more than weeds' – recognising that all plants are important to biodiversity and wildlife. Meanwhile, others see street weeds as a sign of neglect in their local area, and I know we receive complaints from residents if these are not dealt with.

I would like to ask today that we revisit the way we manage weeds in BNES in two ways.

Firstly, in terms of our approach to the use of weed killer. I welcome the steps that this council has already made to reduce the use of the herbicide glyphosate, including phasing it out in the regular maintenance of parks and green spaces. The council has also reduced its use in street cleansing to one annual spray.

However, many of our residents, and some parish councils, continue to have concerns about any use of glyphosate and its direct and indirect effects on the local environment. By killing all weed and wildflowers, it destroys habitats and food supplies for insects and butterflies. It is also water soluble and potentially harmful to aquatic environments as well as soil health.

Many other local authorities are acting. The Pesticides Action Network says at least 40 UK local authorities have so far stopped its use altogether or in part. Please can revisit this issue and commit to a timetable for phasing out the use of glyphosate in our operations?

I recognise that many people feel strongly about a clean urban environment with no weeds and grass and that weeds on the pavement and highway can cause damage. There probably isn't a magic alternative around the corner, and so this will mean manual and mechanical clearance.

The second issue I would like to address is when we cut our grass verges and green spaces. I welcome the steps that the council has made to publicise our grass mowing regime, and to reduce mowing as part of the let's get buzzing initiative which is aimed at encouraging pollinators. Today I visited the river banks at Saltford ,which from this year, will not be mown at all, allowing long grasses and wildflowers to thrive.

Can we also go further and look at delaying when we mow, taking inspiration from Plantlife's **No Mow May** campaign. Leaving some areas to grow for longer will give more plants the chance to flower and spread, supporting greater diversity of plants and flowers, and the insects, butterflies and birds that rely on them for food.

I appreciate these asks will come with a financial cost, as well as a change in how our streets and green spaces look. I am encouraged by several emails from residents this Spring, who all want to see us do more to support local biodiversity. I believe that these are important steps that we can take in our operational role to act on the ecological emergency in BNES.

This page is intentionally left blank

Bob Goodman statement 20 May 2021 Cabinet

The State of the Council and other Environmental Issues

It is immensely difficult for me to know where to start to highlight the appalling way this Administration is treating the residents of this great City.

I suppose I have to start with the Ecological Emergency . When Cllr Guy spoke at Full council at his election as leader he declared that the Tufa Field planning permission would be shelved. I like others had assumed that the field was saved for all time.How wrong were we.

Then we heard Cllrs indicating that the decision by his predecessor to look at a smaller development was still being considered- with talk of upto 10 houses.THIS IS A BETRAYAL OF THE RESIDENTS AND MORE IMPORTANTLY THIS SPECIAL ECOLOGICAL SITE.

This has now been confirmed in a reply to a Cabinet Question by Cllr Samuel in which he say .. a smaller impact that will provide social benefit...well Cllr Samuel clearly you do not care about the damage to the Environment.

Will the New Leader Now put on record that No building development will take place on Tufa Field so that it can be saved for the future Generation of our WildLife and our planet.

THE RESIDENTS OF BATH WANT THE TRUTH.

But even more disappointing was that whilst in my professional capacity as a Chartered Surveyor only last week that I received from a Client a copy of an email from this Council concerning purchasing a 10ft strip of land adjoining the house she was looking to purchase at the top of Perrymead.

The contents were most disturbing... and I quote.. “the land is held for strategic reasons in that it might be key to facilitating the future development of the larger area of land” by the way it does men housing dev if you are in any doubt.

This piece of land I suspect is of a greater Ecological Importance than even Tufa Field, I know as I’ve been bird watching there on numerous occasions

For Officers to believe this Land could be developed for housing is beyond comprehension. When the residents of Perrymead, Foxhill and Mulberry Park find out that this precious green space is going to be destroyed by this Council.. well the council will have to take the consequences.

Do this Cabinet know that officers are actively looking at these types of sites, then if they do they are showing scant regard to the Ecological Emergency which has been declared. If they don't then who is running this Council.. it clearly not this CABINET.

It is obvious to those who care about the Environment that the Ecological Emergency which was passed by this Council is being paid nothing more than lip service

by this Administration and there has clearly been no change with the new Leadership.

