

PARISH LIAISON MEETING

Minutes of the Informal Meeting held

Wednesday, 13th July, 2022, 6.00 pm

In attendance:

Bath & North East Somerset Council

Councillor Shaun Stephenson-McGall - Chair of Council
Cllr Matt McCabe, Bathavon North Ward Councillor, B&NES and Cabinet Assistant for Planning and Sustainable Transport

Mandy Bishop - Chief Operating Officer
Chris Major - Director of Place Management

Gary Peacock - Deputy Group Manager for Highways and Traffic
Craig Jackson - Team Manager, Highways Maintenance & Drainage
Stephen Burrell – Principal Engineer, Street Lighting
Daniel Parr - Principal Engineer, Flooding and Drainage

Simon de Beer - Head of Planning and Place Team lead for Somer Valley
Richard Daone - Deputy Head of Planning Policy
Paula Freeland - Team Manager, Planning and Conservation

Carol Maclellan - Assistant Director for Environmental Services
Sarah Alder - Team Manager for Strategy and Contracts (Waste Services)
Sheryl Marsh - Green and Clean Project officer (Waste Services)

Dave Dixon - Community Engagement Manager
Sara Dixon - Locality Manager
Alison Wells - Community Engagement Project Officer

Parishes

Cllr Rodney Andrews - Chew Magna Parish Council
Cllr Julie Austwick - Saltford Parish Council
Cllr Ivan Batchelor - Stanton Drew Parish Council
Cllr Paul Beazley-Long - Southstoke Parish Council
Cllr Bruce Clarke - Priston Parish Council
Cllr Hillary Cox - Bathford Parish Council
Geoff Davis - Clerk to South Stoke and Monkton Combe Parish Councils
Cllr Sally Davis – Farmborough Parish Council and Ward Councillor for Clutton and Farmborough
Cllr Dawn Drury - Compton Dando Councillor and Clerk to Keynsham Town Council
Cllr David Duckett - Hinton Blewett Parish Council
Philip Edwards - Clerk to Temple Cloud with Cameley Parish Council and Hinton Blewett Parish Councils
Cllr Michael Evans – Midsomer Norton Town Council and Ward Councillor for Midsomer Norton North

Cllr Clive Fricker - Keynsham Town Council
Trudi Gilbank - Clerk to Farmborough Parish Council
Cllr Robert Law - Englishcombe Parish Council
Richard Maccabee - Clerk to Batheaston Parish Council
Cllr Martin Mitchell, Claverton Parish Council
Jocelyn Nichols - Clerk to Priston Parish Council
Cllr Josie Pownall - Timsbury Parish Council
Cllr Sam Ross - Farmborough Parish Council
Cllr Nick Schofield - Chew Magna Parish Council
Katherine Sears - Deputy Clerk, Keynsham Town Council
Cllr Kathy Thomas - Peasedown St John Parish Council and Chair of BANES ALCA
Cllr Andy Wait - Keynsham Town Council and Ward Councillor for Keynsham East
Cllr Chris Warren - Saltford Parish Council

Apologies

Bath & North East Somerset

Cllr Tim Ball – Cabinet Member for Planning and Licensing
George Bottin - Principal Engineer, Highway Maintenance & Improvement
Sophie Broadfield – Director of Sustainable Communities
Cllr Neil Butters – Ward Councillor for Bathavon South
Jackie Clayton – Joint Head of Green Transformation and Place Team lead for Chew Valley
Cllr Tom Davies – Cabinet Member for Adult Services and Council House Building
Cllr Neil Dowdney – Marksbury Parish Council
Will Godfrey – Chief Executive
Cllr Duncan Hounsell – Ward Councillor for Saltford
Simon Martin – Director Regeneration and Housing and joint Place Team lead for Bath
Louise Morris – Joint Head of Green Transformation and Place Team lead for Bathavon
Cleo Newcombe-Jones – Regeneration Team Manager and joint Place Team lead for Bath
Simon Porter – Head of Waste and Fleet Operations
Cllr Manda Rigby – Cabinet Member for Transport
Cllr Dine Romero – Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, Communities
Pam Turton – Head of Transport Strategy and Place Team lead for Keynsham
Cllr Sarah Warren – Cabinet Member for Climate and Sustainable Travel

Parishes

Corston Parish Council
Dunkerton and Tunley Parish Council
East Harptree Parish Council
North Stoke Parish Meeting
Shoscombe Parish Council
West Harptree Parish Council

1 WELCOME

Cllr Shaun Stephenson-McGall, Chair of the Council, gave an Introduction which was followed by a presentation from Chief Operating Officer, Mandy Bishop.

