

Council

Date: Thursday 21st January 2021

Time: 6.30 pm

Venue: Zoom Online -

<https://www.youtube.com/bathnescouncil>

To: All Members of the Council

Dear Member

You are invited to attend a virtual meeting of the **Council** on **Thursday 21st January 2021** via zoom.

The agenda is set out overleaf.

Yours sincerely



Jo Morrison
Democratic Services Manager
for Chief Executive

Jo Morrison

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NOTES:

1. **Inspection of Papers:** Papers are available for inspection as follows:

Council's website: <https://democracy.bathnes.gov.uk/ieDocHome.aspx?bcr=1>

2. **Details of decisions taken at this meeting** can be found in the minutes which will be circulated with the agenda for the next meeting. In the meantime, details can be obtained by contacting as above.

3. **Recording at Meetings:-**

The Council will broadcast the images and sounds live via the internet

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The Council may also use the images/sound recordings on its social media site or share with other organisations, such as broadcasters.

4. **Public Speaking at Meetings**

The Council has a scheme to encourage the public to make their views known at meetings. They may make a statement relevant to what the meeting has power to do. They may also present a petition or a deputation on behalf of a group.

Advance notice is required not less than two clear working days before the meeting. This means that for meetings held on Thursdays notice must be received in Democratic Services by 5.00pm the previous Monday.

Advance notice for receipt of questions to Council is 4 clear working days before the meeting.

The Council now has a maximum time limit for this, so any requests to speak cannot be guaranteed if the list is full.

Further details of the scheme can be found at:

<https://democracy.bathnes.gov.uk/ecCatDisplay.aspx?sch=doc&cat=12942>

5. **Supplementary information for meetings**

Additional information and Protocols and procedures relating to meetings

<https://democracy.bathnes.gov.uk/ecCatDisplay.aspx?sch=doc&cat=13505>

Council - Thursday, 21st January, 2021

at 6.30 pm in the Zoom Online - <https://www.youtube.com/bathnescouncil>

A G E N D A

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

At this point in the meeting declarations of interest are received from Members in any of the agenda items under consideration at the meeting. Members are asked to complete the green interest forms circulated to groups in their pre-meetings (which will be announced at the Council Meeting) to indicate:

- (a) The agenda item number in which they have an interest to declare.
- (b) The nature of their interest.
- (c) Whether their interest is **a disclosable pecuniary interest** *or* an **other interest**,
(as defined in Part 2, A and B of the Code of Conduct and Rules for Registration of Interests)

Any Member who needs to clarify any matters relating to the declaration of interests is recommended to seek advice from the Council's Monitoring Officer or a member of his staff before the meeting to expedite dealing with the item during the meeting.

3. ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE CHAIR OF THE COUNCIL OR FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

These are matters of information for Members of the Council. No decisions will be required arising from the announcements.

4. TO ANNOUNCE ANY URGENT BUSINESS AGREED BY THE CHAIR

If there is any urgent business arising since the formal agenda was published, the Chair will announce this and give reasons why it has been agreed for consideration at this meeting. In making this decision, the Chair will, where practicable, have consulted with the Leaders of the Political Groups. Any documentation on urgent business will be circulated at the meeting, if not made available previously.

5. QUESTIONS, STATEMENTS, PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

The Democratic Services Manager will announce any submissions received. The Council will be invited to decide what action it wishes to take, if any, on the matters raised in these submissions. As the questions received and the answers given will be circulated in written form there is no requirement for them to be read out at the meeting. The questions and answers will be published with the draft minutes.

6. CLIMATE & ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCY PROGRESS REPORT (Pages 5 - 14)

This report updates Council on the action the Council has taken since the last Climate

Emergency progress report in October 2019, further to the update and review of strategies and plans at the Climate Emergency and Sustainability PDS Panel in March 2020. This report includes an update on the Council's response to the Ecological Emergency declared in July 2020.

7. FOOD POVERTY ACTION PLAN UPDATE (Pages 15 - 48)

The process for taking forward the development of a Food Poverty Action Plan for B&NES was agreed with the Children, Adult, Health and Wellbeing Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel on 28th January 2020. This included the formation of a local Food Poverty Steering Group to drive the work and support implementation of the plan. This report provides an update on progress, local priorities, the evolving action plan and sets out the case to widen the scope of the food agenda for comment and engagement.

8. STANDARDS COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT (Pages 49 - 60)

To present the Committee's annual report for 2019/20.

9. QUESTIONS, STATEMENTS, PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

The Democratic Services Manager will announce any submissions received. The Council will be invited to decide what action it wishes to take, if any, on the matters raised in these submissions. As the questions received and the answers given will be circulated in written form there is no requirement for them to be read out at the meeting. The questions and answers will be published with the draft minutes.

The Committee Administrator for this meeting is Jo Morrison who can be contacted on 01225 394358.

Bath & North East Somerset Council		
MEETING/	Council	
MEETING DATE:	21 January 2020	
TITLE:	Climate & Ecological Emergency Progress Report	
WARD:	All	
AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM		
<p>List of attachments to this report:</p> <p>Please list all the appendices here, clearly indicating any which are exempt and the reasons for exemption</p>		

1 THE ISSUE

- 1.1 This report updates Council on the action the Council has taken since the last Climate Emergency progress report in October 2019, further to the update and review of strategies and plans at the Climate Emergency and Sustainability PDS Panel in March 2020.
- 1.2 This report includes an update on the Council's response to the Ecological Emergency declared in July 2020.
- 1.3 This report explains how the new Renewal Programme and the Renewal Vision workstream are enabling progress on the commitments made in both environmental emergency declarations.

2 RECOMMENDATION

The Council is asked to:

- 2.1 Note the wide-ranging action that is being taken to tackle the climate and ecological emergency including:
 - a) Strategic re-positioning of the core climate and ecological emergency policy through the new Renewal Programme to the heart of the Council's place-based work;
 - b) The development of the Renewal Vision with 'green recovery' at its heart, in order to create a stronger, more diverse and greener economy in the future;

- c) The range of specific service actions undertaken or in hand, including, but not limited to: the Local Plan Partial Update in order to response to the climate and ecological emergency and the Liveable Neighbourhood development;
- d) The climate leadership training for members and senior officers that will be rolled out in 2021 followed by the carbon literacy training for staff.

2.2 Note the specialist work underway that will inform further detailed action planning on renewable energy development.

2.3 Note the degree of community engagement activity achieved despite the Covid constraints, enabling residents to have a bigger say.

2.4 Note the initial response to the ecological emergency.

2.5 Note the delay, due to Covid, in undertaking the annual carbon footprint review of the area and the review of the pathway to net zero carbon and endorse the recommendation that the results of this review are reported to the Climate Emergency & Sustainability PDS Panel meeting on 16 March 2021.

3 THE REPORT

3.1 Introduction – Climate & Ecological Emergency

- (1) In March 2019 the Council committed to providing the leadership to enable Bath and North East Somerset to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030. As a first step, the Council commissioned the first area wide carbon foot-printing study, which enabled the identification of three priority areas for action:
 - a) Buildings' energy efficiency and zero carbon new build;
 - b) Shift to mass transport, walking and cycling;
 - c) Rapid and large-scale increase in renewable energy.
- (2) In October 2019, the outline action plan identified the following strategic enabling actions:
 - a) To develop place-based partnership working to drive action across the area;
 - b) To embed action within key Council services;
 - c) To commission further specialist work to enable action planning on each of the key priorities;
 - d) To engage with the community.
- (3) The following section 3.2 will outline the action taken in relation to the above in the context of the impact of the Covid pandemic and the development of the Council's Renewal Programme and Renewal Vision Workstream.

- (4) The Council declared an ecological emergency in July 2019. A summary of the response to the commitments in this declaration and next steps are outlined in section 3.3 below.

3.2 Progress Update – Climate Emergency Action Plan & Renewal Vision

- (1) The Covid pandemic caused a delay to some of the action planned for 2020, but progress has been made corporately and services have risen to the challenge, taking a wide range of actions, including a considerable amount of community engagement.
- (2) The Corporate Strategy (2020 -2024) adopted in February 2020 highlights tackling the climate and nature emergency as one of two core policies and notes the need for a step change across the public, private and community sectors in our area to achieve the net zero 2030 goal and commits the Council to ensuring this policy shapes everything the Council does, along with giving people a bigger say.
- (3) The Corporate Delivery Programme 2020-21, published alongside the Corporate Strategy in February 2020, included over 150 specific actions identified by services to respond to the Climate Emergency declaration commitments and the outline October 2019 action plan.
- (4) Part of the Council's response to the Covid pandemic has been to set up the Renewal Programme, which is enabling a strategic re-positioning in order to drive action on the Council's priorities. The programme is creating a more comprehensive and collaborative approach to driving climate and nature emergency action across services and accelerating policy and resource alignment through the Renewal Vision workstream.
- (5) Another part of the Covid response has been the setting up of the B&NES Economic Recovery and Renewal Board, which consists of leaders from a variety of sectors including engineering, legal, tourism, the arts and digital, along with higher and further education and is chaired by the Leader of the Council. Initially, the Board focussed on the immediate priorities of supporting local business during lock-down, for example through the Bath Unlimited project, and supporting young people and those who have lost their jobs through a host of skills development projects.
- (6) New internal governance and coordination arrangements have been put in place, bringing together all the place-based services, along with key corporate services, to improve collaboration and efficiency, reporting to and steered by the new member Sustainable Place Board.
- (7) The Renewal Vision workstream includes facilitating the development of One Shared Vision for Bath and North East Somerset that all parts of the community can get behind. This work is driven by the need to tackle the weaknesses in the local economy that the pandemic has highlighted, to build on some of the positive changes that have taken place such as the shift to home working and reduction in commuting, and to create a stronger, more diverse and greener local economy that encompasses the 2030 net zero goal and our climate and nature emergency commitments. This work is being carried out in conjunction with the B&NES Economic Recovery and Renewal Board.