CABINET MEETING 20th May 2021

STATEMENTS FROM PUBLIC AND COUNCILLORS

1. Malcolm Baldwin – Parking Issues
2. John Chapman – Disable parking
3. Cllr Jess David – Weed control
4. Bob Goodman – Environmental matters and the city of Bath

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS - COUNCILLORS

M	01	Question from:	Councillor Karen Walker
<p>In response to the pandemic, the Bath Christmas market was cancelled in 2020.</p> <p>Many residents, shop owners and visitors have commented on social media both for and against having the market in Bath.</p> <p>The Christmas market was first seen on the streets of Bath in 2000 and has been a great success over the last 20 years, bringing in visitors from a wide variety of towns and cities.</p> <p>To achieve a happy medium, could the Christmas Market be permanently moved to The Royal Avenue, Royal Victoria Park?</p> <p>There is plenty of space for stalls to set up in safe, socially distanced way. Chalets can be situated on the very wide pavements.</p> <p>I am keen for locals and visitors to experience The Christmas market at its best, especially with The Ice Rink also situated on The Royal Avenue, the addition of a fairground to the Park would also bring the magic of Christmas back to Bath for all to use.</p> <p>The Royal Avenue Victoria Park is located close to Charlotte Street carpark and to a drop off point for coaches. The Royal Avenue is only a short walk into the city centre for those who wish to use facilities such as the shops and restaurants.</p> <p>Please could you consider my request to re-locate the Christmas Market to the Royal Avenue, Royal Victoria Park?</p>			
Answer from:			Councillor Kevin Guy
<p><i>Plans for Bath Christmas Market 2021 will be presented in a Report to Cabinet on 23 June 2021, which will outline the recommendations for approval.</i></p>			

M	02	Question from:	Councillor Colin Blackburn
<p>Could the Cabinet Member please tell me how much the costs were that were awarded against us in the Locksbrook Rd and Olly Barkley planning cases that were both lost at appeal?</p>			
Answer from:			Councillor Tim Ball
<p><i>Olly Barkley is related to 31 Third Avenue, Bath and costs were paid in the sum of £3,807.</i></p> <p><i>With regards to Locksbrook Road, this relates to application 18/05047/FUL which was allowed on appeal, but it does not appear that costs were awarded.</i></p>			
M	03	Question from:	Councillor Colin Blackburn
<p>We will every year have planning appeal applications. Inevitably sometimes we will lose these cases. Could the Cabinet Member tell me where have we allocated a provision of planning costs against us in 21/22 budget?</p>			
Answer from:			Councillor Tim Ball
<p><i>The Planning Service has a budget of £40,000 for 2021/22 for dealing with appeals and their associated legal costs, which includes provision for costs awarded against the Council.</i></p>			
M	04	Question from:	Councillor Robin Moss
<p>The Government has announced an additional £17M in funding for mental health services in schools & colleges. While this welcome, a substantial proportion of young people who would benefit from support have opted out of school or college. In addition the confidentiality & independence essential for such a service may be compromised by being provided 'in house'.</p>			

There are independent services that exist, such as 'Off the Record' & 'One CT Keynsham' that provide counselling & mental health support services outside of the educational ring fence but may not be eligible for this funding.

Will the Cabinet Member:

- (1) Write to central government to advocate for the independent sector to be included in the eligibility criteria for this money?
- (2) Outline what support B&NES will provide for our own local independent mental health support services for young people?

I declare an interest as an unpaid trustee of 'One CT Keynsham', I also have professional experience in this field as I used to manage an advice & counselling service for young people.

Answer from:

Councillor Dine Romero

(1) Write to central government to advocate for the independent sector to be included in the eligibility criteria for this money?

The criteria for this funding has been set out by central government .

The £17 million announcement (<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/schools-and-colleges-to-benefit-from-boost-in-expert-mental-health-support>) is specifically for the following:

- *7 million - Extending the Wellbeing Education Return programme that Local Authorities were funded to deliver September 2020 to March 2021. In B&NES, we have offered our provision to any school and some independent schools have taken it up.*
- *9.5 million to fund new Senior Mental Health Lead training. The funding for this only covers state schools. An*

independent organisation could submit a plan to deliver this training. The relevant link is: [Establishing high quality training provision for senior mental health leads in schools and colleges - Contracts Finder](#) . In B&NES the independent sector are supported to be actively involved in the Voluntary Sector Network (VCS) and this network are represented on the multi-agency emotional health and wellbeing sub- group.