2 WORLD CAFÉ SESSION

Group discussion - Highways and Transport and Fix My Street

Officer attendance: Chris Major, Gary Peacock, Craig Jackson, Stephen Burrell, Daniel Parr

B&NES Reporting Structure:

Will Godfrey
Mandy Bishop
Chris Major
Gary Peacock
Craig Jackson

Stephen and Daniel report to Craig.

What has worked well

- Almost an immediate response - very impressed with Fix My Street.
- General Feeling that Fix My Street is excellent.

Areas for Improvement

- Issue is getting the job completed. We are now reporting back last on Fix My Street, once it has been completed, to ask for an update.
- Street signs have disappeared - could there be regular updates if particular jobs take longer like signage.
- Audit of signage (including street name plates) and getting rid of unnecessary street clutter and cleansing.
- Parishes need to be more involved in planning of white lining at a particular junctions. There have been issues where it has been done and it shouldn't have been prioritised.
- Unannounced repairs to a pedestrian crossing in Bathford. We are looking for support from the Council to help reduce traffic speeds with the addition of painted roundels in the road and signs.
- How do you report removal of roadside debris?
- Lots of issues around worn and faded white lines.
- Street lighting and Volker issues of Parish Council owned running and repairing of street lights. 1 x street light at bus stop at Dunkerton.
- Issue of stolen gully covers in North East Somerset.

- Issue of yellow lines being redone in Chew Magna - need to go through “Fix my street” and get recorded.
- Tree came down in Hinton Blewett - tried to report the issue on Fix my Street. Issue was, they said it was closed 20 mins later. Issue in rural areas where sometimes it’s difficult to find a postcode. The whole issue of saying a problem is resolved when it actually isn’t. Also an issue with footpaths and how they are repaired.
- Issue about the gully at Compton Dando.
- Issue about pot holes and length of time it takes to resolve. Also, sometimes the length of time to get repairs done in rural areas. (The roads in rural areas are used as footpaths) so need keeping up to spec to encourage people to walk and cycle. Information given to parishes about gully maintenance programme.
- Temporary traffic lights left out and working after job was done. Same with diversion signs. Can this try to be looked at when the diversion is not needed.

Group discussion – Planning and Transportation

Officer attendance: Simon de Beer, Richard Daone, Paula Freeland

B&NES Reporting Structure:

Will Godfrey
 Sophie Broadfield – Director of Sustainable Communities
 Simon de Beer

Richard and Paula report to Simon

What is working well?

- The officers are responsive and helpful. We often have to request a delay on responding with our comments to allow for parish meetings to take place and they are amenable to this.

What areas require improvement?

- Paperless is good but the quality of some of the drawings creates issues when projecting them at Parish Council meetings, particularly pencil drawn plans and lines. It seems to be worse now than previously.
- Planning Applications sent for comment sometimes have missing information that would be really helpful eg dimensions. A message was left for a Planning Officer but no response to date.

