

Thursday, 11th February, 2021

Present:

Councillor Dine Romero	Council Leader and Liberal Democrat Group Leader
Councillor Rob Appleyard	Cabinet Member for Adult Services
Councillor Tim Ball	Cabinet Member for Housing, Planning, and Economic Development
Councillor Neil Butters	Cabinet Member for Transport Services
Councillor Paul Crossley	Cabinet Member for Community Services
Councillor Kevin Guy	Cabinet Member for Children's Services
Councillor Richard Samuel	Deputy Council Leader and Cabinet Member for Resources
Councillor Sarah Warren	Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency and Neighbourhood Services
Councillor David Wood	Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency and Neighbourhood Services
Councillor Joanna Wright	Cabinet Member for Transport Services

82 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting by explaining that this meeting is being held under The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020. The Council has agreed a protocol to cover virtual meetings and this meeting will operate in line with that protocol. The meeting has the same status and validity as a meeting held in the Guildhall..

83 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

84 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Chair invited Michael Hewitt (Interim Monitoring Officer) to address the meeting at this point.

Michael Hewitt informed the meeting that he would issue a general dispensation on agenda item 14 (Budget & Council Tax 2021/22 and Financial Outlook) to all Councillors with regard to payment of Council Tax. Michael Hewitt has also issued an additional dispensation to all Councillors who were in receipt of Council services and invited Councillors to make any declaration of interest.

Councillor Tim Ball declared an other interest in item 14 as his grandson is in receipt of care package.

Councillor Sarah Warren declared an other interest in item 14 as a family member was undertaking an educational health care needs assessment.

Councillor Kevin Guy declared an other interest in item 14 as his family business was in a receipt of a government COVID business grant.

Councillor Joanna Wright declared an other interest in item 14 as a family member was in receipt of social care services.

85 TO ANNOUNCE ANY URGENT BUSINESS AGREED BY THE CHAIR

There was none.

86 QUESTIONS FROM PUBLIC AND COUNCILLORS

There were 13 questions from Councillors and no questions 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 1 and are available on the Council's website.]

87 STATEMENTS, DEPUTATIONS OR PETITIONS FROM PUBLIC OR COUNCILLORS

David Redgewell in a statement *[a copy of which is attached to the Minutes as Appendix 2 and on the Council's website]* addressed transport issues in the West of England area.

Kari Erickson in a statement *[a copy of which is attached to the Minutes as Appendix 3 and on the Council's website]* addressed the Cabinet about Bath City Centre High Street Renewal.

Councillor Paul Myers, in his capacity as the Chair of the Corporate PDS Panel, in a statement *[a copy of which is attached to the Minutes as Appendix 4 and on the Council's website]* presented the summary of findings from the three PDS Panels of the Council in terms of the Budget 21/22.

The Chair and Councillor Richard Samuel thanked Councillor Myers for the statement. Councillor Samuel invited Councillor Myers to discuss develop on improvements in the scrutiny process of the next budget planning.

Theresa Franklin in a statement *[a copy of which is attached to the Minutes as Appendix 5 and on the Council's website]* expressed her concerns related to

proposals to Approach Golf Course and asked the Cabinet to keep the Approach Golf Course open.

Martin Grixoni addressed the Cabinet by expressing his concerns related to the proposed Budget, in particular on some of the recent Cabinet and Single Member Decisions where he felt that may have negative impact on the city of Bath and the Council.

88 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS CABINET MEETING

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 10th December 2020 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

89 CONSIDERATION OF SINGLE MEMBER ITEMS REQUISITIONED TO CABINET

There were none.

90 MATTERS REFERRED BY POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY BODIES

Councillor Paul Myers (Chair of the Corporate Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel) addressed the Cabinet under agenda item 6 – Statements, Deputations or Petitions from Public and Councillors with summary of the PDS Panels comments on the proposed Budget 21/22.

91 SINGLE MEMBER CABINET DECISIONS TAKEN SINCE PREVIOUS CABINET MEETING

The Cabinet agreed to note the report.

92 DECISION ON AWARD OF A CONTRACT TO A NEW OPERATOR FOR THE APPROACH GOLF COURSE SITE FOLLOWING A PROCUREMENT PROCESS

Councillor Lucy Hodge addressed the Cabinet by saying that the Cabinet would be making a significant decision on Approach Golf Course. Councillor Hodge said that the Cabinet made a decision in July 2020 on Approach Golf Course indicating that the site would continue to operate as 18-hole golf course. However, the residents were very concerned that the decision on the new operator of the site was not consulted with the residents, and the residents had little warning on what was happening. Councillor Hodge invited the Cabinet not to ignore the petition of 4,000 signatures, asked the Cabinet to listen what the residents have to say at this meeting and put a pause on the decision for the time being. Councillor Hodge urged the Cabinet not to take the decision today.

Councillor Mark Elliott in a statement [*a copy of which is attached to the Minutes as Appendix 6 and on the Council's website*] invited the Cabinet to listen to the residents and turn down the bid on the Approach Golf Course.

Lynne Fernquest in a statement [*a copy of which is attached to the Minutes as Appendix 7 and on the Council's website*] said that Bath Rugby Foundation has been using this site for many years and their disabled students have received the greatest benefit from this affordable space, and it would be a huge blow to lose it.

Patricia Ludlam in a statement [*a copy of which is attached to the Minutes as Appendix 8 and on the Council's website*] urged the Cabinet not to award the contract yet but engage with local residents who have so much interest and help to offer.

Ben Reed in a statement [*a copy of which is attached to the Minutes as Appendix 9 and on the Council's website*] also urged the Cabinet to note the residents' concerns for the Approach Course that has been seen over recent weeks (with the petition of 4,000 plus signatures) and honour their commitment to retain golf on the site.

Peter Langley addressed the Cabinet by saying that his family has been in Bath for a long time, and that High Common has been one of the favourite sites for them. Peter Langley said that Council's planners and conservationists should be involved in the planning around this site, in particular on its use. Peter Langley also pointed out that the application has been made to Heritage England to have the High Commons listed. Peter Langley also urged the Cabinet not to make the decision today.

Sally Parkes in a statement [*a copy of which is attached to the Minutes as Appendix 10 and on the Council's website*] urged the Cabinet to listen to our local Ward Councillors, to listen the Bath residents' wishes, and keep status quo of the Approach Golf Site.

Justin Draeger in a statement [*a copy of which is attached to the Minutes as Appendix 11 and on the Council's website*] urged the Cabinet to reject the bid and pause its decision, consult with the residents and keep the status quo of the site until a proper public consultation is conducted.

Emilio Pimentel-Reid in a statement [*a copy of which is attached to the Minutes as Appendix 12 and on the Council's website*] invited the Cabinet to reject the bid and engage with the residents before making its final decision.

Lyn Jacobs in a statement [*a copy of which is attached to the Minutes as Appendix 13 and on the Council's website*] asked the Cabinet to reject the bid, consult and listen to local people, conduct research on the future of golf post pandemic, and keep low level maintenance until an equitable solution is reached.

Robert Sumner in a statement [*a copy of which is attached to the Minutes as Appendix 14 and on the Council's website*] urged the Cabinet to reject the only bid which has been made for the Approach Golf Course and to pause the whole process of finding a solution / operator for the Course, at least until the pandemic has come to an end.

Rachael Hushon in a statement [*a copy of which is attached to the Minutes as Appendix 15 and on the Council's website*] as a Chair of Lansdown Crescent Association asked the Cabinet to listen to Ward Councillors, pause and maintain the High Common in the current state by way of low level maintenance until Covid restrictions are lifted, and economic conditions become clearer, and do not rush the decision.

The Chair thanked all speakers who addressed the Cabinet on this matter. The Chair informed the meeting that the Cabinet has agreed to hold the debate in open/public session for this item. If any of the Cabinet Members were minded to refer to any information from exempt documents, then the Cabinet would move into exempt session.

Councillor Paul Crossley introduced the report by reading out the following statement:

'I want to start by thanking all the speakers and those who have written to me with their views on the future of the Approach golf course. Your passion and respect for the value of this area is evident.

Whilst the decision on the future of the High Common is delegated to the Cabinet Member, I have always made clear that this matter must be considered in an Open Cabinet meeting to enable public participation in the process.

This evening's Cabinet meeting is about whether or not a 'preferred bidder' is appointed. If one is appointed, they will be required to engage meaningfully with the Community before any final decision is made. So, as you can see, there will be public engagement, whatever the Cabinet decides today.

For those who are not familiar with the process, I want to explain that, to ensure a fair and legal process, the Council is not able to comment during a live procurement – which is the current position. If we had been allowed to comment, we could have corrected the false myths and misunderstandings of our intentions.

I would like to highlight a few points in relation to these:

- There has never been any intention to prevent public access to the Approach
- There has never been any intention to limit any other recreational activities enjoyed by those using this space.
- There has never been any intention of selling the Approach
- The only intention was to enhance this important part of the green infrastructure for the city for all residents and visitors and for the environment

The Council has run a robust procurement process to find a golf or golf derived operator for the site. We have sought bids that, as a minimum, maintain community access to the site, but with a view to securing an operator who would enhance the facilities. We have proactively engaged with golf companies.

This is the second time a procurement process has taken place for a viable golf solution at the Approach. This was done in 2015 and again in 2020.

Despite these proactive actions, no viable golf bid has been received.

We will later debate the Council's challenging Medium-Term Financial position. Discretionary services, such as leisure, must aim to deliver financially sustainable solutions. Golf at the Approach has required significant subsidy from the Council for some time now. Any outcome from today must be affordable, meet the Council's desired outcomes, as well as the needs of the Community.

I know my Cabinet colleagues have considered the Tender report. I would like to thank again the Community and Cabinet for the comments and contributions to the discussion.'

Councillor Paul Crossley moved the following recommendations:

- 1) That whilst the bid in the report is proceedable, the Cabinet are not satisfied that there are sufficient benefits to commit to a long-term solution and will not be appointing Company A.
- 2) That the High Common is retained as public open space which should increase the range of informal uses on the site.

Councillor Richard Samuel seconded the motion by saying that the Council has followed a scrupulous public procurement process that is governed by current UK Law. It was not legally possible for the Council to issue a public document on a tender process during its course. Councillor Samuel said that he has worked alongside Councillor Crossley to ensure that a fair, legal, and transparent procurement process had taken place. This was an open tender process which means that, unlike restricted tenders where a particular outcome is sought, the Council was seeking market interest in the provision of services to the two former golf courses, one of which was at the High Common. Due to the pandemic, and due to declining interest in golf, the golf courses became loss making sites, and the purpose of the tender was to seek interest in alternatives. Nevertheless, the brilliant provision of golf services was not ruled out, and indeed efforts were made to encourage tenders to submit the relevant applications. The resident should be in no doubt that this space was not under threat from development, or restrictions; it would remain as public open space available to all to enjoy in perpetuity. Councillor Samuel concluded by welcoming residents' involvement in the process.

The rest of the Cabinet supported the motion from Councillor Crossley and welcomed the residents' engagement in the process. Members of the Cabinet also thanked and Ward Councillors for their statements. Members of the Cabinet highlighted the importance of the High Common area to the residents, in particular for their health and wellbeing.

Councillor Sarah Warren asked if Councillor Crossley had any information on the types of chemicals that were usually used to maintain golf greens.

Councillor Crossley responded with the list of chemicals used to maintain golf courses and added that these compounds were not banned, restricted or controlled.

RESOLVED (unanimously) that the Cabinet agreed with the following decision:

- 1) That whilst this bid in the report is proceedable, the Cabinet are not satisfied that there are sufficient benefits to commit to a long-term solution and will not be appointing Company A.
- 2) That the High Common is retained as public open space which should increase the range of informal uses on the site.

93 **DECISION ON AWARD OF A CONTRACT TO A NEW OPERATOR FOR THE ENTRY HILL GOLF COURSE SITE FOLLOWING AN OJEU PROCUREMENT PROCESS**

Elizabeth Hallam in a statement [*a copy of which is attached to the Minutes as Appendix 16 and on the Council's website*] asked the Cabinet to retain Entry Hill as a golf course.

Katina Beckett (Chair of Entry Hill Community Association) in a statement [*a copy of which is attached to the Minutes as Appendix 17 and on the Council's website*] asked the Cabinet to ensure a proper residents' engagement with the preferred bidder.

The Chair thanked all speakers who addressed the Cabinet on this matter. The Chair informed the meeting that the Cabinet has agreed to hold the debate in open/public session for this item. If any of the Cabinet Members were minded to refer to any information from exempt documents, then the Cabinet would move into exempt session.

Councillor Paul Crossley introduced the report and thanked the speakers for their statements. Councillor Crossley said that encouraging and enabling people to be active was one of the most effective and sustainable ways to improve lives and confront inequality. The Cabinet made the decision in July 2020 to run an open procurement exercise to seek a new operator for the Entry Hill golf course. The bids that the Council received were environmentally friendly, sustainable financial future and to promote improved experience for local people. A community consultation on the future of the site was undertaken between December 2019, and March 2020, and involved carrying out substantial stakeholder engagement to understand the views of residents, Golf Course users, and those who would like to use the site. The consultation has ignited considerable interest from the residents and organisations with a range of exciting proposals coming forward. Councillor Crossley thanked everyone who took part in the consultation by recognising the passion and commitment that people have for their own preferred choice of sport. Five bidders have submitted final tenders for Entry Hill, all of which addressed the recommendations of the consultation and priorities of Council, such as to contribute to climate and ecological emergency goals, getting more people more active and ensuring there is a leisure preserve provision for all members of the community in the future through removing the subsidy requirement to the Council. Due to commercial sensitivities and in line with the tender procedure, details of bidders and proposals were not made public until preferred bidders have been appointed. However, one bid has exceeded all others in responding to the requirements, and that was company E. Councillor Crossley concluded by saying that the bid would be public after standstill period of 10 days.

Councillor Paul Crossley moved the recommendations.