- *Link programme to improve partnership. The aim remains the same: to bring together local leaders in education and mental health to identify the support required by children and young people in your area, so they get the help they need, when they need it.*
- *A Schools Wellbeing Charter. This is a National Charter and awaiting further national guidance.*
- *A roundtable to support the adoption of suicide safer universities*

The £17 million is intended to up-skill staff in schools to support children and young people at universal level.

(2) Outline what support B&NES will provide for our own local independent mental health support services for young people?

In Bath & North East Somerset we used our previous funding to:

- *Deliver the national Anna Freud training (we commissioned Oxford Health to do this)*
- *Fund a series of themed network meetings responsive to issues schools raised – led by Public Health and Education Psychology service*
- *Offered a free and confidential helpline appointment-based support service for schools wanting to talk about individual children’s concerns – staffed by the Education Psychology service.*

This model was agreed by the multi-agency emotional health and wellbeing sub-group, to include public health colleagues, CAMHS, educational psychology, college and the VCS network. This group is a sub-group of the Children and Young People’s

Subgroup (CYPP) which is a sub-group of the Health and Wellbeing Board.

As much was delivered by the Council, we have been able to extend the offer from March 2021 until the end of this academic year.

Now we know there is additional funding we will review our offer and consider how we deliver ongoing support that meets the needs of schools.

Our current local plans regarding the £17 million fund are as follows:

- 7 million - Extending the Wellbeing Education Return programme that Local Authorities were funded to deliver September 2020 to March 2021*

All schools are encouraged to appoint a Senior Mental Health lead who can help them take a whole school approach to supporting children and young people's mental health and to support staff in understanding emotional health and wellbeing issues that impact on pupils.

The Department for Education has sent out a request for expressions of interest to deliver this. As yet the details are not confirmed but we know that courses will be quality assessed by the Department for Education in the summer with a view to running in late September.

Schools will be given a portion of the money which they can use to buy-in support from a directory of quality assured trainers.

Public Health colleagues have registered interest in becoming quality assured to deliver this training across our schools. The option to put in a course proposal is open to 3rd sector groups.

- Link programme to improve partnership*

This programme is led by B&NES, Swindon and Wiltshire Clinical Commissioning Group. We are expecting information

regarding the revised programme shortly.

M 05

Question from:

Councillor Liz Hardman

With the half term holiday just over 2 weeks away, have any plans been put in place to ensure those children in receipt of Free School Meals (FSM) will receive FSM vouchers or FSMs during the holiday period?

Answer from:

Councillor Dine Romero

The council has agreed to provide FSM vouchers to pupils entitled to FSM by benefit during the May/June half term week.

The Lead Member has prioritised access to FSM and has released a press statement to that effect on 18.05.2021.

The voucher system will be the same as it has been during the previous holiday periods, so it will provide continuity to parents who have used this before.

The voucher value will be £20 per pupil.

The schools have been advised that the scheme will be operational, but further communication will be required to specify the exact dates and details of when parents will receive vouchers and when new applicants can apply. Officers will be providing this information shortly.

M 06

Question from:

Councillor Paul May

Now WECA has a new Mayor and BANES has a new Council Leader, will you commit to work with the new WECA Mayor to protect all of the green belt in our area?

Answer from:

Councillor Kevin Guy

<i>I look forward to working closely with the new WECA Mayor on all functions which are relevant to the Bath and North East Somerset Council area.</i>		
M	07	Question from: Councillor Paul May
Will you use your power to ensure that WECA consults on the SDS the same way that BANES has committed to consult on its new Local Plan?		
Answer from:		Councillor Kevin Guy
<i>In light of the Council's commitment to ensuring its residents and communities have a say in the decisions that affect them, we will stress to WECA the importance of engaging with our residents on the SDS whilst it is at a formative stage and in line with our Community Engagement Charter. In any event, we are committed to ensure that our residents will continue to be engaged as both the SDS and our own local plan progress.</i>		
M	08	Question from: Councillor Paul May
Many small rural parishes in North East Somerset have to fund grass area maintenance and upkeep from their precept yet see press releases committing BANES to spending capital sums on similar areas in Bath City. Will you undertake a survey or audit to establish the needs of communities across BANES to prepare a fair future programme?		
Answer from:		Councillor David Wood
<i>We do not spend capital sums on grass cutting.</i> <i>We do undertake cross cutting across the whole of B&NES and work with Parish Councils to understand local needs. We have had various requests from rural areas to cut grass less frequently in specific places to support biodiversity.</i>		