- We are not always given the background on why something has been put to us which would be helpful. Also, we are not always notified about non-material changes which could be something such as brick colour. This means that new buildings sometimes don't fit in with the rest of the village.
- There seem to be communication failures – we didn't get notified about a couple of applications. It was recorded that Stanton Drew and Chew Magna had not given a response but we had not received the application to consider.
- Information can be vague. Most of the applications we receive relate to conversions of farm buildings – one has changed their plans five times but no work on the building has been undertaken. We wonder whether the vagaries are deliberate on the part of those developing.
- When there are resubmissions, residents' comments disappear. They then complain that they put in objections but they are no longer there. It doesn't happen all the time – mainly on the complex ones.
- The attachment for the formal notice seems laborious ie having to send an attachment which has to then be opened. All we are looking for is approved or not. Could there be better use of digital for this?
- We're seeing applications that relate to agriculture with a bit of housing thrown in and then changes taking place which move them more towards residential ie building residential on the sly.
- We raised an enforcement issue in May and while various officers have replied, we still have nothing substantive.
- What is the relationship between B&NES and WECA? How does that work in terms of strategic planning and transport? WECA did a consultation on the A4 corridor and did not consult the parish council on it. We have approached WECA about this and have not had a satisfactory response. Is it just an extra layer of bureaucracy?
- There is a B2 development – a cement mixing works – alongside housing. This brings a good deal of lorry movement and other disturbance for residents. Can we ensure in future that industrial next to residential is not classified as B2 as the category is too broad.
- It is the same with Withies Green in Keynsham. It is on the A4, next to an Esso garage classified as B2 but on the Local Plan the site is allocated for residential – there could be a similar issue here in future. We have challenged this through the Town Council.
- We have around 5,000 more residents due to development (Keynsham). There seems to be no overview with no new roads built since the 1960s, apart from those within the new estates. The new residents want to go to the town centre or to Bristol and Bath. The town and main roads around it are congested.

- The developments in Keynsham recently and those planned puts pressure on the A4 which is excessive. Withies Green, if approved, will add to this. Where is the strategic view? Cycling is not an option for very many people. Our desire to have a railway station in Saltford is not prioritised in the same way as cycling.
- The housing is around the edge of the town of Keynsham but the residents all want to come into it. I'm sure we had this conversation at the time – there is development with no infrastructure – no new GP surgery for example. Is traffic being looked at?
- What is the relationship between B&NES and Wessex Water on sewerage. It seems at capacity in certain areas.
- What happened with WECA and the Spatial Development Strategy?
- It all seems a bit top down in terms of numbers of housing.
- Are we getting any funds back from WECA for undertaking our own plan?
- When will B&NES hear about the Local Plan Partial Update?
- There was a discussion on infill boundaries and the Green Belt with officers confirming that the Inspector is reflecting on this – we should have his view early next month. B&NES had to change the infill policy to align with national policy.
- There is development in Mendip but on our boundary (Midsomer Norton). The residents are using B&NES services but their Council Tax goes to Mendip. Do we have a financial arrangement with them around this?
- B&NES seems inconsistent on certain planning applications with one resident in the village getting approval yet another being refused for very similar proposals. It would be very helpful to receive a communication, maybe two or three times a year, to explain why certain cases met approval but others didn't, so residents understand the guidance before they appoint an architect.
- Councillors find it difficult to look at elevations as lines get compressed. Freehand elevations are not true to scale. A presentation/explanation would make life easier.
- There was a discussion around the desire to preserve stone built buildings on farms so permission may be granted for an Air BnB for example so that the building is saved/used. Further Air BnBs are then refused on lack of public transport grounds. Yet, modern barns which look less attractive, get permission.
- Residents seem to have had a bit of a spree during Covid and we have a long list of potential enforcement issues. Some go back to 2019 – are we out of time?

Table 3 – Waste and Cleansing and parks

Officer attendance: Carol McClellan, Sarah Alder, Sheryl Marsh

B&NES Reporting Structure:

Will Godfrey
Mandy Bishop
Chris Major
Carol Maclellan
Sarah Alder
Sheryl Marsh

What has worked well

- The booking system for the recycling centre is very good.
- Please pass on our thanks to the team in relation to the gully cleaning, they came out very quickly (Chew Magna).
- The recycling teams that come to Hinton Blewett are an example of how it should be done. The teams are excellent, they pick up and sweep up any rubbish. They are a real credit to the Council. I wonder whether there is evidence that more recycling is done because the staff care about the collection?
- Recycling teams are very fast.

Areas for improvement

- Priority for the Waste Team is food recycling but 30% of rubbish in black bags is food waste. Parishes are interested to find out more about the statistics and data so that they can help target and promote positive messages in their areas. Keynsham's newsletter is going out shortly - happy to include details within this.
- Difficulty in getting rubbish bags. The Parish Sweeper scheme had to end so we now go to the Wombles to get them. (The Council is working with the Wombles as a distributor for the community litter picks.)
- Litter bins in Midford are often overlooked.
- The three bins by Warleigh Manor are well serviced. The only issue which has arisen lately is that food trucks are down at the Weir again and the rubbish is being collected by the teams.
- Can we request the mechanical sweeper? There are Health and Safety issues for the parish sweeper working on A roads. It would be helpful to have a copy of the schedule.