- (8) The One Shared Vision work has identified an emerging consensus on the need to rebuild the local economy around 'green recovery', recognising the opportunities for new jobs from the action that needs to be taken across, for example, home energy retrofitting, developing new renewable energy generation, creating new electric vehicle charging infrastructure, increasing local food production, increasing and managing tree cover, increasing biodiversity, natural flood defence and nature-based approaches to carbon sequestration.
- (9) The One Shared Vision work started in early autumn and has included interviews with over 70 local stakeholders. The analysis of this evidence base produced a number of emerging themes for the future vision, around which eight virtual workshops were held in December. This has been accompanied by an opportunity for any resident to contribute ideas and comment on the emerging themes that runs through to early January 2021.
- (10) Further work will be undertaken with the B&NES Economic Recovery & Renewal Board in the New Year on the emerging vision, including leadership and partnership development and further engagement. It is recognised that delivery on the climate and ecological emergency and giving people a bigger say means developing better working relationships with partners and local communities.
- (11) A number of key partners have also taken action on the climate and nature emergencies in the last year; both universities have formally declared Climate Emergencies and the Royal United Hospital and Avon Fire and Rescue have developed their own climate strategies.
- (12) Specific action plan progress:
 - a) The annual review of the area's carbon footprint was delayed by Covid, but is now underway, and will report in late January 2021. The report will include a review of the original pathway to net zero carbon 2030 and an update on the Council's direct carbon emissions. Given the delay, it is recommended that the footprint review is reported to the Climate Emergency & Sustainability PDS Panel in March 2021.
 - b) The Corporate Estate review, reported to Cabinet in December 2020 embeds carbon reduction, environmental sustainability and future climate-proofing in the approach to future management. From April 2021 the Council's energy contracts will be 100% renewable energy.
 - c) In the 2021/22 budget setting process, the emerging capital programme will include dedicated capital for retrofitting the Council's own buildings, alongside allocation for the development of renewable energy projects within the estate and beyond.
 - d) An analysis by the South West Energy Hub has identified options within the Council's estate for potential renewable energy projects, subject to satisfactory detailed business case development.
 - e) The new Climate Emergency Procurement & Commissioning Strategy is being developed to take into account the complex changes to the public procurement landscape, as a result of leaving the EU and the recently

published Green Paper 'Transforming Public Procurement'. A likely change is that the evaluation of tenders will be based on the Most Advantageous Tender (MAT) and not Most Economically Advantageous Tender (MEAT). There will therefore be scope for the Council to consider wider social benefits, such as economic, social and environmental factors, when assessing which supplier to award a contract to. It is expected that in future, as a result of some of these government changes, the Council will be able to apply award criteria that drive supplier behaviour to achieve environmental targets.

- f) A climate literacy training programme has been developed and will be piloted in the first quarter of 2021, prior to full roll-out to staff later in the year. This includes a day long climate leadership course for members and senior managers in March.
- g) A Climate and Ecological Emergency Performance Monitoring Framework has been developed as part of the Council's Integrated Performance Framework to record and monitor actions and progress taking place to tackle the climate and ecological emergencies across all service areas. It brings all key projects and indicators together in one place to facilitate insightful analysis and data communication, and feeds into the Quarterly Corporate Performance Reports that go to the Strategic Leadership Team, including the Chief Executive.
- h) A study has been commissioned to analyse the job creation potential in B&NES of the 'green' actions we need to take locally to deliver on the environmental emergency commitments, helping us to understand what the new green recovery opportunities could mean for our economy. This will report in late January and will inform the next stage of the One Shared Vision work.
- i) A study has been commissioned on the financial aspects of developing local renewable energy at the scale and pace needed to deliver our 2030 net zero carbon goal. The report is expected in late January 2021 and will inform further action planning in relation to potential investment and support for community energy that will take place during 2021.
- j) Further specialist work will be undertaken in 2021 to enable more detailed action planning on the climate emergency priority areas for action.
- k) The Planning service has begun a Partial Review of the Local Plan in order to update and align planning policies with climate and ecological emergency requirements and is due to come into force in early 2022. Following the options consultation in Jan/Feb 2021, a draft Plan is scheduled for Spring 2021. B&NES is also working with WECA to ensure that carbon reduction is a key driver in the preparation of the new Spatial Development Strategy.
- l) Alongside this, work is underway in the West of England to review renewable energy capacity, with results expected in early 2021, which will inform Local Plan policy development. A WECA carbon assessment tool is also in development, which will be used to assess the carbon impact of development locations, transport measures and capital items at the early options stage through more detailed design, making carbon impacts visible

through the decision-making process. The tool is being developed by a working group of WECA and the four West of England LA's and is due for completion in March 2021.

- m) The Housing service has taken advantage of the government's new Green Homes Grant scheme, winning £500k under the local authority led element of the scheme to expand our existing Affordable Warmth Grant scheme and support low income and vulnerable residents to undertake energy efficiency works. This sits alongside their Energy at Home advice service and a partnership with Lendology to offer B&NES residents a low interest home improvement loan. Specialist work is planned in 2021 to inform what further action can be taken to support home energy efficiency.
 - n) The Transport service is running a number of key projects that will enable the shift to more sustainable transport modes and reduce transport related emissions, such as the Liveable Neighbourhood development; Residents' Parking Zones; the Wiltshire Whippet; electric vehicle charging infrastructure development and a WECA project to improve mass transit between Bath and Bristol.
 - o) An update on the Climate Emergency Action Plan was brought to the Climate Emergency & Sustainability PDS Panel in March and the timetable setting out the review of relevant strategies and plans was noted, with most key strategies being reviewed during 2020. It is proposed that the results of the annual carbon footprint and 2030 pathway work is reported to this Panel during the first quarter of 2021.
 - p) We have worked closely with WECA, who declared a Climate Emergency and committed to net zero carbon 2030 in July 2019, following demands from the West of England authorities, led by Bath & North East Somerset Council, and have continued to support the development of the WECA Climate Emergency Action Plan. We have also been working with others in key networks such as ADEPT (Association of Development, Environment, Planning and Transport directors) to press national government for the further powers and resources local government needs in order to deliver on the environmental emergencies.
 - q) However, we recognise that for local government to be able to provide the leadership to enable the area to achieve net zero carbon by 2030 and make its own operations net zero goes beyond support for particular measures, requiring fundamental action by central government to the funding structure for local government and to drive the wider system change, that is beyond local government control. On both these issues the Council is active in lobbying central government for change. This is done partly via WECA, but also via national initiatives, such as UK100, to articulate strategic local government demands and broker dialogue with ministers. The Leader, Cllr Dine Romero is one of the local authority leaders at the forefront on this initiative.
- (13) Community engagement was identified as a key element in the October 2019 Climate Emergency Action Plan, bringing together and delivering both core policies (tackling the climate and ecological emergency and giving people a bigger say). A Community Engagement Programme was developed in early 2020 and was about to launch with a community conference planned for April

2020, when Covid hit. This led to a re-think in our approach in order deliver as much as we could within Covid restrictions, using Zoom webinar technology and trialling a new online dialogue platform called Delib. The following community engagement work has been delivered:

- a) A community group survey, completed by 70 groups in early 2020 on what they were doing on climate, was followed up with a Council hosted virtual networking event on 6 October, enabling groups to share experience and work together;
- b) Presentations on the climate emergency and action that parishes can take were delivered in late 2019/early 2020 at the Community Forums and the Parish Liaison Committee and updates delivered via Zoom during October and November 2020. A Parish Council Climate Toolkit was developed to help parishes. To date, nine parishes have declared a Climate and Ecological Emergency. On 26 November 2020, we put on an all-day training session for parishes on how to develop a local climate action plan, led by the Centre for Sustainable Energy.
- c) In December 2019, the Council supported the development and launch of the B&NES Schools' Climate Network. Since then, fifteen schools in B&NES have declared a Climate and Ecological Emergency.
- d) A series of public webinars have been held over the last nine months on different aspects of climate and ecological emergency action, including showcasing the work of community groups. The first phase of webinars in the summer of 2020 were entitled 'Climate Conversations' with Cllr Sarah Warren, the lead member for Climate Emergency. These webinars have enabled engagement on, for example, waste and recycling (Share and Repair), tree planting (More Trees for Bath), sustainable farming (Community Farm), meadows and carbon (Emoresgate Seeds), parish action (Freshford Parish Council), youth climate voices and school action (Polly & Elsa France). More recent webinars this autumn have run under the banner of Renewal Vision and Green Recovery and have covered topics such as green skills and home energy efficiency.
- e) At the time of writing, a pilot is being run using the Delib online dialogue platform to enable residents to comment on the emerging themes from the Renewal Vision development process and to contribute their own ideas.
- f) In 2021, further engagement work will be carried out using a mixture of webinars and Delib. Before Covid, a Citizens' Jury had been planned for this year, but has had to be delayed. A review of the value of Citizens' Juries will be conducted in early 2021, as part of the development of the next phase of the Community Engagement Programme.

3.3 Ecological Emergency Declaration Response

- (1) The Council has a long and strong history of work on bio-diversity, landscape and ecology, which means that there is a considerable amount of action already underway in Bath and North East Somerset and within the wider context of the West of England, though existing excellent local and regional partnership working.