Councillor Richard Samuel seconded the motion by saying that this was a scrupulous tender process that was conducted and guided by the law. The tender process sought expressions of interest and six tenders have put themselves forward. Their bids were received and were evaluated against most economically advantageous criteria. Each tender was scored and praised against known criteria available to each tender, as set out in the report.

Councillor Samuel added that the public has been heavily engaged in the process, that this was a properly conducted process and that he was happy to second the motion from Councillor Crossley.

RESOLVED (unanimously) that the Cabinet support the appointment of Company E as the Council's preferred bidder. The preferred bidder will engage with the local community on their proposals and once terms are agreed final contracts will be completed, after a standstill period of 10 days.

94 PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE PROGRAMME

Councillor Richard Samuel introduced the report by saying that the pandemic has had profound impact on the way the Council had to organise its staff to provide services. During the past year there were over 1,000 staff members working from home which presented a major challenge to IT systems as well as establishing wholly new patterns of work. The Council had to adapt to new ways of working which had forced a major rethink about the use of office space.

The Council's preparing for the future programme sets out the next stages of the programme for which the resources have been allocated within the forthcoming budget.

Councillor Richard Samuel moved the recommendations.

Councillor Dine Romero seconded the motion by saying that it was important for the Council staff to be able to work in an environment that best suits their individual needs. For many this has been working from home but for some this has proven to be much more of a challenge. Councillor Romero added that Keynsham Civic Centre has not been used as effectively as it could be and the preparing for future programme would allow more flexibility for the staff to consider each individual's needs.

The Chair invited Amanda George (Interim Director of Business Recovery) to take the Cabinet through the details of this report.

Amanda George thanked the Chair and read out the following:

'This paper follows the Cabinet paper presented on 10 December 2020 which provided an update on the property services service review and included a summary of the preparing for the future programme. This paper provides further detail on this programme of work.

The Council has for some time been reviewing the way we work. Prior to the Covid pandemic progress had been made on plans to adapt Keynsham Civic Centre to improve utilisation, provide a more modern working environment and create greater flexibility to enable more effective collaboration.

In common with many organisations the pandemic has now accelerated the progress of these plans. A great deal has been learnt, both from staff surveys and engaging with staff, about how staff have adapted to working flexibly during the last 10 months and this has meant we are able to now consider how a blended working approach, where staff have the choice in how and where they work, is possible for the future. The Preparing for the Future Programme has many benefits for both the Council and staff as follows:

- an opportunity to allow blended working for most office-based staff which will mean that they can organise their time and working location to benefit themselves,

their team, and their clients. For many staff this will include a reduction in commuting stress, time and cost and enable a better work-life balance.

- a break-down of silo working between services and the opportunity for increased collaboration between teams leading to improved staff morale, well-being and productivity.
- greater flexibility and increased efficiency of staff who will be provided with the right IT equipment to complement the new ways of working.
- reduced operating costs through a reduction of office buildings and rationalisation of office space along with the opportunity to create revenue through the commercial letting of Lewis House.
- an internal re-design of Keynsham Civic Centre which will enhance the space, resolve some existing equalities issues, contribute towards climate change initiatives and improve the capacity and efficiency of the office building across the week.
- increased hot desking arrangements in some of our offices in the Guildhall for staff who need touch down spaces in Bath.
- reciprocal arrangements with our key partners so that staff have some options about where they work, which are not just at Keynsham Civic Centre, the Guildhall or at home. These options could also help to reduce travel time and cost for some staff and contribute to a better work life balance.

A communication change management and engagement plan is in place with staff. Regular written communications are issued to staff and members, and a service user group is in place to allow full consultation with all service areas. The trade unions are also updated on a monthly basis.

The focus for the next stage of the programme is on the re-design of Keynsham Civic Centre to increase capacity, maximise utilisation of the building and enable staff to work differently. The short-term investment plans associated with the redesign are set out in the report and these costs will be recovered over time.

The concept designs for the internal re-design of the building will be confirmed by the end of March 2020 with the final designs and the technical specification for any works needed by end of June 2020. Whilst the designs are taking shape work will also take place to test prototypes and re-arrange existing furniture to create activity based working areas.

So, to summarise the aim of the preparing for the future programme is to create a workspace that really enables modern and efficient service delivery and fully supports the needs of our staff and the Council.'

Councillor David Wood welcomed the report as being a forward-thinking way for the Council. There was a necessity to change the way we work, due to the pandemic, but also to allow greater flexibility to Council staff in terms of the new working patterns.

Councillor Richard Samuel added that it would be useful for the Cabinet to receive an update on the progress of Keynsham Civic Centre re-design at one of the future meetings.

RESOLVED (unanimously) that the Cabinet agreed with the aims of the Preparing for the Future programme and to note the progress that has been made with the programme to date.

Councillor Richard Samuel introduce the Budget & Council Tax 2021/22 by reading out the following statement:

'This 2020/2021 has been an extraordinary year for our country. COVID has wreaked destruction and damage to our economy and our very way of life. And as of yesterday, nearly 115,000 people have died in the UK, with 4 million people testing positive for Coronavirus. Job losses due to pandemic, as we know, have amounted to nearly 1 million jobs. And the retail and hospitality sector have been particularly badly hit. In Bath and North East Somerset where we have traditionally had strong dependence on this the impact was quite serious. This isn't an emergency situation in every sense of the word, and one that has hit our Council was hard as it has hit our residents and local businesses. As 20/21 was a difficult year, I fully expect 21/22 to also be a very difficult year for the Council's finances and the succeeding years until 2025. I do expect some recovery for next year, but we also have to be prepared for setbacks along the long road to normality. It was only six months ago that we were forced to introduce an emergency budget in the form of a financial recovery plan that aim to save £20m during the year and stabilise our finances. And I'm pleased to say this decisive action has meant that the Council is on course to balance the books in the current financial year. This is very important because had the Council being forced to draw on its reserves this year, this would have left us very exposed in future years. I am bound at this point say something about the support we have received from the government. Promises at the start of the pandemic made by Robert Jenrick MP, the local government minister have turned out to be based on foundations and sound. He promised we would have all the resources we needed to tackle the pandemic. Well, so far, we have received unrestricted grants of £12m from the government and expect to be able to claim back £18m for income loss. However, this does not fully compensate our income shortfall, as the government scheme only provides 70% reimbursement and excludes all of the Council's commercial income losses. This means that a £14m shortfall exists that we have we have to make up by service cuts and in the main the slowing down of our capital programme. To sum this up, we have been short-changed. So, against this background, we have been forced to plan for the next financial year. Much of the impact on the Council has been a substantial loss of income which is experienced from the closure of our world heritage assets such as the Roman Baths and Pump Rooms. Other major losses have occurred from reductions in parking and other related transport income. And finally, our commercial estate operating in the marketplace as it does has seen a huge pressure on rental income. Tenants who have received inadequate support from the government have turned to us for help, whether through rent restructuring, payment deferment, or defaults. And as businesses have ceased to trade, income has reduced and for the moment units remain difficult to let as private confidence is drained away. Business confidence measured by the CPI Business Confidence Index is now at -22. Well, this is better than the -87, recorded in quarter two last year. But it reflects not only the pandemic woes, but the double whammy of break of the Brexit chaos caused by the government's botched trade agreement. All of these factors mean that our planning assumptions to 21/22 to have had to be downgraded as a starting point in building this budget. I made an early decision that given the extreme economic turbulence I have described; we should smooth the impacts of reduced income until the local national economy recovered and income levels began to return to pre COVID levels. If we had not taken this decision, we will be looking at making £20m of cuts on top of those we made only six months ago. And I was clear at the time that this would have been difficult at any point let alone while we were still dealing with the pandemic. The Council will therefore be recommended to 'borrow' £13m from our reserves to be repaid by 2025 as a means of smoothing out cash flow.

This is an exceptional action for exceptional times. But it is necessary to avoid damaging those vital services or residents need. Because I expect 21/22 to be a turbulent year, I am making one off provision of £5m into a special COVID contingency reserve. I hope of course that we will not need to draw down any of this reserve and if that turns out to be the case it will be returned to our main reserves when it is prudent to do so. I now want to turn up the main thrust of this budget. It would have been tempting for someone to say these are tough times abandon your ideas for saving the planet and its ecology stop your transport plans forget building affordable housing for the moment. Well, the Cabinet considered this for no longer than it takes me to do my shoelaces. We are clear that the existential threat that climate change poses must be tackled. This includes continuing to bear down on carbon emissions from vehicles and taking other carbon reduction measures. Our budget also contains a range of measures to help our local economy recover, with emphasis on our high streets, enterprise parks and of course of continuing work on Bath Keys. Our own commercial estate will spearhead this renewal work together with valued partners such as our two outstanding universities. We will continue to collaborate and secure funding from the West of England Combined Authority, focusing particularly on transport improvements, investment funding for local acquisition, and support for our economic recovery plans. In addition to these initiatives, I've made clear that it is essential to do as much as possible to cushion any financial impacts on our services for children and vulnerable adults. Nevertheless, our budget can set £8.5m of savings that it is necessary to undertake to balance the books. Wherever possible. I have tried to ensure that these have the least possible impact on our frontline services. We aim to minimise redundancies and there are no imposed cuts. But there are changes which we are funding that will improve our working environment for staff reflecting the dramatic shift to home working as you've just heard. Our budget also makes provision for a modest pay increase that is favourable, particularly to lower paid employees. During the pandemic and in the future over the next year the Council has run the wellbeing hub providing free school meals distributed millions of pounds of business grants kept the refuse and recycling service literally on the road, as well as the whole range of services to the neediest residents. Our pandemic planning with the NHS at a local level has been top rate and the communication of messages on the progress of the pandemic has been faultless in my view. Our administration wants this to continue as long as it is needed. I want to end by setting out our plans for Council Tax levels next year, and how we intend to cushion the impact from lower income households. Nobody wants to pay more tax, but at the same time, most residents value the services they received from the Council. I believe that given the choice, most residents would support modest increase in their Council Tax. And that is why I'm proposing a 1.99% increase in council tax in 21/22. This increase is necessary to bridge the financial gap left by the income reductions I previously described and to avoid further damaging cuts. It also enables the continuing delivery of the programme we were elected to implement. In addition to the basic Council Tax rate, as I've described, but I'm also proposing a 3% increase in social care precept. This will be used to fund improvements in our Adult Social Care Services which were under such severe pressure during the last year. The total Council Tax and social care precept increases amount to £1.40 a week at the end of which the council tax element is 56p per week. Now, I realised that even this amount of increase will be a struggle for some people. That is why I've increased the funds available for Council Tax support and also funds for welfare support by £400,000 per year increase. This is a robust budget for challenging very challenging times it seeks to restore stability in the Council's finances offer a truly dreadful year. And I cannot finish without paying tribute to Andy Rothery and his excellent finance team, as well as

other directors and officers who have supported our work to bring this budget forward. They have worked tirelessly to bring these proposals before us today and help us rebuild our financial strength. So, I commend this budget to the Cabinet, and I move the recommendations set out in the report.'

Councillor Richard Samuel moved the recommendations.

Councillor Dine Romero seconded the motion by thanking Councillor Samuel, Cabinet Members and Council officer for setting this budget. The Council have had a very challenging past year, with huge losses in revenue from heritage services, commercial loans and parking income. The government has compensated for some of this lost income, but not entirely. The Cabinet set a mid-year financial recovery plan which has helped in resetting Council's finances. The pressures on all Council services, especially adult and children services, have remained high and revenue sources remain precarious.

With the prudent action recommended and the increase in council tax, the Cabinet would still be able to ensure that key priorities for this administration are being delivered.

The rest of the Cabinet Members agreed with the proposed Budget and Council Tax for 2021/2022 by highlighting pressures and issues within their Cabinet portfolios, as outlined in the report, and expressed their commitment to continue with the delivery of priorities set by this administration.

RESOLVED (unanimously) that the Cabinet agreed to:

1.1 Recommend that the Council approves-

- a) The General Fund net revenue budget for 2021/22 of **£130.07m** and the individual service cash limits for 2021/22 as outlined in Annex 1.
- b) The savings plans outlined in Annex 2(i), growth and pressures 2(ii), in conjunction with the Equalities Impact Assessment Report in Annex 3.
- c) An increase in Council Tax of 1.99% in 2021/22 (an increase of £28.99 per Band D property or 56p per week).
- d) An increase of 3% to Council Tax for the Adult Social Care Precept is approved in recognition of the current demands and financial pressures on this service. This is equivalent to an increase of £43.70 on a Band D property (84p per week).
- e) The movement in reserves outlined in section 5.6 and the adequacy of Un-earmarked Reserves at £12.59m within a risk assessed range requirement of £11.6m - £12.8m.
- f) The Efficiency Strategy attached at Annex 4.
- g) The Capital Programme for 2021/22 of £69.506m including new and emerging capital bids outlined in Annex 5(i), planned sources of funding in 5.8.2, and notes the programme for 2021/22 to 2024/25 and that any wholly funded projects coming forward during the year will be added to the Capital Programme in line with the Budget Management Scheme.
- h) The delegation of implementation, subject to consultation where appropriate, of the capital programmes set out in Annex 5(ii) to Annex 5(iii) to the relevant Director in Consultation with the appropriate Portfolio Holder.

- i) The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) allocations and amendments outlined in Annex 5(iv).
- j) The Capital & Investment Strategy attached at Annex 6.
- k) The MRP Policy attached at Annex 7.
- l) The Capital Prudential Indicators outlined in 5.8.8.
- m) The Annual Pay Policy Statement at Annex 8.
- n) The Community Contribution Fund proposal outlined in Annex 10.
- o) The Council Tax Support Scheme for 2021/22 shown in the following link: <https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2021-01/Council%20Tax%20reduction%20scheme%20April%201%202021%20-%20March%2031%202022.pdf> and referred to in 5.3.4.