We will write to all Parish Councils to understand better if there are any areas of grass cutting they have concerns about.

M 09

Question from:

Councillor Paul May

Are you going to keep the mobile library service going during your administration?

Answer from:

Councillor Dine Romero

The mobile library continues to be an important and accessible service in our communities to enable our residents to access library services as well as our council and partner services online.

In line with the Government's advice it has not been possible to operate the mobile library service during most of the last year but instead we arranged a modified Covid-safe home library service to support our communities.

We are pleased to announce that the mobile library service was reinstated on 20 April 2021 using a revised route and from 21 June it will be back to its full operation.

M 10

Question from:

Councillor Paul May

Having been supported by the conservatives in declaring an ecological emergency can you outline how this will be implemented by the council officers in the next twelve months?

Answer from:

Councillor Sarah Warren

Considerable action is underway in Bath & North East Somerset, building on our long and strong history of work on biodiversity, landscape and ecology locally and within the West of England. As I reported to Council in January, officers conducted an urgent review of work across services and have been working hard to deliver on the commitments made since then. Officers are now developing the action plan for next two years. This will be reported in more detail to Council in the joint annual climate and

ecological emergency report in the autumn.

The next year will include, but will not be limited to:

- *Completion of the development of strengthened planning policies within the Local Plan Partial Review, including biodiversity net gain, natural environment and green infrastructure policy and guidance;*
- *Work to implement West of England Joint Green Infrastructure Strategy;*
- *Implementation of ecological emergency and biodiversity net gain awareness training for key staff to further enable delivery;*
- *Implementation of the B&NES Tree & Woodland Delivery Plan in pursuit of the target to plant 100,000 trees by May 2023;*
- *A wide-ranging programme of community engagement to support further action on the ground across the community;*
- *Continued delivery of the Pollinator Strategy to identify locations for reduction of cutting of grass, shrubs and hedges to increase biodiversity and food for pollinating insects;*
- *The development of Bath and North East Somerset partnership working to bring together key local stakeholders and groups to provide leadership and wider action planning and delivery.*

M

11

Question from:

Councillor Paul May

Your long term commitment to young people is recognised and supported. Can you confirm how many schools are now Academies and how many are in multi-academy trusts? The answer reinforces the need for the Council to be the voice of parents and pupils with special reference to closing the educational gap post pandemic. Will you be prepared to outline to the Scrutiny Committee how this can be achieved?

Answer from:

Councillor Dine Romero

All schools in B&NES are academies apart from one secondary school and six primary schools. The council remains committed

to supporting those schools that wish to stay maintained.

All academy schools in B&NES, apart from 3 standalone academies, are part of a multi-academy trust.

The council remains committed to working alongside partners to improve the attainment gap for disadvantaged pupils in B&NES. Several pieces of joint work to address this are being implemented in B&NES. Officers will present a scrutiny paper to PDS to provide a fuller briefing on these projects. As a cabinet member, I will be working alongside partners to support these projects and attend the Schools Standards Board to champion this work area. As Lead Member I will always speak up for parents and pupils.

M	12	Question from:	Councillor Paul May
----------	-----------	-----------------------	---------------------

Will you continue the commitment to creating an educational/skills role within the former Culverhay site?

Answer from:	Councillor Dine Romero
---------------------	------------------------

The council remains committed to delivering education provision at the Culverhay site. Following consultation, the council has established education preferences for the site. Council officers are working with Learn@MAT to develop a bespoke building to house a permanent Alternative Provision School on the site.

Alongside this, officers and I will be holding meetings with partners and stakeholders to look at options for a provision that offers a vocational curriculum through into college.