- (2) As a first step, an analysis has been conducted across services to draw together and understand what action is taking place against each commitment and to identify gaps.
- (3) Key actions include:
- a) Building on existing planning policies designed to protect and enhance wildlife, the Local Plan Partial Review, currently underway, will strengthen policies taking into account the emergency declaration and updating in relation to the Environment Bill, particularly the new bio-diversity net gain requirement; and including an update of green infrastructure policy;
 - b) This is reflected in West of England actions such as West of England Guidelines for Biodiversity Net Gain; Joint Green Infrastructure Strategy and Tree and Woodland Strategy.
 - c) The Parks team are implementing key aspects of the B&NES Pollinator Strategy and reviewing parks and green spaces management regimes to deliver habitat improvement.
 - d) The Environment & Design team manage a range of projects that contribute to tackling the ecological emergency, nature-based solutions and habitat restoration, such as: Bathscape; Bath River Line; Waterspace Programme; Somer Valley Rediscovered; connecting the Cotswold and Mendip AoNBs; Chew Valley Catchment project. The Bathscape project provides support and guidance to landowners and other local stakeholders on biodiversity, tree-planting and management.
 - e) The new West of England Joint Green Infrastructure Strategy and B&NES Green Infrastructure strategy are being actively implemented within major developments.
 - f) An increase in biodiversity net gain above the Environment Bill requirement is being developed within the Local Plan Partial Review, with a view to raising it from 10% to 15% locally.
 - g) Work is underway within the West of England to develop a Nature Recovery Network Implementation Strategy; a West of England Tree and Woodland Strategy is being finalised.
 - h) A B&NES Tree and Woodland officer task and finish group has been established to develop the B&NES Tree & Woodland Delivery Plan, which will be completed by March 2021. The B&NES Tree and Woodland Delivery Plan will be aligned to the regional West of England Nature Partnership's (WENP) Tree and Woodland Plan, which aims to double urban and rural tree cover by 2060. There is planting underway this winter in pursuit of the target to plant 100,000 trees by May 2023. Approximately 5,000 trees will be planted on Council and private land in 2020/21.
- (4) The main gaps identified relate to the need for improved coordination between the different delivery services and the need to improve connection with the implementation of climate emergency action. This is being addressed through the new Renewal Programme and its associated governance arrangements, with all strategy and delivery on the climate and ecological emergencies

encompassed by the Programme and embedded as key drivers of the Renewal Vision workstream.

- (5) Further action planning will be developed during 2021 alongside the climate emergency action planning within the Renewal Vision workstream.

4 STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS

- 4.1 The activity outlined in this report is fully in line with the expectation on local authorities to take local action on the climate issue contained in the Climate Change Act 2008 and with the Climate Change Committee's recommendations; with the impending Environment Bill. Further, it is in line with the 2018 UN Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change report on the need to reduce carbon emissions more quickly in order to prevent the world from warming by more than 1.5°C and the UN Inter-governmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services report 2019, highlighting the alarming decline in nature worldwide.

5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCE, PROPERTY, PEOPLE)

- 5.1 The activity outlined in this report will be staffed and funded by the Climate Emergency budget approved in the Council's February 2020 Budget for 2020 to 2023, by existing service budgets and by capital budget items proposed in the budget-setting process for 2021/22.
- 5.2 As mentioned above at 3.2 (12) q), the Council recognises that delivery of net zero by 2030 in the Council's operations as well as across the whole of B&NES, requires strategic change to local government funding and central government action to delivery the wider system change required.

6 RISK MANAGEMENT

- 6.1 A risk assessment related to the issue and recommendations has been undertaken, in compliance with the Council's decision-making risk management guidance.

7 EQUALITIES

- 7.1 The climate emergency research programme in 2019 included a review of per capita carbon emissions, showing higher carbon emissions for higher income households. This analysis informs the development of the Council's work to ensure support for lower income and vulnerable residents such as the Housing service's work on home energy efficiency and fuel poverty alleviation.
- 7.2 The Renewal Vision engagement process has been informed by advice from the Council's equality officer and used the Community Engagement Charter, which has also informed the wider community engagement programme.

8 CLIMATE CHANGE

- 8.1 This report updates on the corporate effort to drive, coordinate and support action across the Council and the area in pursuit of commitments made in the Climate Emergency Progress Report to Council in October 2020, to enable delivery of the March 2019 Climate Emergency Declaration.

9 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

9.1 None.

10 CONSULTATION

10.1 The report has been reviewed and signed off by the Renewal Board and Informal Cabinet, including the Chief Executive, the S151 Officer and the Monitoring Officer.

Contact person	<i>Jane Wildblood 01225 477685/07530 263293</i>
Background papers	
Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format	

Bath & North East Somerset Council	
MEETING	Full Council
MEETING DATE	January 21st 2021
TITLE:	Food Poverty Action Plan Update
WARD:	All
AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM	
<p>List of attachments to this report:</p> <p>Appendix 1 B&NES Food Poverty Steering Group Terms of Reference and membership list</p> <p>Appendix 2 Testimonials from families</p> <p>Appendix 3 Draft Food Poverty Action Plan 20/21</p>	

1 THE ISSUE

1.1 The process for taking forward the development of a Food Poverty Action Plan for B&NES was agreed with the Children, Adult, Health and Wellbeing Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel on 28th January 2020. This included the formation of a local Food Poverty Steering Group to drive the work and support implementation of the plan. An update report was taken to the same panel on 14th July 2020. This report provides a further update on progress, local priorities, the evolving action plan and sets out the case to widen the scope of the food agenda for comment and engagement.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

The Council is asked to

2.1 Consider the information in this report, note the significant developments and progress made. Council is asked to reaffirm its commitment to addressing food poverty as a whole council issue.

3 THE REPORT

3.1 Terminology around this issue is important. The term 'food poverty' is used here to reflect wording in previous reports to Council, however, more fitting terms that reflect our ambition rather than what we intend to eradicate are being explored and will be used in future reports. The term 'household food insecurity' will also be used in this report to describe a situation where people do not have

means to reliably meet their needs for food of sufficient quantity, quality or variety in socially acceptable ways.

3.2 Household food insecurity is a growing national issue and B&NES residents living in areas of high deprivation are increasingly affected. Existing vulnerability has been greatly exacerbated through the past nine months of the coronavirus pandemic. Household food insecurity is a complex issue with three core and closely linked drivers at the household level:

- Insufficient household income to reliably and consistently afford a healthy and nutritious diet for all household members
- Poor networks of informal social support
- Adverse life experiences (job loss, bereavement, relationship breakdown, social exclusion, trauma, poor health etc)

3.3 These key drivers have been exacerbated by a decade of austerity measures that have led to cuts to universal and targeted services, stagnated wage growth and an increase in insecure employment models including zero-hours contracts. Much of the B&NES economy is dependent on the more precarious sectors of food, hospitality and service, and this is coupled with a higher than average cost of living in the area, mainly due to higher housing costs, which can all have a detrimental impact on household income.

3.4 The Food Poverty work in B&NES is led by the public health team and coordinated through by a Health Improvement Officer. The post was recruited as a 0.6 FTE, fixed term contract until July 2021. Recently funding has been secured through the St John's Foundation to extend the post until July 2024.

3.5 The B&NES Food Poverty Steering Group (see Appendix 1 for Terms of Reference) has met five times since its first meeting on 25th March 2020 at the start of the first coronavirus lockdown period. The main focus has been on understanding the challenges emerging for residents in relation to immediate food needs and provision of welfare support. The Steering Group has provided a network for members to share information, co-ordinate activity and both offer and request support. Membership currently stands at over 60 members representing a range of statutory, third sector, education and independent organisations.

As the new and acute needs that emerged through the coronavirus situation subside in coming months, household food insecurity which existed in B&NES prior to the pandemic will require the focused attention of the Steering Group to shift the emphasis of action from crisis intervention to long term solutions to reduce and eradicate household food insecurity.

3.6 Following a presentation by Andrew Forsey, National Director of Feeding Britain¹, the Steering Group formalised its relationship with the Feeding Britain network in September to access the benefits of;

¹ <https://feedingbritain.org/>

- Membership of a growing national network of partnerships around the country from whom we can learn and with whom we can share our own innovation and best practice.
- Support for funding of local projects with experienced bid-writers and possibilities of joint projects to increase traction with funders.
- A direct route of communication to government through the Feeding Britain trustees and their lobbying capacity to take forward aspects of the work that require legislation or national policy change.
- Access to, and possible involvement in the creation of a growing body of credible research into poverty and food insecurity and the complexity of solution-finding.

3.7 The significant increase in demand for support with food and income related issues since March are illustrated with the following figures shared by some of the key partners from the Steering Group:

3.8 From March to September 2020 Universal Credit (UC) claims in B&NES increased from 7500 to 13,660, with the steepest rise between March and May. This also resulted in an increase in children becoming eligible for free school meals (FSM). For the nearly 3000 UC claimants who are aged over 50 it can be more difficult re-enter the Labour Market at their previous pay rate.

3.9 B&NES Welfare Support team awarded grants totalling over £21,000 specifically for food support from April to September 2020. This accounted for around one third of the 1528 grants awarded for crisis financial assistance for that period. The team also provided white goods to the value of £45,000 to residents and made 550 referrals to the area's foodbanks. The Welfare Support team are also managing additional Government funded schemes to:

- (1) relieve Coronavirus-related debt/financial crisis.
- (2) £500 Test and Trace payments for people who have lost income through self-isolation and meet the qualifying criteria.
- (3) support those facing eviction, since the ban on evictions was lifted on 21st September, through the Discretionary Housing Payment Scheme.

3.10 By September St. John's Foundation Crisis Fund had benefitted 1149 people through 558 applications and a total of £231,424. White goods and support around food insecurity have featured strongly in the applications. St John's are long-term funders of FareShare South West's work in B&NES and have offered specific support to Julian House and Mercy in Action.

3.11 Citizens Advice (CA) have dealt with over 4500 cases since the first lockdown, predominantly involving benefit claims and significant debt issues.

3.12 Further rises in claimant numbers are expected as furlough schemes come to an end and service, retail, hospitality and entertainment sectors continue to see large numbers of job losses.