1.2 That the Council include in its Council Tax setting, the precepts set and approved by other bodies including the local precepts of Town Councils, Parish Councils, and Charter Trustees of the City of Bath, and those of the Fire and Police Authorities.

1.3 That Cabinet note the S151 Officer's report on the robustness of the proposed budget and the adequacy of the Council's reserves outlined in 5.7.

1.4 Authorise the Council's S151 Officer, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Resources, to make any necessary changes to the draft budget proposal for submission to Council.

96 REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING, CASH LIMITS AND VIREMENTS – APRIL 2020 TO DECEMBER 2020

Councillor Richard Samuel introduced the report by saying that this was a regular quarterly report it covers Quarter Three period. The Council was on course to end the year the balanced budget position, which was an outstanding achievement considering the impact that the pandemic had on the Council. This was achieved with swift actions taken by the Cabinet and the Council's senior management team to control Council's finances.

The capital budget has been impacted by the pandemic and Councillor Samuel highlighted the deficits on the collection of the Council Tax and Business Rates as a concern for future years.

Councillor Richard Samuel moved the recommendations.

Councillor Dine Romero seconded the motion and thanked Councillor Samuel, other Cabinet Members, and the relevant officers for ensuring that the Council was in the balanced budget position.

RESOLVED (unanimously) that the Cabinet agreed to:

- 1) Note the 2020/21 revenue budget position (as at the end of December 2020).
- 2) Note the revenue virements listed for information only in Appendix 3(i).
- 3) Note the capital year-end forecast detailed in paragraph 3.36 of this report;
- 4) Note the changes in the capital programme including capital schemes that have been agreed for full approval under delegation listed in Appendix 4(i).

97 TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT AND ANNUAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY 2021/22

Councillor Richard Samuel introduced the report by saying that this was a Strategy that guides the Council's use of its Treasury funds which is annually reviewed and

updated to reflect wider changes in financial markets. Councillor Samuel highlighted the progress in moving the Council away from investing in funds that support unsustainable environmental activities and investing in funds that meet high ethical and environmental standards.

Councillor Richard Samuel moved the recommendations as printed.

Councillor Sarah Warren seconded the motion by welcoming the fact that the Council would be moving away from investing in non-ethical and non-environmentally friendly funds.

RESOLVED (unanimously) that the Cabinet agreed to:

- 1) Recommend the actions proposed within the Treasury Management Strategy Statement (Appendix 1) to February Council.
- 2) Note the Treasury Management Indicators detailed in Appendix 1 and delegate authority for updating the indicators prior to approval at Full Council on 23rd February 2021 to the Chief Finance Officer and Cabinet Member for Resources, in light of any changes to the recommended budget as set out in the Budget Report elsewhere on the agenda for this meeting.
- 3) Note that any comments made by the Corporate Audit Committee at their meeting on the 4th February 2021 will be reported to Full Council on the 23rd February 2021.

98 TREASURY MANAGEMENT MONITORING REPORT TO 31ST DECEMBER 2020

Councillor Richard Samuel introduced the report and moved the recommendations as printed.

Councillor Kevin Guy seconded the motion.

RESOLVED (unanimously) that the Cabinet agreed that:

- 1) The Treasury Management Report to 31st December 2020, prepared in accordance with the CIPFA Treasury Code of Practice, is noted.
- 2) The Treasury Management Indicators to 31st December 2020 are noted.

The meeting ended at 9.45 pm

Chair _____

Date Confirmed and Signed _____

Prepared by Democratic Services

BATH & NORTH EAST SOMERSET COUNCIL

MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT

Grant of a Dispensation

Name of Members	All Councillors
Meeting and item of business for which the dispensation has been sought	Cabinet– 11 th February 2021 (Cabinet Agenda item 14 Cabinet Budget and Council Tax 2021/22 and Financial Outlook).
Reason for dispensation	The Monitoring Officer issued a general dispensation for all Councillors who pay Council Tax and therefore had an interest in these items, to enable them to take part in the debate and vote.

Having received a request at the meeting from the councillors requesting this dispensation, it was granted.

SignedMichael Hewitt.....

M Hewitt
Acting Monitoring Officer – Bath & North East Somerset Council

Dated 11th February 2020

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BATH & NORTH EAST SOMERSET COUNCIL

MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT

Grant of a Dispensation

Name of Member/s	Councillor Sarah Warren Councillor Tim Ball Councillor Kevin Guy Councillor Joanna Wright
Meeting and item of business for which the dispensation has been sought	Cabinet - 11.02.2021 - Agenda Item Budget and Council Tax 2021/22 and Financial Outlook and Full Council on the 23.02.21 Budget and Council Tax Meeting Regarding their respective pecuniary interest in the Budget because: A family member was undergoing an Education, Health & Care needs assessment. A family member was in receipt of a social care package A family business was in receipt of a Covid Grant A family member was in receipt of a social care package.
Reason for dispensation	The Monitoring Officer issued a general dispensation to Cllrs Warren, Ball, Guy & Wright to enable them to take part in the debate.

Having received a request from the above councillors requesting this dispensation, it was granted.

SignedMichael Hewitt.....

M Hewitt
Acting Monitoring Officer – Bath & North East Somerset Council

Dated 11th February 2021

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CABINET MEETING 11th February 2021

STATEMENTS FROM PUBLIC AND COUNCILLORS

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1. David Redgewell – Statement on transport issues within West of England Combined Authority
2. Kari Elizabeth Erickson - Bath City Centre High Street Renewal
3. Councillor Paul Myers (Chair of the Corporate PDS Panel) – ‘Matters Referred by Policy Development and Scrutiny Bodies’
4. Councillor Lucy Hodge – Approach Golf Course
5. Councillor Mark Elliott – Approach Golf Course
6. Theresa Franklin – Approach Golf Course
7. Lynne Fernquest – Approach Golf Course
8. Patricia Ludlam – Approach Golf Course
9. Ben Reed – Approach Golf Course
10. Peter Langley – Approach Golf Course
11. Sally Parkes – Approach Golf Course
12. Justin Draeger – Approach Golf Course
13. Emilio Pimentel-Reid – Approach Golf Course
14. Lyn Jacobs – Approach Golf Course
15. Robert Sumner – Approach Golf Course
16. Rachael Hushon – Approach Golf Course

- 17. Liz Hallam – Entry Hill Golf Course
- 18. Katina Beckett – Entry Hill Golf Course
- 19. Martin Grixoni – Budget 2020/2021

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS - COUNCILLORS

M	01	Question from:	Councillor Duncan Hounsell
Can Councillor Paul Crossley, Cabinet Member for Community Services, provide an update on the search for suitable 14 day moorings in the B&NES area?			
Answer from:			Councillor Paul Crossley
<p><i>Thank you for the question Cllr Hounsell. I am pleased to say that I received a briefing on our future mooring strategy from officers on 15 January. As you are aware, this strategy looks to identify additional mooring locations along the River Avon. Specifically between Pulteney Weir and Hanham Lock.</i></p> <p><i>Officers are near to completing the first phase of this project, a detailed desk-based assessment. This involved pulling together a range of data sources, a review of riparian ownership arrangements, determining the provision of local amenities, river and bank conditions and a number of informal conversations with users of the river.</i></p> <p><i>Our next steps are to undertake site visits to validate (or not) the desk top assessment, engage stakeholders and our neighbour – South Gloucestershire. Resulting in a robust business model for future consideration by this Council. I will of course keep you updated as this programme of work progresses.</i></p>			
M	02	Question from:	Councillor Sarah Bevan
Further to Councillor Samuel's encouraging emails to me, can you confirm that there will be funding in this year's budget for the Ward Councillors Empowerment Fund, and clarify where in the budget papers I will find the relevant information?			
Answer from:			Councillor Richard Samuel

Whilst the majority of 2021/22 budget adjustments are for budget pressures, the budget has provided for the continuation of the Ward Councillor empowerment fund providing £1k per Councillor for 2021/22 funded from the revenue budget contingency.

This narrative can be found in section 5.2.5 of the budget report.

M

03

Question from:

Councillor Shaun Hughes

An article in The Times (27th January) titled “£1 million wasted on cycle-friendly road zones that councils abandoned” highlights how almost 1 in 10 low-traffic neighbourhoods had been abandoned after a month at huge expense to the public.

Out of 138 schemes completed 13 were scrapped and 25 altered following a backlash from residents and emergency services. Issues identified included increased pollution, traffic gridlock and delaying emergency service vehicles.

As Low Traffic Neighbourhoods are a key part of your future plans, can you please tell us what safeguards are you putting in place to ensure we don’t fall into the same traps as the 25 other Councils who have had to reserve/cancel their schemes?

Answer from:

Councillors Joanna Wright and Neil Butters

The Times article dated 27/1/21 is based on research undertaken by Auto Express which represents the interests of car enthusiasts, manufacturers and dealers. Unfortunately, the report confuses low traffic neighbourhoods with a range of active travel schemes developed through the Department for Transport’s Emergency Active Travel fund, which sought to quickly facilitate active travel in response to problems caused by the Covid-19 pandemic.

On 10/12/20, Bath & North East Somerset Council’s Cabinet resolved to adopt the three Liveable Neighbourhood strategies (Low Traffic Neighbourhoods; Residents’ Parking Schemes; and On-Street Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy) with minor amendments.

The Low Traffic Neighbourhood (LTN) strategy proposes that communities should express a desire to be considered for LTN interventions through their Ward Member(s) and scheme development will be on the basis of co-design. In considering schemes, the council will consult a wide range of stakeholders including the emergency services and groups representing disabled people. These procedures will ensure that implemented schemes will be in the best possible position to meet their objectives and secure widespread support from the community and other stakeholders.

M	04	Question from:	Councillor Paul May
Can you provide details of all of the additional Government funding since the start of the pandemic provided for the council, businesses and residents including supplements for children's and adult services?			
Answer from:			Councillor Richard Samuel
<i>Grant funding allocated to B&NES from the start of the pandemic to 8th February 2021:</i>			
		England Total in £m (provided for context)	B&NES Total £m
Covid 19 Government Support & Grants via Councils			
Covid 19 - Local Government Support Grant - Tranche 1		1,600	4.644
Covid 19 - Local Government Support Grant - Tranche 2		1,600	5.358
Covid 19 - Local Government Support Grant - Tranche 3		500	1.296
Covid 19 - Local Government Support Grant - Tranche 4		1,000	0.644
Local Authority Sales, Fees & Charges Income Loss Support Scheme - Latest Full Year Claim (April to July Claim submitted for £7.7m, August to November Claim submitted for £5.1m)		Tbc	12.800
Sub Total Covid 19 - Local Government Support Grant		4,700	24.742
Other Covid 19 Grants and Support:			
Adult Social Care Infection Control Fund (Round 1)		600	2.189

Adult Social Care Infection Control Fund (Round 2)	546	1.870
Adult Social Care Rapid Testing Fund	149	0.557
Workforce Capacity Fund for Adult Social Care	120	0.365
Contain Outbreak Management Fund - National Restrictions (£8 per head of population)	465	1.546
Contain Outbreak Management Fund - Local Restrictions (£2 per head of population) - from 2nd Dec - 28 days funding	200	0.387
Wellbeing for Education Return Grant	8	0.030
Local Authority Test & Trace Service Support Grant	300	0.849
Test & Trace Support Payments Grant - Main Programme Costs	25	0.062
Test & Trace Support Payments Grant - Discretionary Costs	15	0.037
Test & Trace Support Payments Grant - Discretionary Costs - extra grant to 31/1/21	10	0.013
Test & Trace Support Payments Grant - Administration	10	0.029
Next Steps Accommodation - shorter-term/interim accommodation and immediate support	105	0.255
Next Steps Accommodation - longer-term accommodation and support (2020/21 - 2023/24	161	1.853
Reopening High Streets Safely Fund	50	0.173
Local Authority Compliance and Enforcement Grant	30	0.074
Emergency Assistance Grant for Food and Essential Supplies	63	0.143
Support for Clinically Extremely Vulnerable Individuals	32	0.097
Council Tax Hardship Fund	500	1.288
New Burdens Grant - Council Tax Hardship Fund and Business Rate Relief Administration Costs	9	0.027
Covid Winter Grant Scheme (DWP)	170	0.387

Business Support Grants:		
Small Business Grants Fund & Retail, Hospitality & Leisure Grants - Amount of grants paid to businesses	12300	40.78
Small Business Discretionary Local Authority Grants - Amount of grants paid to businesses	617	2.12
New Burdens Grant - Small Business Grant Fund & Retail, Hospitality & Leisure Grants - Administration Costs	Tbc	0.170
Local Restrictions Support Grant Scheme (LRSGS) Grants for Businesses required to close during the period between 5th November and 2nd December.	Tbc	4.240
Additional Restrictions Grant (Business Support) - Grant to distributed on the basis of £20 per head to enable Councils to support businesses over the coming months more broadly, who are a key part of the local economy.	1100	3.866
Additional Restrictions Grant (Business Support) - Top Up Grant	Tbc	0.571
New Burdens Grant to cover: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Authority Discretionary Grant Fund • Reconciliation process for the first three Business Grant Schemes (Small Business Grant Fund (SBGF), Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Grant Fund (RHLGF) and the Local Authority Discretionary Grant Fund (LADGF)) • Post payment assurance process of the first three Business Grant schemes (SBGF, RHLGF and LADGF) • Parliamentary Constituency data exercise 	Tbc	0.077

Local Restriction Support Grants - LRSG (Open) allocations for those LAs in both Tier 2: High alert and Tier 3: Very High alert. Covering period 2nd December to 19th December	Tbc	0.721
Local Restriction Support Grants - LRSG (Closed) payment for those LAs in both Tier 2: High alert and Tier 3: Very High alert. Covering period 2nd December to 19th December	Tbc	0.037
Local Restriction Support Grants - LRSG (Open) allocations for those LAs in both Tier 2: High alert and Tier 3: Very High alert. Covering period 20th December to 4th January	Tbc	0.527
Local Restriction Support Grants - LRSG (Closed) payment for those LAs in both Tier 2: High alert and Tier 3: Very High alert. Covering period 20th December to 4th January	Tbc	0.313
Christmas Support Payment for wet-led pubs (CSP)	Tbc	0.109
Closed Business Lockdown Payment (Business Support) - supports businesses that have been required to close due to the national restrictions that began on 5 January 2021.	Tbc	12.717
Local Restrictions Support Grant - Closed Addendum Payment (Business Support) - covering period 5th January to 15th February	Tbc	6.360
Sub Total - Other Covid19 Grants & Support	17,585	84.839