M	13	Question from:	Councillor Paul May
----------	-----------	-----------------------	---------------------

Your predecessor bravely changed the south Bristol link road into a transport corridor. Will you meet the communities of South Bristol to understand the anxiety and ecological impact of building a two-mile road through green belt fields has been causing?

Answer from:	Councillor Sarah Warren
---------------------	-------------------------

<i>I am always happy to meet with residents to hear of issues of concern to them.</i>		
M	14	Question from: Councillor Paul May
On the edge of a big city like Bristol, rat runs and indiscriminate parking are a nightmare for some communities. Will you review the proposal submitted by me on behalf of my two Parishes, Whitchurch village and Pensford, for priority changes within the former Liveable neighbourhood scheme?		
Answer from:		Councillor Sarah Warren
<i>Following the invitation for ward Members to submit applications for Liveable Neighbourhoods in three tranches, 39 applications were received in February 2021, with a further 7 applications received in May 2021. The February applications have been reviewed and subjected to a prioritisation process and this work is ongoing for the applications received in May. The results of the prioritisation process will be considered at the June Cabinet meeting.</i>		
M	15	Question from: Councillor Vic Pritchard
Following your correct decision to scrap the pursuit of planning consent on the behalf of ADL, the Council's arm length development company, together with a commitment for the land to remain in Council ownership and not sold to avaricious developers, do you personally consider ADL to be an avaricious developer?		
Answer from:		Councillor Richard Samuel
<i>The proposal to set up a local authority wholly owned company to develop, deliver, own and manage property as well as new development on a case by case basis, was put forward and approved by the Cabinet on 2 December 2015.</i>		
<i>This Cabinet has continued to support the objectives that are captured in the legal agreements for the company, the objectives</i>		

recognise the potential financial impact, housing supply, affordable housing provision, sustainability and market differentiation of the company to enable and contribute to the delivery of the Council's strategic vision.

The Council continues to work with ADL but in relation to the Englishcombe Lane site a decision has been made not to implement the planning consent for the site submitted by the last administration and instead examine options for a smaller lower impact development that provide social benefit.

M 16

Question from:

Councillor Vic Pritchard

In her promotion of e-scooters, Joanna Wright, the former Cabinet Member for Transport, stated that e-scooters would form the first and last miles of a journey. In the fight against obesity, does the new Member for Health & Wellbeing accept this as a commendable approach?

Answer from:

Councillor Dine Romero

First and foremost, the Council prioritises active travel to meet a wide range of policy objectives, including tackling obesity through increasing levels of physical activity as part of promoting a healthy environment. However, car use for short journeys remains stubbornly high, so we must be innovative in our approach and offer a range of solutions to meet people's travel needs. The e-scooter trial offers the opportunity to test and evaluate if e-scooters can make a positive contribution to the transport mix in Bath, where topography is regularly offered as a reason not to adopt active travel habits. On street rental scooters support increased walking levels by enabling longer journeys that walking alone would be prohibitive for, without defaulting to car use. Voi, the e-scooter operator in Bath, conducted an in-app survey in March-April 2021 of their UK users (using a question flashing up immediately after a ride had finished), which revealed that over 20% of e-scooter trips replaced car use. There is also some anecdotal evidence seen on social media from individuals who have limited mobility but who have benefitted from the B&NES e-scooter trial to become more mobile. Data collected from the trial will enable the Department for Transport to decide if e-scooters should be legalised for general use, including private e-scooters.

In terms of specific link to addressing obesity, as yet there is little robust evidence about e-scooter use as this is such a new transport mode. It is also important to note the need for an integrated systems approach to obesity prevention considering the

importance of calorie intake as the main driver of weight gain, rather than less physical activity. There are a number of measures we are taking to encourage people to maintain a healthy weight including through provision of community-based weight management programmes which incorporate healthy eating as well as encouraging physical activity. As part of this whole systems work there is evidence that the quality of the local environment is a contributing factor to excess calorie consumption and inactive lifestyles. Local authorities are in a unique position to promote a healthy weight environment through encouraging physical activity in daily lives, enabling active travel as well as helping people access and choose healthier food options on our high streets. For most people, the easiest and most acceptable forms of physical activity are those that can be incorporated into everyday life, such as walking or cycling, and e-scooters may play a role in helping to facilitate this. Switching more journeys to active travel has benefits for the environment and the local economy, while at the same time having substantial mental and physical health benefits.