- 3.13 The B&NES community response has been broad, diverse, flexible and continues to evolve as the pandemic situation changes and the pre-Covid scale of existing household food insecurity becomes increasingly evident.
- 3.14 In the early stages of the pandemic acute need around food crisis was largely met by increased use of established foodbanks. Across the Southwest region use increased by 124% by April 2020 compared to April 2019.
- 3.15 The broader community response which quickly followed involved the coordination and mobilisation of a large network of businesses, community projects, charities², volunteers and B&NES council teams to safely provide food parcels, chilled / frozen meals and home deliveries to thousands of B&NES residents over the months of Covid-19 restrictions.
- 3.16 That community response, while still very much addressing acute crisis where it arises, has evolved into a growing network of community-based support offering FOOD (Food On Our Doorstep) Clubs, Food Pantries, Community Cafes, Community Fridges, Village Larders and redistribution of locally grown produce from allotments and gardens via an innovative new project called CropDrop. The FOOD Clubs and Pantries run on membership models where households pay a small weekly subscription (around £3.50) to access around £15 worth of varied groceries.
- 3.17 Most of the projects described above are among the 35 charities, schools and children centres who are B&NES members of FareShare Southwest. They provide wholesale food surplus for redistribution to the people engaged with the projects. Nearly 17 tonnes of food, enough for around 40 000 meals, is shared in B&NES every month via FareShare.
- 3.18 All members seek to offer as much wraparound support as possible to help people not only address acute needs and hunger but also the causes of food insecurity to prevent future crisis. This support includes financial guidance, referral and signposting to other services, building social connection and relationships, and practical skills-building around cooking, budgeting and food growing.
- 3.19 The Sustainable Food Partnership and 3SG set up an online Food Finder platform showing which local businesses were offering food deliveries and takeaway during the lockdown.³
- 3.20 John Thornfield, Funding manager at St John's Foundation, shared his feedback on perceptions of the work in B&NES to address food poverty and how it is being coordinated:

“Looking more widely at themes, our conversations with the likes of FareShare and Feeding Britain, indicate that B&NES is an exceptionally well-coordinated locality with a strong emerging strategy around food insecurity. With a proactive local authority public health team working in close alignment with a major local funder in St John's and an influential national player in Feeding Britain, allied to the good work

²Charities and community groups include Mercy in Action, Oasis, Bath City Farm, Southside Family Project, Bath Area Play Project, Food Cycle, Age UK, BEMSCA, Community at 67, Youth Connect, Square Hot Meal and Sporting Family Change

³ <http://banesfoodfinder.org.uk/>

emerging from 3SG and the wider Community Wellbeing Hub, we feel very confident in the progress that is being made”

- 3.21 **Funding** Support for this network has been strengthened by a combined Holiday Food Grant Programme of £30K from Feeding Britain and St John’s Foundation over the summer. There was a further £50K fund from public donations initiated by Wera Hobhouse MP and a generous single business donation, distributed through 3SG and administered through the St John’s Foundation in October.
- 3.22 Schools have worked hard to identify and connect with their more vulnerable families to offer additional support including the technical support required to access vouchers and provision of food parcels and home delivery as needed. Many have reported that this new route to connecting with families has had a positive effect on the relationship between families and the school. This is echoed in the testimonials of families supported by voluntary sector projects too (see Appendix 2).
- 3.23 The national Free School Meal voucher system over the summer holidays saw families with children eligible for free school meals (FSM) receive vouchers worth £90 to cover the 6-week period. We know this was not sufficient to meet all need and there are other families who fall outside of eligibility criteria but still have very low incomes and need additional support.
- 3.24 The government Covid Winter Grant Scheme which began early December 2020 has largely been directed to fund a locally administered voucher system, arranged through Education Business Support and Welfare Support to provide for all children eligible for FSM and those in early years who fulfil the eligibility criteria for FSM. Between the 8th and 29th December, the Welfare Support team issued vouchers in respect of more than 3,700 children in B&NES. The vouchers will cover the Christmas holiday and a similar exercise will be conducted for the February half term period. The remaining funding will be accessible to other households in need of support through application to Welfare Support services.
- 3.25 Further government funding, through an extended Holiday Activities and Food programme will cover the Easter, Summer and Christmas school holidays in 2021. The value of that grant is not yet known.
- 3.26 The £20 a week uplift in Universal Credit value from early April is likely to have been an important driver in keeping emergency food needs from spiralling as the pandemic progressed. It will be important to consider and prepare for the potential impact on demand when the uplift ends in April 2021.

4 FOOD POVERTY ACTION PLAN

- 4.1 Proposed priorities for action, drawn from discussions with Steering group members, have been incorporated into an evolving action plan (see Appendix 3). Delivery of these actions is led by three task groups to guide and develop the work and report back to the Steering Group.
- 4.2 The task groups are:
- Income Maximisation

- Food for All
 - Hear My Voice
- 4.3 The **Income Maximisation** group is chaired by St John's Foundation and has representation including DWP, DHI, Welfare Support, Citizen's Advice, Age UK, CleanSlate, and Curo. A key purpose is sharing information and best practice across B&NES so people can be confident of a consistent response when approaching any member organisation for support and advocacy around financial issues including benefits advice, debt solutions, household budget management or employment / enterprise support.
- 4.4 The **Food for All** theme is currently focused around two key projects; developing an Affordable Food Network of free and affordable food projects, and supporting the development of CropDrop, a volunteer-led initiative to redistribute locally grown allotment produce to the projects in that network. Both are seeking to build resilient and forward-thinking resources for local communities to alleviate and prevent ongoing food insecurity and help people make stronger and more meaningful personal connections with sources of healthy locally grown food.
- 4.5 The **Hear My Voice** theme is taking shape through work with both Bath University and Bath Spa researchers to carry out initial exploratory local research, with people with life experience of household food insecurity and any agencies with whom they are already closely engaged. This will inform funding applications for more significant pieces of research.
- 4.6 Both Universities are also examining their own contribution to the local food economy and how food insecurity may impact their own staff and students. This involves exploration of the impact of their own procurement and use of food, considerations around being a Real Living Wage⁴ employer and supporting students on low incomes who may be affected by the issues directly.
- 4.7 The key areas around Data and Communications are currently co-ordinated by Public Health with support from Steering Group members.
- 4.8 In order to address key drivers relating to poor social networks and adverse life experiences we are actively engaging with existing partnerships such as, B&NES Community Safety and Safeguarding Partnership (BCSSP) and the Early Help and Compassionate Communities partnerships.
- 4.9 B&NES Renewal Board have agreed for public health to lead on the development of an integrated strategy on obesity, physical activity and food in 2021. The prevention and mitigation of the effects of food poverty is best addressed at a systemic level and the food elements of the new integrated strategy will link to the wider sustainable food agenda. Alongside this a commitment by the Council to sign and implement the Healthy Weight Declaration⁵ (HWD) would further help to support work around household food security.

5 WIDER LOBBYING AND CROSS-STRATEGY WORKING

⁴ www.livingwage.org.uk

⁵ <https://foodactive.org.uk/what-we-do/influence-policy/local-authority-declaration-on-healthy-weight/>

5.1 Wera Hobhouse MP has agreed to champion the National Food Strategy recommendations, as they impact on household food insecurity, in Parliament. These are to:

- (1) Expand eligibility for the Free School Meal scheme to include every child (up to the age of 16) from a household where a parent or guardian is in receipt of Universal Credit or equivalent benefits.
- (2) Extend the Holiday Activity and Food Programme to all areas in England, so that summer holiday support is available to all children in receipt of free school meals. (Funding has been agreed to extend this scheme from April 2021).
- (3) Increase the value of Healthy Start vouchers to £4.25 per week, and expand the scheme to every pregnant women and to all households with children under 4 where a parent or guardian is in receipt of universal Credit of equivalent benefit (The value of the vouchers will increase from April 2021).

5.2 Our Steering Group members are also encouraged to provide data and testimony to support the national lobbying by Public Health England, Sustain and Feeding Britain on wider associated issues of food policy and welfare provision.

5.3 It is crucial that B&NES not be drawn into the rising global pattern of ‘solving’ household food insecurity with the equally problematic overproduction of food; endemic in our industrialised food supply chain which creates a great deal of surplus⁶. Food waste isn’t accidental or unavoidable– it is an intrinsic and necessary part of our current industrial, commodified food system. Household food insecurity is rooted in social and economic inequality and it is this which creates the barriers to and availability of sufficient sources of healthy food. We must de-couple these two problems rather than use them each to mitigate the other and, consequently, serve to perpetuate them both.

B&NES should continue to take a whole Council approach, considering the potential contribution each department and team can make to the eradication of food poverty locally and linking with work on wider sustainable food systems.

6 STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 By developing a Food Poverty Action Plan, B&NES Council, in partnership with a wide range of local stakeholders and partners, will strengthen collective action to:

- (1) support residents experiencing or at risk of household food insecurity and
- (2) through a focus on preventative action contribute towards minimising health inequalities longer term.

7 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCE, PROPERTY, PEOPLE)

7.1 No additional resource implications at present.

7.2 The Health Improvement Officer role within the public health team will be supported beyond the current contract by St. John's Foundation funding.

8 RISK MANAGEMENT

8.1 A risk assessment related to the issue and recommendations has been undertaken, in compliance with the Council's decision-making risk management guidance.

9 EQUALITIES

9.1 Household food insecurity can be a very dynamic experience and is something that can affect anyone; individual circumstances can change rapidly as this year particularly has demonstrated. Research shows however, that some sections of the community can be particularly vulnerable to experiencing food poverty. Following discussions with the Council's Equalities Team the Food Poverty Steering Group will collaboratively complete an Equality Impact Assessment in order to:

- consider how our local action plan is targeting support to the most vulnerable groups in our area
- highlight and address barriers that some groups might face in accessing support

10 CLIMATE CHANGE

10.1 This work has the potential to contribute to achievement of carbon neutrality as part of a wider focus on food in B&NES which aims to reduce food waste and increase access to fresh, seasonal, local produce. Work is in progress to forge meaningful links between the work around food poverty and wider cross-departmental work in the Council in relation to addressing the Climate and Biodiversity Crisis, sustainable food, minimising over purchasing, better use, local food production, and soil health.

11 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

11.1 None

12 CONSULTATION

12.1 Information in this report has been provided by members of the Food Poverty Steering Group and the draft action plan is a product of discussions and consultation with group members and other stakeholders since March 2020.