M	05	Question from:	Councillor Paul May
Could you please provide details of all of the Council's free and earmarked reserves?			
Answer from:			Councillor Richard Samuel
<i>Total Council reserves are listed in the table below, this balance is at the start of the 2020/21 financial year and does not include planned in year drawdowns. To note General fund unearmarked balances are held in recognition of, and to manage future years budget risk, these are reviewed annually by the S151 Officer when assessing the robustness of the budget proposal.</i>			
			Actual Opening Position 01/04/2020
			£'000
General Fund Balances unearmarked			13,518
LMS Schools Balances			585
Corporate Earmarked Reserves			
<i>Insurance Fund</i>			1,795

<i>Capital Financing Reserve</i>	8,335
<i>Revenue Funding of Capital</i>	506
<i>Financial Planning & Smoothing Reserve</i>	6,285
<i>Revenue Budget Contingency Reserve</i>	4,778
<i>Invest To Save Reserve</i>	699
<i>Revenue Grants Unapplied</i>	5,649
<i>Transformation Investment Reserve</i>	3,130
<i>Restructuring & Severance Reserve</i>	2,183
 <i>Dedicated Schools Grant Reserve *</i>	 (1,250)
<i>Business Rates Reserve</i>	5,876
<i>Other</i>	2,458
<i>Sub Total - Corporate Earmarked Reserves</i>	40,444
 <i>General Service Earmarked Reserves</i>	
<i>Information Technology Reserve</i>	533
<i>Finance VAT Advice Reserve</i>	408
<i>Leisure Reserves</i>	497
<i>Waste Reprovision Reserve</i>	964
<i>Combe Down Stone Mines Interpretation Centre Reserve</i>	145
<i>Care & Health Reserve</i>	1,705
<i>Other General Service Reserves</i>	170

Sub Total - General Service Earmarked Reserves		4,422
Service Specific Reserves		2,769
Total Revenue Unearmarked and Earmarked Reserves		61,738
<p><i>* The Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Reserve holds the balance of DSG to be carried forward for use in future years. Based on the separate report of DSG deployment in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, as amended (Regulation 7 (4)), the 2019/20 DSG overspend has resulted in a negative reserve, for recovery against future years' DSG.</i></p>		
M	06	Question from:
		Councillor Paul May
<p>The Council-owned property company ADL was set up to provide revenue support for the Council. Since its start, can you provide the audited actual net contributions received by the Council year on year?</p>		
Answer from:		Councillor Richard Samuel
<p><i>Please find the ADL income to the Council revenue budget year on year.</i></p>		

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	TOTAL
LOAN INTEREST	£19,439	£74,775	£267,034	£641,196	£1,002,444
<i>DIVIDEND (Estimate)</i>	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
TOTAL RETURN	£19,439	£74,775	£267,034	£641,196	£1,002,444

M	07	Question from:	Councillor Paul May
Do you think joining adults and children's scrutiny together in one committee could be reviewed bearing in mind it represents over 80% of Council expenditure?			
Answer from:			Councillor Kevin Guy
<i>The composition and resourcing of scrutiny is a question for Council. I understand the current composition was decided following a cross party review of the previous arrangement and agreed by Full Council. Following the work on scrutiny review currently planned with support of the LGA, Council will be in a position to consider if it wishes to make any changes.</i>			
M	08	Question from:	Councillor Karen Warrington
In the Local Plan Update there are policy options relating to renewable energy which appear to be confined to solar farms and wind turbines. Can you please confirm that this premature strategy of concentrating on solar and wind energy is not set and that this Council is investigating other options, given that:			
a) there is a duty to cooperate with our neighbouring authorities;			
b) the authority has a great deal of water that can generate power, and			
c) the fact that the Government is committed to off-shore wind power generation that will supply energy to all residents by 2030?			

Can you also confirm that any renewable energy locations will not just be concentrated in one area, which appears to be North East Somerset at the moment as per the Local Plan Update accompanying maps?

Answer from:

Councillor Tim Ball

The council's current Local Plan (Policies CP3, SCR1, SCR2, SCR3 & SCR4) sets out the current approach to increasing renewable energy generation. These policies relate to all forms of renewable energy generation and not just wind and solar. However, the policies refer explicitly to wind and solar because the evidence underpinning the Local Plan highlights that these offer the greatest potential to generate renewable energy in B&NES and because national policy requires Local Plans to be more explicit about wind energy generation in particular. In reviewing the Local Plan the council has updated its evidence base in the B&NES renewable energy resource evidence base prepared by Regen SW and this study identifies potential renewable energy capacities from a range of technologies including wind, solar, hydro etc. As the Local Plan review is an update to the existing Plan, the scope and approach of the Local Plan must be maintained. Under the Duty to Co-operate, the Council is continuing to co-operate with neighbouring authorities on cross boundary strategic issues and thus will include renewable energy generation where relevant. Any such discussions will be included in the Local Plan Statement of Common Ground

However, as part of the forthcoming new Local Plan and West of England Combined Authority Spatial Development Plan, the Council has commissioned a Renewable Energy Resource Assessment Study (RERAS) jointly with South Gloucestershire Council and North Somerset Council to assess the potential energy capacities from a wide range of technologies. This joint work will facilitate the Councils to apply a strategic approach to energy production in co-operation with neighbouring authorities.

M

09

Question from:

Councillor Vic Pritchard

Worldwide it has been recognised that wetland areas offer the most natural effective source of absorbing Co2 and are being lost at an alarming rate. Yet we here in BANES have the opportunity to construct our own wetland area in Keynsham and I understand there is a section 106 agreement to that effect that has not been implemented. What progress has been made in taking this forward, or is it preferred to forgo the opportunity and return the money to the developers?

Answer from:

Councillor Tim Ball

We can advise that there is a section 106 that requires Wetland provision at Keynsham former Cadburys site. The applicant has commenced footpaths and planting in connection with that provision and that work continues with a view to completion over the next 2 years at which point it will be open to the public.

M	10	Question from:	Councillor Vic Pritchard
The Council has committed to an increase in charges to address rat infestation to a cost of £130 (this charge is reduced to £60 to those on benefits). Has it not been considered that this cost may prohibit many from reporting rat infestation and cause a Public Health concern?			
Answer from:			Councillor Paul Crossley
<i>The current price rise is £138/60. The Pest Control Service is a non-statutory service that provides an excellent service to residents and businesses across the district. Price setting is a delicate balance between offering an affordable service to residents and also minimising the cost to the council. The less income we make from customers, the more the council needs to subsidise the service. This is money diverted from other services. The Council's Pest Control service is the only regional pest control service that offers a significant reduction to those on income related benefits and a very cost-effective service to others who are able to better afford it.</i>			
M	11	Question from:	Councillor Vic Pritchard
The Council appears supportive of the Government's directive to protect and restore our natural environment by planting 30,000 hectares of trees every year by promoting their own tree planting scheme. Does the Council give a supporting grant to enable organisations or individuals to proactively engage in tree planting?			
Answer from:			Councillor David Wood
<i>The Government's directive to protect and restore natural environment by planting 30,000 hectares of trees every year is national</i>			

initiative. Increasing tree cover within the district is one of this Council's key priorities (as per B&NES Local Plan Tree Policy NE6 and its Green Infrastructure Strategy) – with an ambitious target to plant 100,000 trees over the course of the current administration.

There are several organisations that Government money is passed through in order to stimulate tree planting regionally, such as The Forest of Avon, The Forestry Commission, The Woodland Trust & The Tree Council. There are various grant schemes available through these organisations which can be found on their websites. In the Council's budget there is a proposed total allocation of £150K (CIL allocation for 20/21 and 21/22 combined) to support new tree planting schemes across the district. This will fund various different planting initiatives over the course of this administration.

The Council is currently developing its Tree and Woodland Delivery Plan which will refine planting objectives within the district and we will be working with private land owners and partner organisations to deliver the planting that's needed. The Council will work up further schemes to raise voluntary donations, advise Parish/Town councils, implement a tree sponsorship scheme, and a school tree eco/education project to be launched later this year alongside its own planting programme. We can also give advice to any organisation that is thinking of submitting an application to a grant award body following the publishing of our delivery plan (approx. June 2021).

M	12	Question from:	Councillor Vic Pritchard
Councillor Wood has remained particularly quiet over measures to counter air pollution in the Temple Cloud area of his ward. Does he share my doubts that installing internal purifiers at £14,000 each in an outdoor setting where their effectiveness extends over a very limited distance does not address the concerns of residents?			
Answer from:			Councillor David Wood
<i>Officers have been working to investigate the efficacy of the currently available technology, bearing in mind that for large scale, outdoor uses this is a very new and emerging potential solution. Dependant on their findings, officers will make recommendations to the Cabinet Member around the potential use of this technology in Temple Cloud.</i>			
M	13	Question from:	Councillor Vic Pritchard

An enormous amount of money has been secured from WECA by the Leader of Council for the Chew Valley recreational trail. Why did she not consult with either of the two ward councillors who both learnt of her negotiations through an article in the Chew Valley Gazette?

Answer from:

Councillors Dine Romero, Joanna Wright and Neil Butters

The funding awarded has conditions which we have been working on to satisfy. These include Planning conditions and land agreements which need to be in place prior to construction within a tight timescale. We therefore did not want to raise expectations until the funding conditions were satisfied or we were more confident the project could go ahead. There are still some risks but are making progress with the funding conditions. We will make sure you are updated when we have satisfied the funding conditions.

As all bus services have now been transferred from the city and county of Bristol, Bath and North east Somerset and south Gloucestershire Council to the Metro Mayor and the West of England Combined Authority is now the transport authority. But has no tax raising powers and their socially supported bus service budget needs to be passported from Banes council budget.

This for bus service such as Keynsham Town services Bristol to Chew Valley bus service 672. Whitchurch to Keynsham service. 636

Bath spa bus and coach station to Peasedown St John , Radstock, Midsomer Norton, Paulton and Farmborough services for Evening and Sunday services.

172

D1 - Bath spa bus and coach station Bathampton , Winsley , Bradford on Avon, Trowbridge , Westbury , Warminster and Salisbury.

Some journeys funded jointly with Wiltshire council.

94 Bath spa bus and coach station city centre Freshford Westwood Wingfield and Trowbridge Town centre.

Funded jointly with Wiltshire.

D2 Bath spa bus and station to Frome via Milford Norton ,st Phillips, Rode Beckington and Frome.

Funded with local council s and Somerset county council.

Bath spa bus and coach station to wick yate bus station ,chipping sodbury Tetbury and Stroud bus station.

Midsomer Norton to Frome 414 424

Midsomer Norton Town service.

18 Bath spa bus station to saltford keynsham, willsbridge ,oidland common North common ,warmley kingswood Hillfields, staple hill, Downend uwe Bristol bus station.

19 Bath spa bus and coach station Weston RuH, back entrance Kelson Bitton ,oidland common, Cadbury heath warmley, kingswood, Hillfields, staple hill Downend, uwe ,Bristol parkway station Patchway and cribbs causeway bus station

179 Bath spa bus and coach station Timbury,midsomer Norton.

And some Bath city service it is very important that we maintain these bus service's are funded by Banes so weca mayoral transport Authority can operate this network .

The rest of the network is fund in the Bath and Bristol city region and North Somerset council by covid 19 bus operators grants running at £27.5 million pounds aweek.

Their will need to be a recovery plan between the Department for Transport and weca mayoral transport authority and North Somerset council to maintain bus service on covid 19 recovery this year.

Its is very important that North Somerset council joins weca mayoral combined authority as soon possible after the may Elections.

Public transport network improvements are important with walking and cycling to add climate change and to reduce car use with the new clean air zone.

The real issue in Bath is to many people make short journeys by the private car Rather than walking and cycling and using public transport.

First group is refurbishing its bus fleet with the city and has brought in modern new buses on Bristol Salford keynsham Bristol x39 39 service.

Their is a split where all bus

infrastructure bus shelters stops and interchange need to be transferred to the Director of Transport and infrastructure at the west of England combined authority. Peter mann public transport team.

But need a maintenance budget in Banes for Bus shelters clean castle kerbs maintenance especially in rural areas. Stop s .

Bus prority measures on key corridor in to Bath especially from On the chippenham ,Corsham ,Batheaston lambridge corridor

Money upgrading street scape and more castle kerbs at Bus stops and Drop kerbs and continuess pavements.

The lack of progress on setting up a railway executive at weca mayoral Transport authority is very important.

Like the west Midlands and Greater Manchester.

This executive will improve railway service investment and develop a light rail system for Bristol and Bath city region.

Without using consultant s.

We welcome the new train service by Metro west starting December 2021 from Severn Beach ,st Andrew road ,Avonmouth, portway parkway new station ,open December 2021 shirehampton, sea mills, Clifton down station, Redland ,montpellier ,Stapleton road, Lawrence hill ,Bristol Temple meads ,keynsham, oidfield park ,Bath spa ,Freshford, Avoncliffe ,Bradford on Avon, Trowbridge ,Westbury, Frome or Warminster. With half hourly train service. Will require extra train units

and subsidies.

This should be show in WECA mayoral transport authority budget.

With need station s at St Anne's park station, Saltford railway reopening fund

Need support for Jacob Reece Mogg mp.

and Corsham. Wiltshire. Council and the MP for Chippenham are putting this bid forward WECA mayoral transport authority and Banes need to discuss this issue with Wiltshire council Corsham Town council and the MP.