M	17	Question from:	Councillor Grant Johnson
----------	-----------	-----------------------	--------------------------

What monitoring is taking place to assess the impact on air quality of traffic displaced by the CAZ on areas outside the zone?

When the CAZ was originally proposed it was suggested that distribution hubs would fulfil the last mile for delivery to businesses within the zone. How many hubs have been established?

Answer from:	Councillor Sarah Warren
---------------------	-------------------------

What monitoring is taking place to assess the impact on air quality of traffic displaced by the CAZ on areas outside the zone?

The Council has an extensive network of air quality diffusion tube monitors which have been placed in locations to monitor the impact of the CAZ, both inside and outside of the boundary. A map showing these locations can be found at this [link](#)

The Council is committed to publishing results of air quality monitoring on a quarterly basis and the report relating to the first 3 months of the CAZ will be published in late Summer.

When the CAZ was originally proposed it was suggested that distribution hubs would fulfil the last mile for delivery to businesses within the zone. How many hubs have been established?

The Council has been awarded £800k by central government in April 2021 to develop and implement an Expanded Only Mile Delivery (OMD) service in Bath, comprising:

- Purchase of 6 new cargo bikes to undertake distribution and delivery activities in line with Only Mile Delivery principles.*
- Installation of a locker station to act as central consolidation hub.*
- Ongoing locker and E-Cargo bike maintenance for up to three years, to ensure core activities are fully funded in nascent stage of scheme establishment.*
- Supporting infrastructure encompassing office and communications equipment (including software).*
- Delivery charge subsidy for eligible businesses for two years, to ease transition for eligible businesses away from current delivery practices (i.e. non-compliant LGV use) to E-Cargo bike distribution practices*

In addition there will be support for the continuation of the Last Mile Delivery pilot scheme for a further year, recognising the impact of Covid-19 on the pilot scheme's inaugural year of operation, and focusing on expanding its usage by local rather than national businesses. This will also enable an additional distribution hub to be added. The project is now in the initiation phase and progress updates will be made available.

Supplementary Question:

How does the cabinet member think residents will interpret the spending of £800,000 on six bikes and a locker in Bath and do you think this will genuinely support businesses?

Answer from:	Councillor Sarah Warren	
<i>I will give you an answer in 5 working days from today.</i>		
M	18	Question from:
		Councillor Grant Johnson
<p>Since launching an online consultation asking for residents' feedback on the new recycling centre charges, I have been overwhelmed with negative responses to the proposal. Former Lib Dem councillor, Dave Dixon (himself an ex member of the B&NES Cabinet), has stated that the advice he received as Cabinet member was "any service reduction or increased charges at the household waste and recycling centres WILL result in increased fly tipping". He goes on to ask "Has Cllr Dave Wood ignored this or has the advice magically changed?"</p> <p>These charges have generated huge anger amongst residents who fear that their areas will be blighted by fly tipping and who object to paying extra for a basic service when they have already had increases to their Council Tax. I therefore repeat Dave Dixon's question and ask:</p> <p>Has the advice that increased charges at waste and recycling centres will result in increased fly tipping been ignored, or has it changed?</p> <p>Will you acknowledge that you were wrong to introduce these charges and will you now take action to withdraw them?</p>		
Answer from:	Councillor David Wood	
<i>An answer will be provided within 5 clear working days after the meeting.</i>		
Supplementary Question:		

The Leader of the Council said earlier that charges for waste would be confusing for residents. But I think that doesn't mean justice. Does this Cabinet agree that they need to start thinking of residents first before blaming their (residents) ability to follow your half-baked ideas?

Answer from:

Councillor David Wood

Thank you very much for question. The Council is willing to change its mind based on new evidence. I have not seen any evidence that the decision that was made was the wrong decision to make, in light of the financial context that we found ourselves in at the time, however circumstances have very clearly changed since that took place. And the idea of bringing charges, which now becomes clear, may will be reversed off the back of a government consultation will be extremely confusing for all concerned. So, it is absolutely the right thing to do to both respond to the circumstances, and to make it very clear that we listen to residents when they speak to us with a very strong voice.