12.2 This report has been approved by the S151 Officer and Monitoring Officer

Contact person	Milly Carmichael@bathnes.gov.uk 01225 394058 Sarah Heathcote@bathnes.gov.uk 01225 394455
Background papers	Children, Adult, Health and Wellbeing Policy Development & Scrutiny Panel 14th July 2020

Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format

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Appendix 1

Bath and North East Somerset Council

Food Poverty Steering Group

Terms of Reference

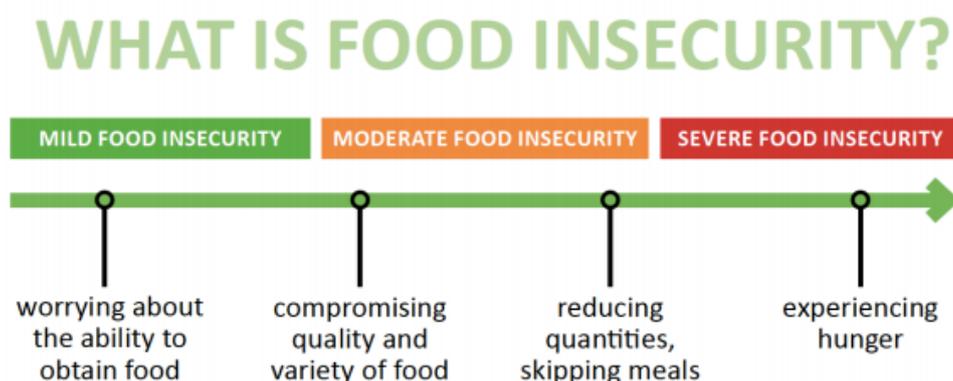
1. Background

The UK pledged in 2015 to end hunger by 2030 as part of its commitment to the UN Sustainable Development Goals which includes a goal *‘to enable access by all people, in particular the poor and people in vulnerable situations, including infants, to safe, nutritious and sufficient food all year round’*.¹

Food poverty is defined by the Department of Health and Social Care as ‘the inability to afford, or have reasonable access to, food that makes up a healthy diet.’

Food insecurity is defined as ‘Limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods or limited or uncertain ability to acquire acceptable foods in socially acceptable ways (e.g. without resorting to emergency food supplies, scavenging, stealing or other coping strategies)’.²

Food insecurity has various degrees of severity. Early stages involve worry about whether there will be enough food, followed by compromising quality, variety and quantity of food. Going without food and experiencing hunger are most severe stages (see Figure below).



B&NES Council passed a motion on Food Poverty on 11th July 2019 requesting:

¹ <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg2>

² While there is not an official government definition of food insecurity used in the UK, this definition is drawn from guidance on measuring food insecurity in the USA and was used for the UK's Low Income Diet and Nutrition Survey, 2007 Taken from Food Foundation Report May 2016 Food Insecurity Briefing

- the Children, Adult Health & Wellbeing Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel to work with local organisations and develop recommendations for a Food Poverty Action Plan for Bath and North East Somerset; and
- that the Cabinet investigate refreshing the Local Food Strategy for Bath and North East Somerset.

The process for taking forward the development of a Food Poverty Action Plan was agreed with Children, Adult, Health and Wellbeing Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel on 28th January 2020. This included the formation of a local steering group to drive the work and support implementation.

2. Principles

The Right to Food

The Right to Food is about ensuring that all people regardless of their gender, race, immigration status or age are able to access food in a dignified way. The United Nations Convention on Human Rights, to which the UK government is a signatory, declares that it is the State that has an obligation to fulfil the right to food.³

The Right to Food is defined by former United Nations Special Rapporteur Jean Ziegler as: “The right to have regular, permanent and unrestricted access, either directly or by means of financial purchases, to quantitatively and qualitatively adequate and sufficient food corresponding to the cultural traditions of the people to which the consumer belongs, and which ensure a physical and mental, individual and collective, fulfilling and dignified life free of fear.”

The UK has ratified a number of international treaties that refer to the Right to Food and broader socioeconomic rights. These include the International Covenant on Social, Economic and Cultural Rights, the convention on the rights of the child and the convention on the rights of people with disabilities.⁴

By adopting this principle, the steering group is looking to raise awareness of the universal right to access food, with the aim of specifically empowering those with lived experience.

Addressing health inequalities

Food poverty disproportionately impacts on women and children and those with long term conditions and disabilities. By developing a food poverty action plan in partnership with a wide range of local stakeholders and partners, we will strengthen collective action to support residents experiencing food poverty and through a focus on preventative action contribute towards addressing health inequalities longer term. It must also be acknowledged that the impact of the COVID 19 pandemic will affect a wider proportion of the population and broaden the profile of those experiencing food poverty in the short to medium term.

³ <https://www.ohchr.org/en/issues/food/pages/foodindex.aspx>

⁴ https://www.sustainweb.org/resources/files/reports/Why_we_need_the_right_to_food.pdf

Social perspective of poverty

Food poverty is driven by of a combination of structural issues relating to the security and cost of housing, quality of employment, adequacy of welfare provision and the cost of living generally.

A social perspective of poverty is concerned with the structures and organisation of society and how it relates to social problems and individual lives, looking at the issue of poverty through the lens of how society is organised rather than a focus solely on individuals' behaviour and choices.

Involving those with life experience

This work will be guided by the meaningful involvement of people with life experience of food insecurity. Those with lived experience will be actively involved at all levels to identify and develop local solutions as well as advocating for longer term sustainable action both locally and nationally.

Community engagement

Engagement with local residents, communities and the 3rd sector is essential to understanding need and developing sustainable solutions to food insecurity. This work will reflect the principles in the Council' Community Engagement Charter.

Safeguarding

This principle relates to our moral duty of care to provide a healthy food system for all.

Future proofing

This means taking into account how local responses to food poverty can be resilient to local, national and global change including the planned transition of residents to Universal Credit, the impact of COVID 19, Brexit and climate change for example.

3. Outcome

The overall aim of this work is to eliminate food poverty and to reduce the numbers of people living in food insecure households in B&NES.

4. Specific aims

Promote dignified access to nutritious and healthy food for all

Ensure the local welfare safety net is clearly defined, promoted, accessible and flexible to varied need and provides sufficient support to those in hardship

Ensure children in B&NES have access to nutritious healthy food 365 days a year (term time/weekends/school holidays)

Increase knowledge, skills and confidence to recognise the key drivers of food insecurity, to enable timely access to self-help, early help and preventative services

Champion the living wage across contractors and local employers including social care, retail and hospitality to contribute to ensuring people can earn a fair income and

Maximise the use of local authority powers and other local levers in tackling food poverty - e.g. boosting welfare support, increasing uptake of free school meals and healthy start vouchers

Align with other key agenda such as climate and nature emergency to ensure food insecurity is central to developing local strategy on food, transport, housing and planning thereby mainstreaming the reduction of food insecurity across a range of strategies and plans

To embed systematic ongoing data collection, reporting and monitoring of food insecurity to maintain the profile of the issue and to measure progress in addressing it locally

Empower local communities to develop local solutions where need is identified

Secure adequate/additional resource and capacity to enable a long-term sustainable approach to this issue locally.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

Functions

- To carry out a needs assessment to better understand the scale of the issue locally, who is affected and where there may be gaps in services and/or support
- Assess the impact of current local policy and initiatives on food poverty in B&NES
- To work collaboratively with local stakeholders and communities to identify and embed local sustainable solutions to address food poverty and household food insecurity
- To develop a food poverty action plan for B&NES with a focus on preventative activity
- Involve people with life experience of food insecurity in the strategic work of the group and development of local solutions
- To oversee implementation of the action plan through local partnerships (new or existing)

- To encourage advocacy via community organisations -targeting national policy change by lobbying national government for change.

Roles and responsibilities – From September 9th 2020 a formal partnership agreement is in place with Feeding Britain. As a stipulation in that agreement, any work undertaken by Bath & North East Somerset Food Poverty Steering Group and its individual members will be carried out in line with the relevant policies relating to health and safety, insurance, safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults, food handling and hygiene, and equality, diversity, and inclusion.

6. Membership

Membership of the group will comprise the following organisations/agencies and representatives from Council departments

Becky Reynolds (Chair)	Consultant in Public Health	Public Health B&NES Council
Angela White (Notes)	Business Support Officer	Public Health B&NES
Cllr Liz Hardman	Paulton	Children, Adult Health and Wellbeing PDS Panel
Cllr Ruth Malloy	Weston	Children, Adult Health and Wellbeing PDS Panel
James Carlin	Director	3SG
Peter Heywood	Chair	Bath Christian Network/Genesis
Grainne Moyer	Bath Food Bank	Genesis
Sam Gillet	Head of Delivery and Impact	St John's
John Thornfield	Charity Funding programme manager	St John's
Les Redwood	CEO	Citizens Advice
Sarah Rogers	Manager	Curo
Nichola Valls	Universal Credit Advisor	Curo
Jane Middleton	Researcher	Bath University
Michelle Jacobs / Sue Deedigan	Head of Contract, Quality and Support / Service Manager	Curo
Janet Dabbs	CEO	Age UK
Julian Mines	CEO	FareShare SW
Susannah Salino	Business Development lead	FareShare SW
Fiona Bell / Joe Lavington / Immi Cory / Sam Rudd	Volunteers	Sustainable Food Partnership / CropDrop
Allison Todd	Co-founder	Mercy in Action
Claire Middlehurst	Future Bright Manager	Economic Development B&NES Council
Simon Graham	Future Bright Coach	B&NES Council
Mike Chedzoy	Manager	Housing Options & Homelessness team B&NES Council
Tracy Pullen	Snr Housing Practitioner	Housing Options & Homelessness team B&NES