All will help congestion in Bath city centre.

On public transport interchange facilities Bath spa is a good bus Coach rail interchange. Which is in need of modernisation with new waiting facilities seats and travel centre which we believe should be funded to redesign the travel centre with Tourist information centres for visit west.

Bath needs a budget for a new tourist

information centre and combined travel centre facilities have been developed across Cornwall the shared facilities in Penzance and st Austell bus coach and rail interchanges.

Tourism is Very important in Bath and North east Somerset and the Bristol Bath city region.

We also need a budget for maintenance and provide of Public toilets. Including disabled facilities. The lack modern changing places for Disabled people in the city centre or at Bath spa bus coach or railway interchange.

Changing please are at Cribbs Causeway bus station shopping centre and Dursey may lane bus station .

But no investment in improving these facilities except at Keynsham hub library.

The mass transit system study between Bathford, Batheaston, Bath, Saltford Keynsham, Brislington, Bristol Temple meads and the city centre is very important.

But also rapid Transit system needs improvement to the Bath bus coach and railway stations, Peasedown st John Radstock, Midsomer Norton Paulton and Shepton Mallett.

Coach station facilities also need improvement s in Bath city centre.

To replace Avon street coach station.

We welcome to the Bath Transport study and plan but of course this will need like the Bristol Transport study fit into the new joint local Transport plan from the WECA mayoral transport authority and North Somerset council.

And should look at electric buses gas bus rapid transit for the city region, and also electrification of the Railway from Chippenham through Bath spa to Keynsham, Bristol Temple meads and Bristol parkway and Patchway

We welcome the brownfield land approach to the local plan refresh in Bath and Keynsham but this will also need to improve active travel and public transport.

Their will need to improve public transport in the corridor Between Bath spa bus and coach station Peasedown st John , Radstock, Midsomer Norton and Paulton. Where further economic growth is required

And the A37 corridor Between Bristol city centre and Whitchurch.

With a park and ride site at Whitchurch.

Please bring our statement to the cabinet meetings and full council meeting of Bath and Northeast Somerset council.

David Redgewell south west transport network and Railfuture Severnside.

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As the pandemic continues to disrupt our lives in unprecedented ways, many of us in BANES are focused on our livelihoods and the economic vibrancy of the communities in which we live and work. I urge the council to prioritise this community's economic viability, considering both short and long term solutions to problems we know plague businesses in and around Bath. While the council is not able to do anything about business rates and perhaps cannot be as flexible with rent as it would like, there are many creative ways that we can support business at the local level. Residents have noticed that other towns not too far away seem to have a different experience to Bath in their town centres; restaurants and shops in neighbouring towns such as Bruton and Castle Cary have continued to trade over this difficult last year and these places seem to be absorbing visitors and money that used to flow to Bath. The council has continued to prioritise traffic measures that may fit its green agenda (which many of us support in the bigger sense), but which do not take account of that fact that all businesses must be able to deliver or offer click and collect services to survive in these times. In talking to business owners, there is a sense that their concerns, which touch on their very livelihoods, have been brushed aside by councillors in pursuit of other agendas. This is to the detriment of our high streets and those who populate them. The public and private sectors must work together for the wellbeing of all, in every sense. I urge the council to listen to businesses and to consult the BID, the other major landlords and residents as it shapes its plans for economic recovery.

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CLLR PAUL MYERS DRAFT SPEECH TO CABINET 11th Feb. 2021

I am speaking today on the Budget as Chair of the Corporate Scrutiny Panel rather than as leader of the Conservative Group. I have sought to summarise the draft minutes of the three Scrutiny Panels representing many hours of input. The challenge has been that the bulk of the minutes cover detailed comment rather than insightful resolution based summaries.

Children, Adults, Health & Wellbeing Panel 19th January 2021

Key points included:

- Will the proposed Adult Social Care precept increase of 3% would be ring-fenced.
- What effect would the proposed £603,000 saving have on the Re-ablement Service.
- How achievable will the savings prove in practice?
- Concern was expressed that the standard of our services regarding care package delivery should not be lowered.
- How will work be delivered in Early Years SEND when the vacant post is deleted?
- Concern was expressed at the proposed significant £43,000 saving relating to Children's Centres but reassurance was given that delivery savings cost would cover this rather than a reduction in services.

In conclusion, the Panel **RESOLVED** to accept the proposals made within the presentation on the basis they were given whilst awaiting clarification of how the Adult Social Care precept increase of 3% would be used.

Climate & Sustainability PDS Panel – 25th January 2021

- Concern was expressed about the impact of fly tipping if charging for building materials is introduced at the tip.
- There was interest in finding ways to reduce reliance on commercial income.
- Where has the increase in income in the waste and fleet operation come from as well as how is a reduction in plant maintenance possible.
- The need to find an alternative waste depot solution for the residents of Bath city centre, many of whom do not own a car was raised as a concern.
- Will the same level of service be maintained for Parks and Bereavement given a staffing reduction?
- On transport could the proposed savings on inspection gangs be mitigated by encouraging community reporting?
- Concern was expressed at Pay and Display machines being replaced with an App with respect to visitors to the area.
- Could there be unintended consequences of a reduction of security in car parks and in particular impacts on the use of Park and Ride
- Concerns about maintenance savings regarding flood and drainage issues and stated that 'Fix my street' did not always give a quick response.
- Queried whether new developments are not going to be adopted whereas it was confirmed that we are to be stricter about what we maintain.

- Is gully emptying being reduced – confirmed that this refers to inspections.

Corporate PDS Panel – 1st February 2021

- Concern was expressed that income from Heritage Services, Commercial Estate and Parking will be down and that the Estate maybe harder hit again as it contains retail. Importance of securing new income streams was noted.
- Raised that the Capital Project Resources had been hit by £1.8m but it was noted that the whole programme would be impacted rather than one project
- The Mental Capacity Act Fund was to be taken as a saving as no commitments have been made.
- Questioned whether £300k savings in senior staff is realistic.
- Raised if there was a risk of slippage regarding the Council Tax deficit which is set to be recovered over 3 years.
- Concern over proposed £22k savings in security cameras for Park and Ride –
- Clarification was requested on ‘borrowing’ £13m from the Council’s own reserves being paid back in years 4 & 5.
- Going digital – concerns about how this could be discriminatory for those without internet access.
- Adult Social Care – looking at these savings concern was expressed about ability to cover the cost of basics e.g. incontinence pads.
- Capital Expenditure for Climate Emergency – concern that renewable energy is spread across the district.
- Concerned about charging for waste resulting in more fly tipping with a disproportionate impact in rural areas.
- There will potentially be more deaths due to Covid – questions on the capacity of Bereavement Services.
- Concerns about road maintenance in rural areas.

Full details of the discussions and officer responses are included in the draft minutes for the three panels.

On behalf of the three panels I would like to thank you for the opportunity to speak today and at the same time would like to thank officers for all their hard work.

ORIGINAL PANEL NOTES

Children, Adults, Health & Wellbeing Panel

Draft Minute - Corporate & Budget Planning 2021/22

The Chief Operating Officer introduced this item to the Panel and gave a presentation, a summary of which is set out below and will be attached as an online appendix to these minutes.

Budget 2021/22 Headlines

Revenue operating cost changes

- Council growth requirement of **£19.1m**, driven by:
 - Material rebasing of income budgets due to Covid
 - Funding new demand pressures, Children's and Adults Social Care
 - Contract Inflation
- Council Savings requirement of **£8.33m** across all portfolios
- Covid risk / contingency reserve of **£5m** proposed

Budget funding changes

- Reserve funding requirement of **£10m**, to be repaid in future years
- Council tax increase **1.99%** & Adult Social Care precept **3%** proposed

New 2021/22 budget pressures / Covid impacts

Emerging MTFS pressures £15.24m

- Commercial Estate £5m
- Parking £4m
- Heritage Services £4.24m
- Other pressures £2m

Strategic Financial Planning Themes

Stabilise – Short term

- Reduce reliance on commercial income.

Transition – Medium term

- Reset business plans looking at new delivery models
- Revise the Council's operating structure
- Maximise opportunity through IT and smarter working

Change – Long term

- Implement new strategies for:
 - Social Care delivery
 - Resident focussed service delivery model

Areas of strategic priority and focus over the next two years

- Continued investment to support the **most vulnerable** people in our communities.
- Continued commitment to secure action to address the **climate and ecological emergency**.

- Focus on supporting the **local economy** to recover from the impact of the pandemic.
- Support the “**Preparing for the Future**” programme to modernise the council with a focus on improved asset management and flexible working.

Adult Social Care Growth

Adult Social Care	2021/22 (£'000)
Pay Inflation	166
Demography	951
Contractual Inflation	1,216
Budget Pressures	0
Total	2,333

Adult Social Care Savings Proposals

Specialist and complex commissioning – contract and procurement review: £537,000. Strategically commission and procure a range of care and support services sufficient to meet identified needs and address gaps in B&NES and provide better value for money for people with complex and specialist needs.

Community – Review of care package delivery: £1,988,000. Review of existing packages to identify efficiencies

Public Health Savings Proposals

Services to be delivered in a different way: £153,000. Following the previous uplift to the Public Health Grant, and the securing of the Integrated Sexual Health Service into a fixed payment 5 year term, funds will be reallocated to cover Public Health services delivered elsewhere within the Council.

Reduction of Post: £112,000. Part time post removed, reduction in Senior Leadership posts to be actioned, alternative grant funding will cover the Senior Leadership requirement during the continued pandemic with the removal of the post being actioned once we are through it.

Children’s & Education Services Growth

Children’s Services	2021/22 (£'000)
Pay Inflation	120
Demography	2,173
Contractual Inflation	252
Budget Pressures	0
Total	2,545

Children’s & Education Savings Proposals

Children's Centres: £43,000. Service efficiencies, provision is maintained, delivered in an alternative way.

School Improvement: £87,000. School Improvement to be funded fully from grant. This is a decrease in financial provision but due to reduced number of LA maintained schools, there is still sufficient resource to support these schools. Should support needed increase, there is a contingent plan in place to enable alternative internal resource to be reallocated.

Early Years SEND: £53,000. Delete Vacant Post (approx. 1 yr vacant). No change to current provision, which already delivers the same outcomes from this reduced financial envelope.

Councillor Paul May asked if the proposed Adult Social Care precept increase of 3% would be ringfenced.

The Chief Operating Officer replied that it was likely to come in as one pot and be used towards the growth element of the service.

Councillor Alison Born asked what effect the proposed £603,000 saving would have on the Reablement Service.

The Director of Adult Social Care, Complex and Specialist Commissioning replied that the figure would not be coming out of the reablement budget, it is a reduction in the packages and purchasing budget. She added that the intention is to provide support to reduce the long-term needs / provision of services to patients.

Councillor Alison Born asked how confident were officers that the savings can be achieved.

The Director of Adult Social Care, Complex and Specialist Commissioning replied that a lot of work has been carried out so far on projections and forecasting, but acknowledged that there would be more to do to deliver these measures.

Councillor Paul May commented that the standard of our services regarding care package delivery should not be lowered.

The Director of Adult Social Care, Complex and Specialist Commissioning replied that it may be possible to achieve funding from another source on this matter and insisted the importance of making sure that eligible needs are met.

Kevin Burnett asked how work will be delivered in Early Years SEND when the vacant post is deleted.

The Director of Education, Inclusion and Children's Safeguarding replied that proactive enabling work is ongoing to make sure that children continue to have a voice within this work area.

Councillor Liz Hardman commented that she was concerned at the proposed significant £43,0000 saving relating to Children's Centres.

The Director of Children's Services replied that as part of the proposal we are aligning our early years support to St Martins akin to our support to other children's centres and early years settings. She added that savings in rent from St Martins is about delivering from a different location and reducing building costs, not a reduction in services.

The Panel **RESOLVED** to accept the proposals made within the presentation on the basis they were given whilst awaiting clarification of how the Adult Social Care precept increase of 3% would be used.

Draft minute from the Climate & Sustainability PDS Panel – 25th January 2021 – Corporate and Budget Planning item.

David Trethewey, Director of Partnerships and Corporate Services, gave a presentation which covered the following:

Lisa Bartlett was also present.

- The Budget Challenge 2021/22 Headlines
- The Budget proposal 2021/22 – 25/26
- New 2021/22 budget pressures/Covid impacts
- Strategic Financial planning themes
- Areas of strategic priority and focus over the next two years
- Service Achievements 2020/2021
- Portfolio Savings Summary
- Climate Emergency and Neighbourhood Services Savings Proposals
- Community Services Savings Proposals
- Housing, Planning and Economic Development Savings Proposals
- Transport Savings Proposals

Panel members asked the following questions and raised the following points:
(Officer responses shown in italics)

Councillor Born stated that she was concerned about the impact on fly tipping if charging for building materials is introduced at the tip. *The officer explained that benchmarking has been done and she is confident that it can work. It will be kept under review.*

Councillor Bromley asked how we reduce reliance on commercial income. The Cabinet Member for Resources, Councillor Samuel explained that this would be a gradual process. We do not get the revenue support grant anymore, the system is based on rates which has been hugely affected by the pandemic. We receive income through Heritage (Roman Baths) but the pandemic has also affected this income. We need to reduce reliance on this and get the property estate to perform.

Councillor Grant Johnson asked the following questions:

- Where has the increase in income in the waste and fleet operation come from? *The officer explained that the team operates on a commercial basis and works with neighbouring authorities. There is a lot of experience within the team. We have put forward the savings – this will be monitored.*
- How is a reduction in plant maintenance possible? *The officer explained that there is always a bit of tolerance, there is experience within the team. We will review this on a regular basis.*

Councillor Craig asked about the waste depot and if finding an alternative solution for the residents of Bath city centre, many of whom do not own a car, has been taken into account. *The officer explained that this work is underway.* Councillor Walker asked

about the early morning and late evening suggestion. *The officer responded that this was based on modelling – it will allow for more efficient routes if the day is lengthened. In response to a query from Councillor Walker about the effect on elderly people, the officer responded that impact assessments will be carried out.*

Councillor Davies commended the Cabinet Members and officers that work on net zero has not been cut despite incredibly difficult circumstances.