M 19

Question from:

Councillor Robin Moss

It is reported nationally that businesses providing residential social care are struggling. ADASS warned of the risk of 'catastrophic failure' of the service, LGIU reports of 13.4.21, 23.3.21 et al paint a similarly gloomy picture.

The additional cost of providing PPE during the pandemic, occupancy being lower than business model planned levels & problems with recruitment & retention, all this in the backdrop where action by central government on funding & payment has been promised for a number of years, but has never materialised.

In light of these reports, what discussions are taking place with local residential suppliers in B&NES about their situation and if any support is needed.

Are you confident that there are adequate safeguards & services in place to support vulnerable residents who use these services?

Answer from:		Councillor Alison Born
<p><i>The messages coming out of ADASS and LGIU are pressing issues locally in our care homes and across the South West. Unfortunately, the pandemic has been particularly traumatic for care homes. Leading to lower occupancy in care homes, recruitment challenges and high levels of stress and weariness amongst the staff and a very worrying and isolating year for residents.</i></p> <p><i>This is leading to new people needing care looking towards home care placements over care homes. In part this is not an unwelcome change as we are at all times seeking to find ways to support people in their own homes for longer. This supports independence and reduces funding pressures for both the LA and the individual where an individual is self-funding. However, it has led to higher levels of vacancies in care homes than would normally be experienced.</i></p> <p><i>Since May 2020, central government has provided a range of financial and other assistance to Local Authorities to support Adult Social Care providers of both care homes and home care.</i></p> <p><i>This funding has for the greater majority gone directly to providers alongside a small central fund which the LA has coordinated through a Covid plan with multi-agency partners to fund a B&NES wide recruitment programme, third sector support to the wellbeing and mental health of staff and residents and funding for deep clean processes.</i></p>		
M	20	Question from:
		Councillor Robin Moss
<p>Please can you provide a figures for reported incidents of fly-tipping over the last 12 months.</p> <p>Can these be broken down into monthly stats, Bath separately from NE Somerset?</p>		

In addition, you are quoted as saying that the evidence is that an increase or imposition of charging at recycling centres does not necessarily lead to an increase in fly-tipping. Please can you reference this evidence.

Answer from:

Councillor David Wood

Reported incidents of fly incidents in the last 12 months. We were not able to separate them between Bath & NE Somerset.

<i>From 17/05/2020 - 16/05/2021</i>	
<i>Month</i>	<i>number of fly tipping incidents reported</i>
<i>May-20*</i>	<i>137</i>
<i>Jun-20</i>	<i>280</i>
<i>Jul-20</i>	<i>262</i>
<i>Aug-20</i>	<i>242</i>
<i>Sep-20</i>	<i>273</i>
<i>Oct-20</i>	<i>266</i>
<i>Nov-20</i>	<i>223</i>
<i>Dec-20</i>	<i>143</i>
<i>Jan-21</i>	<i>243</i>
<i>Feb-21</i>	<i>237</i>

**from 17/05/2020*

Mar-21	314
Apr-21	190
May-21*	100
Total	2910

* until
16/05/2021

Other Councils charge for these materials and have seen no discernible increase in flytipping directly attributable to the charges, including Dorset <https://news.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/2018/05/16/charges-at-the-dump-cause-fly-tipping-time-to-think-again/> and North Somerset who introduced charges in 2017, and whilst they did see an increase in flytipping incidents between 2016/17 and 2017/18, this cannot be directly linked to the introduction of charges, as the regional trend across the Southwest as a whole was an increase in fly tipping during the same period.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS - PUBLIC

P 01	Question from:	Chris Beezley
<p>The WECA Bath Active Travel Schemes spreadsheet claims that the need for the proposed North Road bus gate and cycle route to and from the University of Bath was “Identified through engagement with the University of Bath” and B&NES is reported to have claimed at the December meeting of its Active Travel and Accessibility Forum that “The University have been consulted and are supportive of the North Road route”.</p> <p>Both claims have been unequivocally denied by senior University management.</p> <p>Will B&NES therefore withdraw these misleading claims?</p>		
Answer from:		Councillor Sarah Warren
<p><i>An answer will be provided within 5 clear working days.</i></p>		

This page is intentionally left blank