		Council
Chris Mordaunt	Manager	Housing Standards and Improvement B&NES Council
Paula Bromley	Service Manager	Connecting Families B&NES Council
Tracey Bidgood	Connecting Families	Team Leader B&NES Council
Heidi Limbert	Manager	Children's Centre Services B&NES Council
Joseph Prince	Insight Manager	Public Health B&NES Council
Adrian Carr	Partnership Manager	DWP
Milly Carmichael	Health Improvement Officer – Food Poverty	Public Health B&NES Council
Cathy McMahon/Sarah Heathcote	Development and commissioning manager	Public Health B&NES Council
Damien Peake	Welfare Support Manager	B&NES Council
Claire Parfitt	Head Teacher	St Martin Gardens School
Lucy Hanney	Food and Health Lead	Virgin Care
Dave Dixon/Sara Dixon	Community Engagement	B&NES Council
Andrew Forsey / Elaine Hanham / Sarah Clark	National Director / Finance officer / Project Manager	Feeding Britain
Megan Mehnert	FOOD Clubs Manager	Family Action
Becca Wilcox	Corporate Sustainability Officer	BANES Corporate Sustainability
Caryl Thomas / Dan Hine	Programme Development Manager / Inclusion Officer	Bath Rugby Foundation
Ed Harker	EYFS Educational Consultant	Brighter Futures
Emma Greenwood	Area Manager – SW England	Trussell Trust
Hatty Richards / Kim Brooks	Farm Engagement Manager / Managing Director	Chew Valley Community Farm
Helen Wright	Manager	Vegan Food Bank
Jenny Wilson	Health Improvement Officer	Public Health
Julian Greaves	Sustainability Manager	Bath Spa University
Jeff Mitchell / Karina Legumi/ Lisa Woodman	Founder & Director / Work Champion / Partnerships Manager	Clean Slate
Dr Lyn Barham	Food Lead	Transition Bath
Ped Asgarian	Director	Feeding Bristol
Teresa Welch	Customer Services Team Leader	Welfare Support
Tracy Pike	CEO	Youth Connect
Wendy Jefferies	LMS and Formula Accountant	Education Business Support (Free School Meals team)

Receiving minutes only

Cllr Rob Appleyard
Cllr Kevin Guy
Jane Wildblood/Micaela Bashford Corporate Sustainability Team

7. Meeting Arrangements

Meetings will be held 4-6 weekly for the first 4 meetings and quarterly from that point.

Meetings will be chaired by Becky Reynolds, Consultant in Public Health, B&NES Council.

Secretariat function will be provided by B&NES Council (resource allowing)

8. Agenda

Agendas shall be developed:

- By discussion amongst the members of the Group
- By requests from individual members of the Group

Accountability

- Update Cabinet Member to Children, Adults, Health and Wellbeing Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel after each meeting
- Report 6 monthly to PDS Panel, Children and Adults Health and Well Being
- Report annually to B&NES Council

Date agreed: 4th May 2020
Updates agreed: 12th October 2020
Review date: 3rd May 2021

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Appendix 2

Evidence of impact of community food support in B&NES during 2020.

Testimonials from **Southside Family Food Hubs** highlighting the many ways that food support has helped families:

- ✓ Giving parents and carers a welcome break from cooking
 - ✓ Children trying and enjoying new foods
 - ✓ Social contact and relationship building with support services
 - ✓ Shared family activity around food, cooking and eating together
 - ✓ Saving money to spend on other important things
 - ✓ Feeling cared for and appreciated through the gift of flavoursome and well - cooked food with decent portions.
-
- One client was not able to move home or actively bid on a property even though she had been awarded a band B due to owed rent arrears. Without the support of the Family Food Hub Groups through the summer and Southside FareShare Pantry, she would not have been able to save £700 needed to clear her debt with Curo to enable her to start bidding on another property.
 - A client who was supported through the Domestic Abuse service said just coming along to collect a meal makes her feel connected to Southside and she felt she would have been more isolated if she did not see us weekly over the summer holidays. The food was a bonus, saving money on one meal a week made a difference of £20 for her family , it means she is able to use the money she saves to use on school clothes instead of food, she would like to see it extended to more days a week. Even an afterschool teatime club!
 - "The meals have helped me amazingly, loving the meals and recipes and I have been cooking my own meals. My daughter and I love them, and it's enabled us to try new food too. I've collected the recipe cards and made my own recipe book and I look forward to Wednesdays, so I don't have to cook."
 - "Southside meals have been very appreciated in my household. It's been lovely to have a break from cooking. Every meal has been enjoyed and the portions are plenty despite having big eaters. Thank you."
 - "The Food Hubs are helping us out loads! My son ate mash potato for the first time this week thanks to this - he has always refused to eat it before."
 - "The meal was absolutely gorgeous, even my son enjoyed it & he's refused to eat Spaghetti Bolognese for ten years after being forced to eat it by my ex-partner."

A series of films have also been made by **Oasis Bath** about their food package and pantry schemes They can be viewed on Vimeo <https://vimeo.com/oasisbath>

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Bath and North East Somerset Food Poverty Action Plan - 2021

Goals

1. Everyone living in BANES can reliably afford and access suitable food to meet their needs for energy, nutrition, and social & cultural connection, with dignity and without resort to emergency food aid.
2. In partnership with broader strategies, the growing, production, packaging, transport, marketing and consumption of that affordable and accessible food will contribute to a thriving local economy and a flourishing biosphere.

Principles

- The **right to food** is respected. “The right to food is a human right. It protects the right of all human beings to live in dignity, free from hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition. The right to food is not about charity, but about ensuring that all people have the capacity to feed themselves in dignity” (www.righttofood.org/work-of-jean-ziegler-at-the-un/what-is-the-right-to-food/)
- Food poverty is recognised as an acute form of poverty and **preventive measures** must, therefore, be taken to tackle poverty at source
- Every **council** decision takes into effect its **impact on food poverty**
- The council **uses all the levers at its disposal to maximum effect** to reduce food poverty. These include but are not exclusive to Welfare Support, Commissioning and Procurement, Planning and S106 funding.
- Strategies to reduce food poverty must be **sustainable in the longer term** and embedded in core practice across all agencies .

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Dignity and Inclusion (Hear My Voice)	pages 7-8
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Data and Communications	pages 13 -14

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The Action plan is colour coded to indicate the level of impact each proposed action is designed to make:

(Short-term) Actions addressing crisis and emergency (food) provision	(Medium term) Actions addressing structural causes of (food) insecurity	(Long term) Actions contributing to the creation of a sustainable and accessible (food) culture in BANES
--	---	---

Abbreviations used in this document:

DWP - Department for Work and Pensions
 IMG – Income Maximisation Group
 AFN - Affordable Food Network

FB – Feeding Britain
 PH – Public Health
 WS – Welfare Support
 FSM – Free School Meals

Systems, Structures and Governance

- In this context ‘sustainable’ solutions are preventative measures that largely negate the need for crisis intervention. They address inequalities and are informed by and responsive to comprehensive local data. They are embedded in core practice across agencies and integrated into a whole systems approach to the provision of affordable, healthy and socially & culturally acceptable food for all. Any solutions to food insecurity which are achieved through narrowly-targeted and/or short-term funding are, by definition, not sustainable.
- When identified solutions are beyond the scope and power of Local Authority, national Government must be lobbied for broader policy and legislative change. This includes but is not restricted to the right to food; income from work and social security that is adequate to meet fundamental needs of life; provision of genuinely affordable housing; fair and equitable processes to access welfare support; associated food trade, production, pricing, labelling and promotion.

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Aims	Actions	Lead Agency/ Org
Create the framework for working collaboratively with local stakeholders and communities, to identify and embed local sustainable solutions to address poverty that results in household food insecurity.	Convene and manage a Steering Group and associated task groups for key themes/areas of work	PH
	Conduct a Covid-19 debrief, harvest the learning from how community food provision evolved during the crisis.	PH
	Report regularly on progress to Cabinet Member lead, Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel and Full Council as required	PH
Encourage advocacy via community organisations -targeting national policy	Formalise partnership arrangement with Feeding Britain (FB)	PH

change by lobbying national government for change.	Work collaboratively with FB partnership to develop local project ideas, explore funding opportunities and contribute to national learning, advocacy and lobby for change	PH
	Connect closely with the Sustain / Food Power network - draw on and contribute to sharing of good practice across the national network	PH
Secure adequate/additional resource and capacity to enable a long-term sustainable approach to this issue locally	Identify resource for strategic and operational leadership on broader poverty eradication and food strategies for BANES	Lead members
	Work in partnership with existing networks, structures and organisations to develop sustainable solutions to co-ordination of food poverty work beyond 2021	PH
	Connect with the BANES Covid Recovery plan and the Corporate Strategy http://intranet/bath-and-north-east-somerset-corporate-strategy-framework and encourage the adoption of Community Wealth Building practice https://cles.org.uk/what-is-community-wealth-building	
	Make a case for a refresh of the B&NES Food Strategy and the identification of resource to rekindle the Sustainable Food Cities (now Places) programme.	PH
Consistently use language in internal and public communications that promotes dignity, choice and personal agency	Create and circulate guidance to all members of the Steering Group and working groups on suitable language and terms (**)	PH
Coordinate associated funding streams. e.g. from central government, Feeding Britain or local fund-raising	Create effective distribution structures with clear identification of eligibility and monitoring requirements	WS / SJF /BANES Finance leads

(**) This action point is also included in the Data and Communication section

Maximising Income

- BANES will take a money-first approach to supporting people and households with low and /or insecure income
- The financial provision of the local welfare support safety net is collaboratively provided by BANES Council Welfare Support (WS) team and St John Foundation individual hardship funds
- An ‘Income Maximisation’ group (IMG) will largely oversee this aspect of the Action plan and membership will include representation from DWP, Welfare Support, St Johns Foundation, Citizens Advice, local 3rd sector organisations offering financial guidance and those addressing needs of specific vulnerable groups e/g Age UK

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Aims	Actions	Lead Agency/ Org
<p>Ensure the local welfare safety net is clearly defined, promoted, accessible and flexible to varied need and provides sufficient support to those in hardship to reduce reliance on crisis food banks</p>	<p>Remove the blanket cap on local welfare support provision and create robust guidance to assess limits to provision on a case-by-case basis</p>	<p>WS</p>
	<p>Collate jointly agreed information on available welfare support services and how to access them.</p>	<p>IMG</p>
	<p>Make this widely known across agencies /charities/schools/public and framed to encourage people to present earlier and to reduce stigma.</p>	<p>IMG</p>
	<p>Develop stronger joint working and collaboration across support agencies including data sharing and co-located working where needed, in line with learning from the Community Wellbeing Hub model</p>	<p>IMG</p>
	<p>Support campaigns to raise awareness of doorstep/online lenders, illegal money lenders and financial scams and direct people to legitimate sources of financial support</p>	<p>IMG</p>