Community Services (slide)

Councillor Crossley updated the panel that the Urban Gulls issues has been deferred to 2022/23. A meeting with Government will look at piloting a license.

Councillor Johnson asked if the same level of service, which is higher than neighbouring authorities, will continue regarding Parks and Bereavement. Can the level of service be maintained with a staffing reduction. *The officer reassured the panel that the aim is to continue to provide the level of service.*

In response to a query from Councillor Walker regarding Entry Hill, Councillor Crossley (Cabinet Member) explained that the tender process finishes this week and a report will be considered by Cabinet on 11th February.

Housing, Planning and Economic Development (slide)

No questions

Transport (slide)

Councillor Hirst asked the following questions:

- Regarding the proposed savings on inspection gangs – can this be mitigated by encouraging community reporting? *The officer explained that there would be a promotion of 'Fix my street' App and other ways of reporting. There may be an impact on complaints.*
- Will pay and display machine be replaced with an App? Councillor O'Brien added that she had concerns about removing credit card payments in car parks as we have many visitors to the area.

Officer to get a more information on this to the panel. (The following information was sent to the panel after the meeting: The removal of credit card payments within the car parks has been considered based on usage statistics, convenience and national trends. Current statistics suggest that 84% of population own a smartphone (with much higher rates in all age categories under 55) and over 95% of the population has access to a basic mobile phone. As the MiPermit cashless parking service offers payment by telephone and text as well as the App we are confident that a great majority of users will be able to access the system. Cash will continue to be offered in many locations for those who chose not to pay by mobile or App.

- Regarding coach parking at Oddown – there will be an impact on traffic on Wellsway? *Officer to get a note on this to the panel.*
(The following information was sent to the panel after the meeting: The removal of use of the Weston Island site for coach parking will have a negligible impact on the amount of coach traffic going to Odd Down Park and Ride site during the majority of the year. However, this impact will be larger during the peak periods such as the Christmas Market period where the numbers of coaches coming into the city is higher.)

- Could there be unintended consequences of a reduction of security in car parks? Councillor Johnson added that he was also concerned about security in car parks, we encourage the use of Park and Ride and we do not want to jeopardize this.

Officer to get a note on this to the panel. (The following information was sent to the panel after the meeting: The Park & Ride security contracts specified currently provide an opening and closing service for the main entrances of the Lansdown and Odd Down Park and Ride sites between 9pm and 5am. The Park & Ride service does not prevent entry of the site before this time of closure or exit from the site post the closure time and as such is deemed not to provide value for money. Further consideration of the long term overnight security of these sites will be undertaken and business cases developed as appropriate.

After consideration and analysis the car park patrol is considered to provide limited value and deterrent to ASB and community issues raised are better served by the response of the Police who have powers to deal with the issues on the spot or through their wider powers.)

- What is the latest situation regarding Terrace Walk? *The officer explained that staff marshalling was cancelled during the pandemic. We may have to review this as things start re-opening.*

Councillor Craig stated that she was concerned about maintenance savings regarding flood and drainage issues and stated that 'Fix my street' did not always give a quick response. *The officer explained that any emergency flooding issues would be dealt with.*

Councillor O'Brien asked the following questions:

- Are new developments not going to be adopted? *The officer explained that there are a series of assets that we traditionally maintain, we are being stricter about what we maintain.*
- Is gully emptying being reduced or just the inspections? *The officer confirmed the reduction applies to inspections.*

Councillor Johnson stated that a lot of working hours are going adrift – who is picking up these hours and what about the stress that falls on others. *The officer explained that the Council is conscious of the impact on other staff. There has been consultation. This is a fair point but we are comfortable that we have covered this. We will review the impacts. We have systems in place.*

Annex 3 (a)

Councillor O'Brien asked what the £900k capital expenditure under Climate Emergency 2021/22 refers to and where the funding for the implementation of LTN would be - in Climate emergency or Transport- as it wasn't highlighted in the capital spend figures shown. *The officer explained that this was primarily for energy schemes not transport schemes. Regarding the Renewal Energy Development Fund, this is about working with communities to enable schemes.*

Councillor Johnson asked about tree planting – more detail on streams of funding - *Officer to get a note on this to the panel.*

(The following information was sent to the panel after the meeting: £60k Tree and Woodland Strategy + £75k from CIL (One off)).

Draft minute from the Corporate PDS Panel – 1st February 2021 – Draft Corporate and Budget Planning item.

The Chair, Councillor Myers reminded the Panel that they have received the draft minutes of the Children, Adults, Health and Wellbeing PDS Panel (19th January) and the Climate & Sustainability PDS Panel (25th January) detailing each Panel's discussion of the Corporate and Budget Planning item. He explained that these discussions and this Panel's considerations at this meeting will be fed through to the Cabinet.

Councillor Richard Samuel, Cabinet Member for Resources introduced the item by explaining that this is not a normal budget and not a normal year. There has been a significant shock to Council finances as a result of the ongoing pandemic which will also have repercussions into future years. There will be a report to Cabinet on 11th February – we expect to balance the budget. He explained that the aim is not to disturb frontline services. He explained that the money borrowed from reserves would be repaid over a longer period. He also added that there is a proposed rise of 1.99% in Council Tax and a 3% Adult Social Care precept. Councillor Samuel thanked Andy Rothery, Director of Finance and his team for their extraordinary work.

Andy Rothery, Director of Finance and S151 officer explained that there has been some budget rebasing in order to reduce reliance on external income and the temporary government Covid grants received in 2020/21. There have been adjustments in Heritage, Commercial Estate and Parking. He explained that, along with the proposed Council Tax increase, extra money has been allocated to the Welfare and Hardship Service and also money put into a Covid risk reserve.

Panel members raised the following points and asked the following questions:
(Officer responses shown in italics)

Councillor Furse noted that income from Heritage Services, Commercial Estate and Parking will be down and that the Estate maybe harder hit again as it contains retail. He asked what assumptions the forecast has been based on. *The officer explained that the Commercial Estate re-basing is based on market trend. A calculation has been made also taking into account analysis of void levels (factoring in an increase) and debt risk.*

Councillor Elliot referred to the Council Tax benchmarking graph and asked what level of increase would take the authority into the middle of the table. *The officer explained that this would involve an approximately 11% rise and bring in an additional £6/7million over and above the proposed 4.99% increase. However as rise of this level is beyond the Council tax cap and would require a local referendum.*

Councillor Warrington asked what the £900k Capital Expenditure under Climate Emergency was for. *The officer explained this was for feasibility work and initial capital expenditure on various ways the Climate Emergency priority can be taken forwards such as retro fitting Council assets or investments in alternative energy.*

Councillor MacFie referred to the Capital Project Resources which had been hit by £1.8m – he asked if this related to a particular project. *The officer explained that the saving was across the whole Capital Programme, it means that some delivery timetables have slipped a couple of years.*

Councillor MacFie asked about the Mental Capacity Act Fund. *The officer explained that funding for this was previously held in a Corporate Contingency budget, as no commitments have been made it is being released to generate a saving, when the relevant legislation has been passed the Council will seek new burdens government funding to meet the costs.*

Councillor MacFie asked if £300k savings in senior staff is realistic. *The officer explained that the saving is across the whole senior management structure. This has been tested. Councillor Samuel, Cabinet Member for Resources added that the bulk of this saving has already been made as the Corporate Director posts have not been refilled. The Chief Executive is confident, and the figures are robust.*

Councillor Singleton asked about Climate spending – the Renewal Energy Development Fund supports projects but there is a gestation period in these schemes, is the money carried forward. *The officer explained that this covers 5 years and if not accessed in year one, it is re-fazed into the following year.*

Councillor Singleton asked if there was a risk of slippage regarding the Council Tax deficit which is set to be recovered over 3 years. *The officer explained that there is some risk – Council Tax general growth assumptions have been pared down.*

Lucy Hodge asked the following questions:

- Last year we had two other tables, new capital projects etc. Do we have less growth this year or is the information presented differently. *The officer explained that this is a recognition of the financial situation – there is not the same scale of investment. Funding is on essential activity only. There will be more detail on this in the pack for Cabinet and Council.*
- Regarding the £50k saving under Transport – suggested areas are gully emptying, grit filling and drainage systems. I get a lot of emails on these issues. I would like more detail. *The officer stated that a further note will be sent with details.*
- Regarding the proposed £22k savings in security cameras for Park and Ride – I would like more detail. *The officer stated that a further note will be sent with details.*
- The New Capital Recommendations for office reconsideration costs, is this for Keynsham Civic Centre improvements. *The officer explained that this does refer to the re-imagining of the Civic Centre and efficiencies that this investment will help achieve from lower utilisation of other buildings.*

Councillor Duguid asked the following questions:

- There is a lot of concentration on savings and reduction. Are you satisfied that we are looking at new income streams.
- Tourism – hard to predict, what assumptions have been made.

- It would be good to look at the risk register (although not duplicate the work of the Audit Committee)

Councillor Samuel, Cabinet Member for Resources, explained that it is difficult to predict what will happen with the Commercial Estate income. In the past we have negotiated with tenants with rentals based on the market but now many businesses are struggling. There no business relief or furlough after March. This means the Council cannot predict with certainty. He explained that the Council does not hold all of the cards (for example Government policy on dealing with the pandemic) so it is hard to de risk our budget. Things will be clearer later in the year. The risk is acknowledged but cannot be completely mitigated. This particular income stream is highly volatile.

Councillor Duguid asked if a special task force is needed or if we are already looking at new income streams (although understandably, the focus is on savings). *The officer explained that, in terms of the budget, we will pursue new income streams. It is difficult to mitigate this risk in the short term but we are thinking about the commercial components of the Council. We need to carefully consider options and income diversification. We need to look at building back income.*

Councillor Elliot asked the following questions:

- There is a post reduction in Children and Adult services. This is surprising and should it be revisited. *The officer explained that the post reduction has been planned for some time, it will be grant funded for a year and then reviewed.*
- There is a post reduction in a Children's Centre, are there more details on this). *The officer explained that the post has been vacant for some time, we can deliver the service as it is now.*

Councillor Myers asked for an explanation regarding borrowing from reserves. *The officer explained that:*

*Years 1 & 2 - c£13m borrowed from reserves
Years 4 & 5 – the money is paid back*

The officer explained that this is factored into the budget setting. He added that there will be a more detailed section in the Cabinet report that sets out the use of reserves.

In response to a query from Councillor Hughes on how things have changed from the October 2020 Medium Term Financial Strategy *the officer explained that the numbers have been completely refreshed, taking into account the 2021/22 provisional settlement. There has been a fundamental re-basing of the numbers. He also stated that the loss regarding parking was the result of a number of factors including Covid and Climate Emergency considerations.*

Councillor Hodge asked why the Corporate Plan Maintenance had changed (£10m to £13m). *The officer stated that a further note will be sent with details.*

Councillor Hodge asked if the highways maintenance funding was a normal level? *The officer responded that this was linked to an asset-based assessment.*

Councillor Myers thanked officers for the responses and asked Panel members if they had anything to add:

Councillor Warrington stated that she had a few concerns which could hopefully be negated:

- Going digital – concerns about how this can be discriminatory. This has been shown with home schooling. Also issues such as Broadband connection and capability issues.
- Adult Social Care – looking at these savings, this service cost money (such as incontinence pads)
- Capital Expenditure for Climate Emergency – concerned that we make sure renewable energy is spread across the district.
- Concerned about charging for waste. Fly tipping has a disproportionate impact in rural areas more than the city.
- We need a Bath Waste Centre
- There will potentially be more deaths due to Covid – questions on the capacity of Bereavement Services.
- Concerns about road maintenance in rural areas.
- Concerns about much of the budget being Bath centric such as Low Traffic Neighbourhoods.

Councillor Duguid stated that it was useful to have clarification on the reserves. We don't know what we will get from the Government for the loss of Heritage and Commercial Estate income. This is not a normal budget and we need to work with officers regarding the Risk Register.

Councillor Macfie stated that there was a lot of positive information from the WECA scrutiny panel and we need to focus on where the money is available from WECA and how to access it. Also buses may be funded by the Government in the short term but in the long term, this will become an issue for Local Authorities. Hopefully rural buses will be protected. Also we need to see more money going into North East Somerset – there has been none for the Enterprise Zone in Midsomer Norton.

As Chair, Councillor Myers thanked the officers and Panel members for their contributions and explained that he would be reporting PDS Panel feedback to Cabinet and Council (Note – the minutes from each Panel will also be circulated)

Good Evening

I am Theresa Franklin from Cavendish Crescent.

This is me with our councillors Lucy Hodge and Mark Elliott.

Note to self - Show visual

The first line in the council's manifesto says:

WE ARE A LISTENING COUNCIL THAT ACTS FOR RESIDENTS

Note to self - Show visual

The turnkey solution to make this happen is

1. Opening up the council to make sure the people in charge heard your voice
2. Letting residents make decisions to get better outcomes
3. Making the council more transparent and responsive.

Note to self - Show visual

SADLY, IN THIS INSTANCE YOU FAILED US

You failed **All THE RESIDENTS OF BATH**, golfers, walkers, lovers of this green open space.

**The Approach Golf Course is an iconic tract of land,
within an area of outstanding natural beauty,
in the middle of a World Heritage City
and with majestic trees which fall under the
Tree Protection Ordinance.**

Yet you, our council chose to put The Approach Golf Course up for tender twice – in the middle of a pandemic.

Without ANY Consultation, whatsoever
With a Complete lack of transparency

And it gets worse

The Tender process chosen is what we perceive to be an undemocratic bidding process which allows the council to make all the decisions without any resident involvement

Our trusted councillors, Lucy and Mark, who opposed your single bid, became our only contact with you.