	Promote best practice in financial literacy and money management skills and support locally	IMG
Increase knowledge, skills and confidence to recognise the key drivers of food insecurity, to enable timely access to self-help, early help and preventative services	Create a training resource and promote its use by all agencies working on maximising income to improve confidence to recognise, assess and offer support around food insecurity as a routine part of their work.	PH / IMG
	Improve identification of people in, or at risk of, rent and council tax arrears at an earlier stage and put in preventative measures	WS and Curo
	Collation of information and promotion of employment support services available in BANES and how to access them	IMG
Champion the living wage across contractors and local employers including social care, retail and hospitality to contribute to ensuring people can earn a fair income	Identify current living wage employers in B&NES and work with them to identify and share benefits for both business and employees	IMG
	Identify strategic leadership within the BANES Council to work with the Living Wage Foundation to implement their Local Authority toolkit. https://www.livingwage.org.uk/local-authority-toolkit-0	Lead Councillors
Maximise the use of local authority powers and other local levers in tackling food poverty	Promote Healthy Start voucher and vitamin scheme and facilitate roll out of digital application process to improve uptake from 2019 levels of 39%	
	Promote Free School Meal take up and improve from 2019 levels of 79%	

Dignity and Inclusion (Hear My Voice)

- All actions to address household food insecurity in BANES must be fully informed by the life experience of people who are living, or have lived, with poverty and household food insecurity themselves.
- The barriers to having their voice heard and respected are many and it is understood that a longer-term, relationship-based approach will be more dignified and lead to more meaningful involvement.
- Whatever we do to address household food insecurity in BANES, we must ensure that the practice of ‘solving’ it with the equally problematic food ‘waste’ or surplus streams is only ever a temporary and pragmatic step in the process of designing a truly sustainable food system, that does not rely on perpetuating co-dependency of two wholly undesirable situations.

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Aims	Actions	Lead Agency/ Org
Involve people with life experience of food insecurity in the strategic work of the group and development of local solutions	Undertake local qualitative and qualitative research, led by University of Bath, to seek out and listen to people with life experience of food insecurity and their suggested solutions.	University of Bath
	Identify existing networks of trust in B&NES who can find and support people with life experience of food insecurity to be meaningfully involved in developing the local strategy, actions and evaluation	AFN
	Create a series of modes of engagement to enable participation	AFN / University of Bath
	Create effective channels of communication to bring the voices of people with life experience to the decision makers and policy maker of B&NES, regional bodies and national government.	PH / University of Bath
	Support, train and encourage people who want to develop their community advocacy skills and impact	AFN

Empower local communities to develop their own solutions where need is identified	Work with Compassionate Communities and the development of local hubs, using best evidence-based practice in community resilience building, to keep food as a key focus for the network.	AFN
	Actively promote Nourish Scotland’s Dignity in Practice Toolkit and training resources to inform and guide service delivery	AFN

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Food for All

- The overall aim of this aspect of the Action Plan is, ultimately, the eradication of need for emergency or crisis food provision and the creation of a food environment in all parts of BANES that can reliably provide nutritious, affordable, socially acceptable and culturally suitable food within easy reach of every community and neighbourhood.
- It is acknowledged that household food insecurity is equitably solved in the longer term, not by the provision of free or affordable food from donated or surplus sources, but through fair and reliable income, solid informal social support networks and the resources to buffer adverse life experiences. As a pragmatic use of available resources in the short to medium term, donated and surplus food sources will be utilised and coordinated alongside a guaranteed connection to financial, social and health care support to address root causes of poverty, social isolation and trauma.
- There is clear synergy here with one of the four pillars of the St John Foundation’s goal of ‘all children under 12 in BANES will have access to nutritious food every day’.
- [The Food Foundation’s ‘Children’s Future Food Inquiry’](#) drew evidence from workshops with over 300 children and young people aged 11-16 across the UK. Of the 13 groups who participated, one was in Radstock and the evidence from those BANES children contributed to this important research.
- The ‘Affordable Food Network’ group (AFN) will largely oversee this aspect of the Action Plan and membership includes representation from foodbanks, food clubs and pantries, community cafes, surplus food redistribution services and people with responsibility for food related benefits like Free School Meals and Healthy Start.

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Aims	Actions	Lead Agency/ Org
Provide wrap-around support alongside all provision of food support in the community	Provide clear links for accessing financial guidance and advice at all points of public contact	IMG / AFN
	Build strong and reciprocal working relationships with the Community Wellbeing Hub	AFN

	Provide accessible opportunities to build confidence and skills to budget for, store, cook and grow healthy food	
	Facilitate the provision of fresh, locally grown fruit and veg via the CropDrop project	
All households with children in BANES have reliable access to enough nutritious food every day	Identify families at greater risk of food insecurity by reason of low or insecure income, single parenthood, families with three or more children, and families with complex needs	PH / AFN
	Review the complex system of children’s food support through the eyes of those families and create clear communications resources that promote all the elements together (e.g. universal and means-tested free school meals, Healthy Start vouchers and vitamins, free prescriptions and dentistry, free fruit and veg in schools, ,voluntary sector community food support projects)	PH
	Create detail for an action plan to Increase uptake of Free School Meals (to include the needs of rural areas, poverty-proofing schools ¹ and reducing stigma, data collection, school holiday provision, lobbying for universal eligibility if on UC)	PH / Education - Business Support and inclusion
	Create detail of an action plan to Increase uptake of Healthy Start vouchers (to include the local promotion of digital roll-out, retailer engagement, lobbying for automatic enrolment)	PH / Early Help Partnership
All households without children in BANES, who are experiencing or are at risk of food insecurity are identified and provided with appropriate support to meet their food needs	Identify and build connection with agencies, teams and organisations who already work alongside the following groups of people who may be at higher risk of household food insecurity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elderly • Homeless or insecurely housed 	AFN

¹ <http://www.povertyproofing.co.uk/>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disabled • People with poor mental health • People with No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) 	
<p>The food retail environment in BANES prioritises nutritious food that is affordable and accessible to all</p>	<p>Create a more detailed action plan to address identified food security needs in these groups</p>	
	<p>Refresh and extend mapping of food retail provision and concentration of hot takeaway food outlets, particularly near to schools and areas where more people live with lower income</p>	
	<p>Ensure mapping illustrates the challenges for rural areas with small pockets of low income and food insecurity</p>	
	<p>Work with the planning teams and PH to determine how best to use this data to influence future planning policy and practice around food outlets</p>	
	<p style="text-align: center;">Explore local procurement of free school fruit and veg</p> <p>Create a feasibility plan to request BANES come out of national procurement and manage this scheme locally to facilitate a stronger relationship between schools and local horticulture and food growing enterprise</p>	PH
<p>Determining access to affordable and nutritious food is a routine element of all health and social care assessments</p>	<p>Gather information on how food insecurity is currently identified in these areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hospital discharge • Connecting families <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguarding • Supported housing and homelessness • GPs – particularly with complex need and chronic conditions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early Help • People with no recourse to public funds (NRPF) 	PH
	<p>Create an awareness-raising resource that demonstrates the value to all services of having a focus on food and identifying food insecurity</p>	PH

Create a more detailed action plan to guide the sharing of this resource to all health and social care providers in BANES	
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Data and Communications

Food insecurity is not yet routinely or robustly measured nationally or at Local Authority level, yet accurate and updated local data are crucial to identify need, inform the scale and scope of needed interventions and to measure progress.

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Aims	Actions	Lead Agency/ Org
Embed systematic ongoing data collection, reporting and monitoring of food insecurity to maintain the profile of the issue and to measure progress in addressing it locally	Carry out a needs assessment to better understand the scale of the issue locally, who is affected and where there may be gaps in services and/or support	PH
	Create and keep updated a WIKI page on Food Insecurity for Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) to enable access to data	PH
	Develop local University links to explore development of local research to support our understanding of need locally.	PH
	Ensure inclusion of food insecurity questions in annual Voicebox survey to residents	PH
	Explore ways of developing this data set through systematic data collection across front line services	PH / Steering group members
Keep the issues of food insecurity alive for the public and associated professionals & volunteers through a managed programme of communications	Develop a comms plan to support co-ordination of campaigns, information dissemination and awareness raising across agencies and to the public	PH / Steering group members
	Review the name of the Steering Group and working groups to clearly communicate the outcomes the groups would like to see	

Consistently use language in internal and public communications that promotes dignity, choice and personal agency

Create and circulate guidance to all members of the Steering Group and working groups on suitable language and terms

PH

DRAFT

Bath & North East Somerset Council		
MEETING	Council	
MEETING	21 January 2021	
TITLE:	Standards Committee Annual report 2019-2020	
WARD:	All	
AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM		
List of attachments to this report:		
Appendix 1 Standards Committee Annual report 2019-2020		

1 THE ISSUE

1.1 To consider the Standards Committee Annual report.

2 RECOMMENDATION

The Council is asked to;

2.1 Note the work of the Standards Committee as set out in the Annual report (Appendix 1).

3 THE REPORT

3.1 The Standards Committee is responsible for the promotion of ethical standards within the Authority, helping to secure adherence to the Members’ Code of Conduct, monitoring the operation of the Code within Bath & North East Somerset Council, conducting hearings following investigation, and determining complaints made against Councillors in respect of alleged breaches of the Code of Conduct.

3.2 The Standards Committee agreed it would provide an annual report to the Council summarising the work of the Committee over the previous year.

4 STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS

4.1 The Standards Committee is not required to produce an annual report; however, it is good practice to do so.

5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCE, PROPERTY, PEOPLE)

5.1 No direct implications.

6 RISK MANAGEMENT

6.1 Adherence to robust standards of conduct mitigates potential complaints about standards issues.

7. EQUALITIES

6.1 No direct impact.

8 CLIMATE CHANGE

8.1 No direct impact.

9 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

9.1 None.

10. CONSULTATION

10.1 The S.151 and Monitoring Officer have been consulted.

Contact person	Michael Hewitt, Monitoring Officer (Acting) Michael_Hewitt@bathnes.gov.uk
Background papers	None
Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format	

Standards Committee

Annual Report 2019 - 20

Chair's Foreword

The Standards Committee fulfils a most important role for Bath and North East Somerset Council and for the Parish and Town Councils within its area. The Committee members are all volunteers: some are Unitary Councillors; some are Parish or Town Councillors drawn from Parish or Town Councils in the Bath and North East Somerset Council area, whose nominations are facilitated by Avon Local Councils Association, and some are Independent Members, being independent members of the public. In addition, as legally required, the Authority appoints an 'Independent Person', to work alongside the Standards Committee and Monitoring Officer.

At the start of the period covered by the period of this report, following elections, a number of new members joined the Standards Committee. All committee members have given willingly and generously of their time and talents in approaching issues most thoughtfully and constructively. We are most grateful to them.

The following detailed report shows the range of matters within the scope of the Standards Committee. In the past year, there have been some 7 matters raised: of which initial assessments required 'no further action' to be undertaken on 5 occasions; 1 dealt with by informal resolution; and one matter was withdrawn. No matters were referred for investigation. To put these figures in context, the Standards Committee has within its purview, the unitary authority and 45 Parish and Town Councils: in total over 500 councillors.

In Bath and North East Somerset, the Standards Committee has three Independent Members: Dr Cyril Davies and Deborah Russell and myself, and in this authority, the Committee is chaired by an Independent Member. I am most grateful to all my colleagues for their help and support and commend the Monitoring Officer and her officers for their most professional and successful operation of the Standards regime.

Dr Axel Palmer
Chair of the Standards Committee

The Standards Committee

Introduction

The Standards Committee has agreed that it will submit an annual report summarising the work the Committee has carried out during the previous year for the consideration of Council. This report comprises the Annual Review covering the period April 2019 to March 2020, together with background information regarding the standards regime established within Bath & North East Somerset Council. All references to 2019-20 in the report refer to this time period.

1. Background information

The Code of Conduct for Elected and Co-opted Members

In 2012 BANES adopted a code required by The Localism Act 2011 setting out the conduct that is expected of elected and co-opted members of the Authority when they are acting in that capacity. The Code applies whenever a member (a) conducts the business of the Authority (including the business of their office as an elected councillor or co-opted member) or (b) acts, claims to act or gives the impression they are acting as a representative of the Authority. The Code is consistent with Nolan's Seven Principles of Public Life, and should be read in the light of those principles, namely that Councillors will act with selflessness; integrity; objectivity; accountability; openness; honesty and leadership.

The Monitoring Officer

The Monitoring Officer is responsible for promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct and for reporting any actual or potential breaches of the law and maladministration to the full Council and/or to the Cabinet (as set out in s.5(1) of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989).

The Monitoring Officer and their team administer the local arrangements for addressing complaints made under the Code of Conduct. This includes the assessment of every complaint received under the Code of Conduct. Following consideration and consultation with the Authority's Independent Person and Chair of the Standards Committee, the Monitoring Officer decides whether the complaint will be investigated. The decision will be based on whether the allegation, if proved, would constitute a failure to observe the Code of Conduct and the application of the Council's adopted assessment criteria. The Monitoring Officer may also consider that a complaint can be reasonably resolved informally and will discuss this option with the complainant and subject member where appropriate.

Independent Persons

The Council has appointed an Independent Person who is invited to attend all meetings of the Standards Committee. The Council has access to a reserve Independent Person through informal arrangements with neighbouring local authorities. The Independent Person must be consulted by the Council before it makes a decision on a matter that has been referred to it for investigation; they can also be consulted by the Council in respect of a code of conduct complaint at any other stage; and can also be consulted by a member or co-opted member of the Council against whom a complaint has been made. It has been emphasised that the involvement and consultation of the Independent Person is important at all stages.

The Standards Committee

The Standards Committee is responsible for the promotion of ethical standards within the Council, helping to secure adherence to the Code; monitoring the operation of the Code; conducting hearings following investigation and determining complaints made under the Code. The Standards Committee's terms of reference are set out in the Council's Constitution in Part 5, Terms of Reference. The Committee conducts proceedings using Article 9 of the Constitution and the Authority's Local Arrangements for dealing with complaints under the Code of Conduct for Members. The Committee is also responsible for granting dispensations to Members.

Where a Final Report from an Investigating Officer recommends a finding that there is no breach of the Code, the Committee determines whether to accept the report; refer the report back to the Investigating Officer if it is considered incomplete; or refer the report to a hearing in accordance with the Authority's Local Arrangements for dealing with complaints under the Code of Conduct for Members.

Where a Final Report from an Investigating Officer recommends a finding that there has been a breach of the Code, the Committee undertakes a hearing in accordance with the Council's Local Arrangements for dealing with complaints under the Code. The Committee will determine the facts; if there has been a breach and any sanctions. It can also make recommendations to Council.

2. Training for Standards Committee Members and Independent Persons

Initial and refresher training on the duties and responsibilities of members serving on the Standards Committee of the Authority is important to ensure the probity and credibility of the Authority's decision making processes. Members are required to undertake basic training through the Authority's member induction programme, on election or re-election, and this is refreshed annually, before they can serve on the Standards Committee. Training is also provided for the Independent Persons appointed by the Authority in order to ensure they are able to carry out their role.

3. Standards Committee Membership 2019-20

In 2019/20 the Standards Committee comprised the following Members:

Councillors Jess David, Sally Davis, Duncan Hounsell, Michelle O'Doherty, June Player.
Parish Councillors Tony Crouch, Clive Fricker, Kathy Thomas.
Independent Members Dr Cyril Davies, Dr Axel Palmer (Chair), Deborah Russell.

4. The Authority's Independent Persons

The Authority's Independent Person is Tony Drew and the Council has access to a reserve Independent Person through informal arrangements with neighbouring local authorities.

5. Committee Meetings

At the start of each year the Standards Committee agrees its Work Programme/Action Plan

for the year, which is then monitored at meetings throughout the year. The Work Programme/Action Plan for 2019-20 is attached at Annex A to this report. Standard Committee sessions are scheduled every 2 months in advance. If not required, these are cancelled.

The Standards Committee met on:

- 4th July 2019
- 19th September 2019

6. Complaints under the Code of Conduct for Members and Co-opted Members for the last 5 years

i. Complaints by complainant

Type of complainant	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	Total
BaNES Councillor	0	1	1	0	0	2
Parish / Town Councillor	8	0	0	1	2	11
Member of the public	16	9	13	15	5	58
Council Officer	n/a	n/a	1	1	0	2
Parish Clerk	0	0	0	3	0	3
Total	24	10	15	20	7	76

ii. Complaints by subject member

Subject of the complaint	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	Total
BANES Councillor	11	7	11	13	0	42
Parish / Town Councillor	13	3	4	7	7	34
Total	24	10	15	20	7	76

iii. Complaints by type

Type of complaint	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	Total
Failure to declare an interest	5	6	6	5	0	22
Bullying/failure to treat with respect	7	1	4	3	0	15
Bringing Council into disrepute	11	3	5	11	7	37
Improperly conferring advantage/disadvantage	0	0	0	0	0	0
Disclosure of confidential information	1	0	0	0	0	1
Lack of respect	0	0	0	1	0	1
Total	24	10	15	20	7	76

Note: A complainant may make several types of complaint about a councillor.

iv. Initial Assessments

Local Assessment Decisions	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	Total
No Further Action	21	10	4	17	5	57
Informal Resolution	0	0	10	2	1	13
Referred for Investigation	3	0	1	1	0	5
Ongoing	0	0	0	0	0	0
Withdrawn	0	0	0	0	1	1
Total	24	10	15	20	7	76

v. Outcome of complaints

Outcomes	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	Total
Other Action	0	0	0	0	2	2
Ongoing	1	0	2	0	0	3
Apology	1	0	0	0	0	1
No Action Required	9	0	1	0	5	15
Withdrawn	0	0	1	2	0	3
Breach	1	4	2	5	0	12
No Breach	12	6	9	13	0	40
Total	24	10	15	20	7	76

7. Review of Standards Committee Work Programme and Action Plan for 2019/20

The Standards Committee's Work Programme/Action Plan for 2019/20 is attached at Annex A. The Standards Committee met on 2 occasions during the year. At each meeting the Committee monitored its Work Plan and noted the current position of complaints using the Complaints Tracker.

In the 2018-19 Annual report the Committee advised that it had reviewed the "Local Government Ethical Standards" – a review by the Committee on Standards in Public Life and noted that the Council was already complying with the majority of its best practice recommendations. Following from that review, an advice note for Councillors on bullying and harassment was agreed to be recommended to Council and this was adopted by Council at its meeting on the 10 October 2019. New members of the committee joined in 2019 following the Local Government Elections in May 2019 and were trained on the work of the committee and the process for dealing with complaints. The Committee also considered the Annual Report on Commission for Local Administration in England (Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman) Complaints and produced the Annual Report of the Standards Committee.

8. Conclusion

The Committee has dealt with a wide variety of matters in the past year. The Committee's aim is to continue to develop and maintain the Authority's ethical governance framework for the benefit of the Authority and ultimately local people. The Committee is looking forward to the next year.

STANDARDS COMMITTEE WORKPLAN 2019 - 20

Date of meeting	Title	Report author / responsible officer
4 th July 2019 (provisional)	Annual Review of Code of Conduct Report on assessment of Complaints Work plan for the Standards Committee	
19 th September 2019 (substantive)	Annual Report on Local Government Ombudsman complaints Annual Report of the Standards Committee Report on assessment of Complaints Work plan for the Standards Committee	
21 st November 2019 (provisional)	Cancelled	
16 th January 2020 (substantive)	Cancelled	
12 th March 2020 (provisional)	Postponed	
21 st May 2020 (substantive)	Cancelled	

9th July 2020 (provisional)	Annual Review of the Code of Conduct	
17th September 2020 (substantive)	Annual Report on Local Government Ombudsman complaints Annual report of the Standards Committee	

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