These Junior Councillors bravely opposed senior councillors with long service and high ranks.

So, we the residents,
close neighbours of the approach golf course,
found our strong
united
collective
community voice.

And you all heard us loud and clear.

On BBC Radio, in the press, on the neighbourhood Portal, on twitter, on the Approach course. You registered the 4220 signatures on Ben Reeds "Keep the Approach Golf Course Open". And you read the many emails sent to you by people from all walks of life across Bath.

Note to self - Show visual

When you cast your vote tonight

LISTEN as you Promised, HEAR our voice as you Promised
and Get the better outcome for residents of Bath as you Promised.

VOTE NO TO "GOLF DERIVED" SPORTS

Pause this process

Engage with us

**and let's find the right solution together in a more positive manner
after the pandemic. Thank you**

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I'm pleased to have the opportunity to address cabinet about the future for the Approach Golf Course.

My fundamental point here is a simple one. Last summer the residents were told by the cabinet member responsible that any move away from golf, on the 18 hole side of the Approach course at least, would not happen without proper consultation. The only bid the cabinet have in front of them is not for golf. Whatever the semantics of whether it can be described as "golf-derived", I think we can all agree, because the cabinet papers state it, it isn't traditional golf. I believe those two facts – that a commitment was given to properly consult if there was any move away from golf, and the fact that this is a move away from golf – means that the cabinet have no choice but to turn down this bid.

There are many other points that could be made, and I'm sure other speakers will expand on them:

- The fact that the procurement process only produced one bid, which is never a positive indicator for a procurement
- The fact that officers having to run a procurement process under very difficult circumstances the middle of a pandemic
- The fact that, anecdotally, golf has actually had a massive upsurge in interest over the summer due to the pandemic, and we don't know what the golf industry will look like post-pandemic
- The fact that the Approach course allows cheap, municipal access to a sport which is often seen as expensive and elitist

But ultimately, I think the fact that the cabinet member committed to proper consultation and engagement with the community on any change from golf, and this is a change from golf when such consultation hasn't occurred, is a strong enough argument on its own.

The LibDem manifesto in 2019 said we would "listen to residents and put them first". We committed to "opening up the council to make sure the people in charge hear your voice". "Letting residents make decisions to get better outcomes." And "making the council more transparent and responsible." I realise the world has changed a great deal since May 2019, but these should still be our fundamental, driving principles, and accepting this bid under these circumstances would fly in the face of those principles. I'm therefore confident the cabinet will not want to accept it.

Thank you.

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We know Bath and North East Somerset Council is committed to reducing health inequalities, and since 2003, when Bath Rugby Foundation was born, it has been a central part of its mission statement too.

However, if we want to lead the way and improve the mental and physical health of everyone in our city, we believe exploring ways to retain this vital green space for the benefit of the whole community is the best solution.

By using the assets of this great city, and by keeping this green space open, we think this gives us the best chance possible of improving the health of everyone – regardless of their income.

At Bath Rugby Foundation we support vulnerable children and young people, because we know this strengthens communities, and stronger communities are better for everyone in them.

Rugby is where we started, but today we use walking, running, golf, cycling and many other sports to change the lives of children and young people who have had the toughest start in life.

Every year we use sport and education to improve the mental and physical wellbeing of thousands of vulnerable youngsters, and the pandemic has strengthened our belief that in any economic downturn it is the vulnerable in our communities who suffer the most, and a lack of physical fitness and poor nutrition is at the heart of this.



We know, as we come out of the pandemic, we, and charities like us, are going to be needed more than ever.

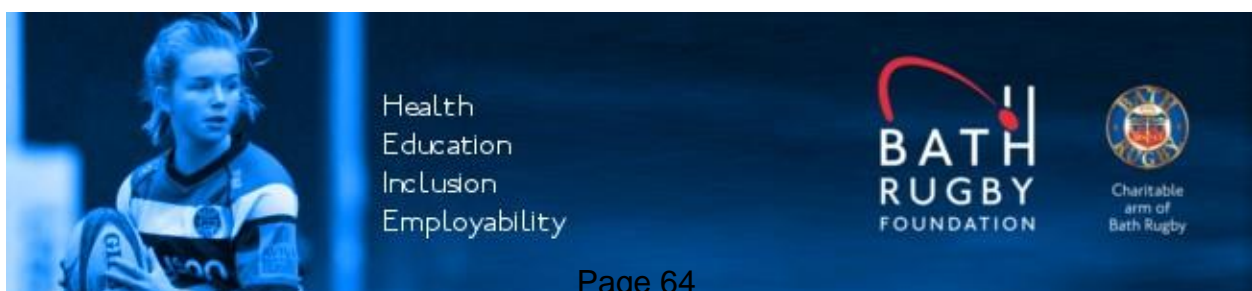
Bath Approach Golf Course sits between some of the most affluent and some of the most disadvantaged sections of our city – a city that is already one of the most unequal in the UK. We understand keeping it as a golf course may be unsustainable, but losing the site as a space for everyone would create wider health divisions.

Availability of affordable grass-roots sport is a necessity, not a luxury, and by retaining this space we can ensure the health gap between the rich and poor in Bath does not become even wider than it already is.

Bath Rugby Foundation has been using this site for many years and our disabled students have received the greatest benefit from this affordable space. It would be a huge blow to lose it.

For almost two decades Bath Rugby Foundation has demonstrated a successful track record of partnering with other charities, businesses and the local authority to make things happen, and were you to vote against this proposal tonight Bath Rugby Foundation stands ready to be part of a strong and diverse consortium to breathe life back into this incredible space.

Thank you for your time this evening.



I am Patricia Ludlam and am representing Sion Hill and Summerhill Road Residents Association.

Sion Hill borders the north side of the approach Course and many properties have boundaries and gates onto it.

We oppose any change of use of the High Common and we want golf to continue there.

High Common has been a park for 140 years It is a beautiful green space, with the best views of Bath from the top. It is situated in the heart of The World Heritage Setting of Bath and is very important within that setting. We need to protect Bath's Heritage.

I spoke at the Cabinet meeting last July to support Golf remaining on the Approach Course when its future was in doubt.

At the end of that meeting C. Crossley summed up the debate by stating that Golf would definitely remain on the 18hole course, As Residents we were all relieved and relaxed over the summer, especially when he gave further assurances.

The golf operation has been closed for a year due to the Pandemic and the High Common has proved to be a place of refuge for young and old to exercise, enjoy the panoramic views and escape from lockdown. Golfers still come with their own clubs and manage to play at quiet times. Snow brought out the toboggans; fun for everyone.

However, - A new operator had to be found

The Council had decided to re define the High Common, as a Sports venue, not a park. It is the Council's view that sports venues have to be self-financing. The land had previously been maintained by the Council but it is no longer able to do so.

Disc golf was prepared to take this on as little maintenance of the land is required once it is set up. It was the only bid so became the preferred bid in spite of it being totally inappropriate for this historic site. Disc golf is not found in residential areas because of the danger from flying discs. Usually found near playing fields or in countryside venues. It is noisy, harmful to trees and to the land. It is mostly played by young people.

Golf is enjoyed by young and old. It has existed on High Common for 60 years in harmony with residents. It is special here because anyone can come and play without joining a club and it is affordable for students and visitors to Bath. Local golf players and residents have been coming forward with ideas of how golf could be encouraged, by engaging with local schools, universities and hotels.

We urge Cabinet not to award the contract for Disc golf but engage with local residents who have so much interest and help to offer.

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Hello everyone and thanks for the opportunity to state my views on the future of the Approach Golf Course. As a regular golfer who doesn't play golf anywhere else, I have spent thousands of hours there over the years, and this evening I'm representing the many other regular and occasional golfers, a number of whom I have corresponded with over recent weeks.

For those who don't know the background to today's discussion, the Approach Course has over the course of the last 9-10 months been dragged into what was initially a consultation about the future of Entry Hill Golf Course, resulting in a tender process seeking new operators for both sites. There has always been an inconsistency between the extensive public consultation that took place on Entry Hill, and the lack of any public consultation on the future of the Approach Course – all the more surprising when you consider that the Approach Course is a central and highly visible, sensitive site, not to mention very popular, and historically consistently profitable barring all but a very recent period under the care of an inexperienced and frankly, reluctant provider.

With this in mind last summer I started the petition on Change.org to keep golf at the Approach Course, and around that time was reassured by a commitment from Cllr Crossley that there would be no change of use on at least the 18 hole side of the course. When last week it became clear that no golf operator had submitted a tender, I and other supporters started to publicise the petition again, resulting in overwhelming support and more than 3,000 additional signatures in less than a week. Since I emailed the petition to cabinet members just a few days ago the number of signatures has more than doubled, and as of lunchtime today stood at over 4,200.

I want to make it clear that these signatures are not based on rumour or misunderstanding about any 'secret plans' to sell or build on the course. Neither are they interested in finger-pointing or apportioning blame for the gradual decline of the course over a period of ten years or more. They are simply asking the council to honour the commitment it made last summer to keep this unique facility in its current form – because it complements the heritage setting; because it effectively doubles as a park for many other casual users; because it's used by people of all ages and backgrounds; because it's affordable, accessible, sustainable, improves physical and mental wellbeing, and because it's fun.

I urge the council to note the tidal wave of affection for the Approach Course that has been seen over recent weeks and honour their commitment to retain golf on the site. In the immediate term this means abandoning the current procurement process and continuing low-level maintenance of the course, in turn giving time to work with the community to find a solution that secures the long-term future of public golf in Bath.

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Approach Golf course February 2021

I am Sally Parkes and I live adjacent to and have access to the Golf Course. I represent Sion Hill & Summerhill Road RA.

Nearly all of our members use the Golf Course to walk to and from the city. Hundreds of people a day, of all ages walk, exercise, jog, walk dogs, play golf, and generally enjoy the park setting, in harmony. It gives a sense of freedom, being in the fresh air and relieves mental stress. It also alleviates the use of cars. It is the lung of the city, accessible by all.

Freedom of pedestrian access contributes to the CleanAir Zone and Lowers traffic.

Golf has become more popular during the pandemic, and Clubs report that memberships are over subscribed, where better than an affordable place for young people to begin and carry on their golf. People have come from all over Bath and beyond to use the golf facility.

We want to be able to walk on our Common, to roam freely.

We do not want to see gates, nets or fences, or blobs of concrete on which to erect disc goals. The local feeling to keep the status quo has been strongly demonstrated.

There is also a very successful petition to Save the Approach Golf Course on change.org, which has thousands of signatures.

We want the Council to defer their decision to change anything on the Approach Golf course until market forces normalise and we are out of pandemic measures.

A deferment would allow the opportunity to obtain more than one tender. It would also allow for the Public Consultation we have NOT had.

It would then show that the Council can be open, honest and fair in their dealings. There has been a lack of transparency in keeping us informed about the bids. How can a decision be made when information is withheld?

At the last Cabinet meeting we were told there would be no change of use. We hear that disc golf is to be introduced. We see no resemblance to golf - no holes, no flags, no clubs, no balls. Golf does not destroy the present environment. This is a change of use of this space as we know it.

We have just heard that now one of the options to the Cabinet is not to proceed to the preferred bidder process. We urge the Cabinet to listen to our local Ward Councillors Lucy Hodge and Mark Elliott, and to also hear the Bath residents' wishes.

This UNESCO city is known for its buildings nestled amongst green spaces. At the very least we would wish this space to be maintained as a park.

Regards

Sally Parkes.

BATHNES COUNCIL CABINET MEETING 11/02/2021

JUSTIN DRAEGER SPEAKING NOTE (FOR ATTACHMENT TO THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING)

I, Justin Draeger, make the following representations in my capacity as chair of The Cavendish Road Society, the Residents Association covering Cavendish Road, Park Street and Park Street. These are areas that overlook the Approach Golf Course/High Common and our residents make extensive use of this beautiful green space.

I strongly urge the Cabinet to reject the only bid which has been made for the Approach Golf Course and to pause the whole process of finding a service provider for the Course, at least until the pandemic has come to an end.

I would like to make 2 preliminary points:

1. It is extremely unfortunate, in my estimation, that such an amount of disinformation has been forthcoming over the past days about what decision the Cabinet is being asked to make tonight. It has been said to residents: “Don’t worry this is just the start of the process. Nothing has been decided yet. Residents will be consulted”. Politely put, this is simply disingenuous. The people who have been saying this know perfectly well that the Cabinet’s decision tonight is a binary one: to accept or reject the bid. If the bid is accepted, the Council is locked into the contractual process. It would not be possible for the Council to say that they want golf on the Course if the bidder has offered to provide disc golf. Residents will only be consulted, to the extent it could even be called a “consultation”, about implementation, not the substance of the sport provision.
2. Residents have been prevented from knowing any of the details of the bid whatsoever under the pretext that this is what is required in the bidding process. Even tonight residents have no clear idea of what the bidder has offered. Yet the Council felt that it was right and proper last week to tweet trumpeting that an exciting new sport provision was arriving at the Approach Golf Course. This before residents had a chance to speak

tonight and before the Cabinet had even voted on the bid. Frankly, this sort of conduct is undemocratic and an abuse of process.

Having made these preliminary points, I want to say the following. Last year, in a meeting with concerned residents, Cllr Crossley gave residents a clear, unequivocal undertaking that golf or golf derived activity would remain on the 18 hole course at the Approach. There was therefore no need for a public consultation, he said.

When pressed to explain what he meant by “golf derived” activity, he became annoyed saying he did not understand why residents were harping on this point because he was simply using the phrase since he felt that some people considered pitch-and-putt golf not to be true golf.

He reiterated there would be no change of use on the 18 hole course. Residents took him at his word.

Any right-thinking person would consider that an arrangement whereby golfers are thrown off the course they have used for the past 60 years in favour of a “sport” that involves throwing a disc at a net concreted into the surface of the Golf Course amounts to a change of use.

Residents understand that disc golf would also mean less maintenance of the Approach, leaving extensive unkempt areas which will make it much more difficult for parents, children, dog-walkers and alpine walkers to use it safely (but presumably providing excellent places to throw beer cans, used needles and condoms).

In summary, I strongly urge the Cabinet to reject the bid that is on the table and pause until at least the pandemic is over. It is commercial madness to rush to accept the only offer that is on the table at a time like this, particularly when the proposal is almost universally opposed by residents and golfers alike.

Thank you.

Emilio Pimentel-Reid

Chair Friends of the High Common

Statement B&NES Cabinet Meeting

11 February 2021

STARTS

Hello I'm Emilio Pimentel-Reid . In normal times I enjoy visiting our welcoming local park up to 3x times a day for my health and well-being.

I am also the Chair of the 'Friends of the High Common' a stakeholders group started in January 2019 and ask the cabinet to reject this bid.

For those who aren't yet members, **The Friends of the High Common (RVP)** was set up to protect our welcoming and inclusive local green space for all those who use it regularly including golfers, dog owners, nordic walkers, children, the elderly, allotment holders and others in our community.

Our aim is to maintain the happy coexistence which has been in place for decades and to ensure the park is responsibly managed and not threatened by inappropriate activities which could disturb this balance.

We have been trying to engage constructively with the council for two years and for the last 18 months the council has just stopped listening to us or engaging positively with the local community.

Given that I and other residents have been trying to discuss our concerns with the council, this attempt at a fait accompli appears to be a deliberate effort by B&NES to impose a decision which they know local residents will not agree with.

- We met with Paul Crossley in July 2019 to express our concerns about the future of the park.
- We also held at least two further meetings in 2019 with Senior B&NES council officials Mandy Bishop, Marc Higgins and others to seek to explain to them how the park is actually used by residents. We offered to engage constructively with the council to ensure all stakeholders were considered in future decisions.
- The council is well aware of resident's strong attachment and love of the park which makes their current actions in refusing to consult even more extraordinary.
- It appears to me that the council have deliberately sought to not engage. This is a shocking way for any council to behave.

As a group we understand the council would like to encourage more people to use the High Common -but unlike Entry Hill they somehow don't bother to ask us how we would like to use the park. This doesn't make sense.

1. Golfers who are members of the park community are about to be chunked off the Approach golf course after 60 years. Most people would regard a golf course being replaced by something other than a golf course as a material change of use.
2. This is a very bad time to seek best value on the Approach Golf Course in the middle of a pandemic. The council is unlikely to be getting the best response when the outdoor leisure sector is so depressed. This appears to be a fire sale.
3. Even our local councillors now understand this bid must be rejected and have followed our campaign not to accept this bid.

At this Point-

1. The rational, sensitive thing to do when there is a major decision affecting so directly the lives of local residents in the middle of the pandemic is to pause.
2. As stakeholders we would like to see a delay in the decision process to allow for public consultation so that local residents' views and concerns can be properly taken into account before any final decision is made.

Thank you for your time and for voting against the bid.

ENDS

I am a local resident asking cabinet to reject this bid and open it up under different rules once we are free of Covid restrictions.

Paul Crossley has stated the current procurement process operated under OJ EU regulations which I believe are not now applicable. A new procurement process could allow the public access to more detail.

We have been denied information about the bid, the bidder or the length of the Contract other than a statement by Paul Crossley that future use would be golf or golf related.

We have been denied consultation. on the basis that there would not be a change of use at Approach hence no need to consult. No professional Golf operator has bid for this contract so we have to assume that his term golf or golf related has little meaning.

High Common occupies a beautiful green space, a green lung in the west of Bath where these groups have enjoyed their sport and leisure in harmony for over 60 years.

The 2016 B&NES Green Space Strategy recognised the Value of parks and other spaces to the lives of residents and importantly offered a context against which future investment and spending decisions should be made. That 2016 principle is relevant here. today.

As this exercise was prompted by the need to stem losses I assume that

the bidder sees a way of making a profit and as golf is not seen as profitable right now we can be pretty sure that the game of Golf will not be central to this operation. but that throwing a metal frisbee will be. Is this really Golf related

Are Games, described as family fun, appropriate at this site and does this measure up to Paul Crossley's promise? They appeal to a different demographic and leave little room for the genuine golf community.

If it was your intention to change the use of the Approach course, why didn't you say so and consult to find out what People want from their green space instead of creating such dismay and anger amongst the community.

So, Reject the bid: consult to get some facts, listen to local people and research the future of golf post pandemic. Keep low level maintenance until an equitable solution is reached.

Do not be the administration that votes to remove B&NES last public Golf course, at a time when outdoor leisure activity for ALL ages is critical to wellbeing.

I am reminded of a quote from Edmund Burke,
'Representatives are not merely delegates of people but rather trustees of the public good well surely this issue is indeed about the public good
Thank you.

Lyn Jacobs. February 2021

I, Robert Sumner, make the following representations in my capacity as a local resident of the area (I live on Park Street) with a direct view onto the High Common / Approach Golf Course. I am also treasurer of The Cavendish Road Society and a local art gallery in Margaret's Buildings.

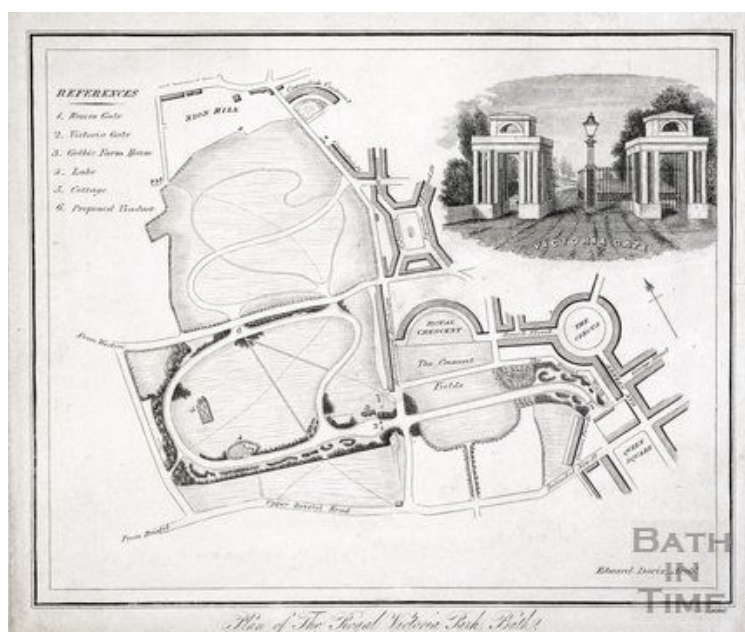
My own house overlooks the Approach Golf Course/High Common and my three children, myself and my wife make extensive use of this beautiful and natural space for relaxation as well as the golf course. My children are able to connect with nature and the space is an incredibly important part of our wellbeing.

I also urge the Cabinet to reject the only bid which has been made for the Approach Golf Course and to pause the whole process of finding a solution / operator for the Course, at least until the pandemic has come to an end and we can return to normal life and in full and transparent consultation with those individuals whose lives it directly affects. As a local businessman with an art gallery in Margaret's Buildings I am also aware of the abundance of local passion for the High Common and recent discussions with individuals and locals concerning its future have always come to the same conclusion; to leave this beautiful space alone.

I am worried at the Council's plan to change the character of the Approach Golf Course and strongly object to proposals for change. In 1830 the Grade I listed Royal Victoria Park was laid out as a "Landscape Garden" in the tradition of Capability Brown and Repton with appropriate tree planting and Garden Buildings, which included the Band Stand, the Gothic Farm House, the Victoria Monument and the many garden ornaments, some of which were added later.

The High Common (i.e. the "Approach Golf Course") was clearly part of this scheme as can be witnessed by the lay out and tree planting, by the opposing gates of the Golf course and The Park and indeed plans. It is particularly important as it incorporates the Landscape Garden Tradition in an urban setting for the enjoyment of the local people of Bath, bringing into reality the concept of *Rus in Urbe*.

The Royal Victoria Park and the Golf Course are within the Bath World Heritage Site. In the light of this the original historic landscape design of what is now the Golf Course needs to be kept in place undisturbed and its importance as an integral part of the Royal Victoria Park recognised and protected.



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I am making this statement as Chair of Lansdown Crescent Association. We would ask that you decide NOT to proceed with the preferred bidder for the Approach Golf Course/High Common.

Our Ward Councillors, Lucy Hodge and Mark Elliott both members of your Party are very hardworking and respected by many in our Community. Simply put, we trust their judgement. If they tell us that the Council's preferred bidder for the High Common/Approach should not proceed then we feel that you should trust their judgement too.

They like many of the residents surrounding the High Common/Approach Golf Course understand that many people including Lansdown Crescent members and myself use this space daily, many have done so for decades. There is a harmonious coexistence of golfers some from clubs, some simply for pitch and putt, walkers, dog walkers, alpine walkers, and children using it in the summer and the winter months. Any divergence from this existing use is a "change of use" and should involve careful public consultation.

This is not an unloved, under used, unviable golf course to be signed away for up to 20 years without careful consideration. This is a beautiful space which is much loved, it is full of trees which are protected under TPOs, it is traversed with many public footpaths and is in the heart of a World heritage setting.

Decisions regarding its future should be made carefully and wisely, any decision to approve the bidder tonight would be opaque, done without local consultation and potentially without understanding the impacts on public access or protected trees. I use the term "potentially" because we have not been permitted to see the details of the tender.

With regard to the tender. You may have been told that there is time for consultation after tonight's decision. But this would not be meaningful "real" consultation it would not materially affect the Bidder's tender as set out in Council papers (Cabinet meeting Agenda : BNES Decision on award of a contract to a new operator for the Approach Golf Course site following a procurement process)

1.3 Once a bidder is appointed they will engage with the local community on their proposals before contracts are signed to consider refinements to their tender. THE TENDER WILL HOWEVER HAVE TO REMAIN SUBSTANTIALLY SIMILAR TO THAT SUBMITTED AND EVALUATED.

I therefore ask that you listen to our Ward Councillors, your colleagues in Lansdown Ward. Pause, maintain the High Common in the current way of low level maintenance until Covid restrictions lift and economic conditions become clearer. Do not rush into a decision which cannot be undone.

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ENTRY HILL GOLF COURSE

Good evening,

My carbon footprint increased finding an alternative to the closed Entry Hill. But what a find - 9 hole, handicap rated, affordable, tee times filled from early morning until late afternoon 7 days a week. A welcoming family concern attracting all ages to course and cafe. More people, more active, more often.

You have a gem at Entry Hill. Yet every public statement, even the Lemon Gazelle Survey, was prefaced with talk of declining numbers and financial losses. What level of mismanagement have you overseen? What burden have you imposed on council tax payers? Even part paying a Council Officer for oversight.

I am worried that Cabinet has been so misled about the prospects for Entry Hill.

Worried that you have the old fashioned view that golf courses are 'green deserts, not aware of golfers care for the environment, their work with wild life organisations

Worried you are unaware of the bid's liaison with local residents keen to maintain free community access to the site.

Horrified by the bold announcement on Walk Ride Bath's Social Media Page- 95% certainty that Bath will have a Mountain Bike Park, 3 such bids, golf is the lowest rated option of all. A Bike Park was unaffordable in July. Has the Council bowed to pressure from a nationwide online survey to subsidise its construction? What about the 1,000 signature golf petition? How alarming that confidential information has reached the public domain at this very late stage. Sprung on a totally unprepared community where it was the least popular option.

The other bid presumably 'The Forest of the Imagination' was heralded as a 'major new visitor attraction' A park was a popular survey response. Yet how much free access will be available?

Cabinet please be honest. Are you in danger of asking Council taxpayers to be responsible for grabbing grants and taking loans to construct what might be a White Elephant? Are you about to cause years of upheaval to a settled community in pursuit of a new major attraction? In these cash strapped times most residents would prefer you to concentrate all your resources on your stewardship of this heritage city, steadily becoming defaced by graffiti and litter. I feel residents might prefer the success of my present golf club recreated at Entry Hill, with input from the community, the local Wildlife Trust, the RSPB. A cost free, simple solution to a self-inflicted problem. No grandiose schemes please. Bath citizens have long memories of those.

Elizabeth Hallam

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Good evening Dine and Cabinet members

I am the Chair of the Entry Hill Community Association, I am speaking on behalf of the Entry Hill residents.

Our neighbourhood has had much to discuss over the last year with the future of the golf course site right at the top of the list.

For the past 12 months Entry Hill Golf Course has provided some of the key elements of what the local and wider community had requested for an inclusive, open community space.

It has been a shame that in the midst of Covid where golf was one of the few sports allowed, our site was closed to golf, however, people of all ages have appreciated the benefits of having this wonderful green lung and safe place to exercise on the door step of local residents.

Whether your passion is golf, wildlife preservation or nature spotting the Entry Hill

site has provided it. Families, dog walkers, solo walkers and budding young artists - all co-existing and enjoying our Conservation area.

We would hope that the OJEU process has taken into consideration, in both its deliberations and scoring, the views of the local residents at the Odd Down drop in event and the Lemon Gazelle online consultation, which both showed clear, strong support for what the Bath and wider community residents hoped for in a local facility - a community park and cafe with walking and running trails. And the golf ladies local petition with 1000 signatures did show support for golf to remain at the site.

We have been appreciative to those bidders who took up the opportunity to talk to us and better understand the Entry Hill community. We will continue to work where ever possible to make sure that our key local amenity is a positive contribution to building a genuine 'liveable' neighbourhood.

We now hope that Entry Hill will receive a viable amenity appropriate for all ages and abilities.

Whoever the preferred bidder is they do need to understand that we are a community who cherishes our green oasis on the site and so we request that Cabinet, and the process, ensure that we can engage with the preferred bidder at the first opportunity, as it is the local neighbourhood and our wider community who will be the most affected by the Cabinet's decision tonight.

Thank you.