- Leaves are a big problem. If people put them in bags can you collect them? (Some parishes are given large green bins for communal areas and this could be offered in specific areas). Cost of bins is expensive so a green bin is a good idea.
- Please can we have the schedule for cutting overgrowth on footpaths. Parishes get a lot of complaints about this.
- Is the Parish Council responsible for some of the public rights of way and clearance?
- Do we get back the compost from our waste?
- Parishes would be really interested to hear more about the local nature reserves scheme (not those that are formally designated but smaller parcels of land that could be identified).
- Is there space in the new Keynsham Recycling centre for the Repair Café?
- Keynsham Town Council manages the cemetery. Would it be possible to borrow some equipment from B&NES for a day?
- In some parishes most of the verges are cut by parishes.
- In Keynsham, Manor Road woodland and the wildflower meadow were cut before the In Bloom judging. This was on the route for the judges.
- Can we give trees to B&NES - we have some available?
- Are there details of the number of trees available per area? (Parish tree planting programme).
- How much information do you give to individuals about planting trees in appropriate places?
- Community Action days parishes were very interested and requested more information. Details of Community Action days to be sent to all parishes and Ward councillors.
- Are we able to identify signs and redundant posts that are no longer in use?
- Are we able to put up new signs if needed?
- The recycling teams do not pick up items that fall out and there is often a lot of debris along the route after they have been.
- In Saltford we had planted wildflowers they were supposed to leave in swathes. They have cut the area and not picked up the grass. This is detrimental to the planting.

More information is needed for clerks to help manage resident expectation – particularly around planned grass cutting, gully cleaning etc.

3 THANK YOU FROM THE CHAIR OF THE COUNCIL

The Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and contribution.

4 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Wednesday 12 October 2022 at 6.30pm.

The meeting ended at 8.00pm

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Issues log – for Parish Charter Refresh 2022

Service area	Issue		Raised at..	Response / Action
General	WECA consultation and engagement	Lack of consultation with parishes/communities. Lack of understanding of their role v B&NES on strategy/plans.	Parish Liaison meeting 13.7.22	Action: Parish Charter update to include engagement with partners.
General	Compliments	A number of compliments were received from Parishes regarding staff working in Planning, Highways and Waste services.	Parish Liaison meeting 13.7.22	Action: Parish Charter – working together - explore how we can share good practice across other service areas and teams to improve customer service.
General	Reporting processes are often not clear	A number of questions were raised regarding reporting regular maintenance work, issues / problems. Parishes unsure of reporting process for maintenance works such as yellow lining.	Parish Liaison meeting 13.7.22	Action: Parish Charter update – decision and reporting process required.
Highways	Reported highway maintenance work and updates on Fix My Street	Lack of communication in relation to notification about outstanding jobs and feedback. Improvements needed to feedback on Fix My Street – information is not always accurate about progress of jobs. Sometimes difficult to find a postcode in rural areas.	Parish Liaison meeting 13.7.22	Improvements to Fix My Street are underway. Opportunity for parishes to work with design team to make improvements. Action: parish rep user group to be set up and work with team.

Issues log – for Parish Charter Refresh 2022

Service area	Issue		Raised at..	Response / Action
Highways	Street furniture and clutter	Street signage has disappeared, redundant poles, cleansing of signs. Communication regarding jobs taking longer eg requesting new signage.	Parish Liaison meeting 13.7.22	Funding has been allocated within 2022/23 budget for Community Action days – cleaning of signs, removing redundant poles, litter picking. Action: to update parishes on programme of Community Action days and reporting of issues.
Highways	Programming and Planning of maintenance work	Frustrations around the length of time it takes to carry out routine jobs (eg pot holes). Traffic lights and diversions are often left out on the highway after jobs completed. Maintenance work is sometimes carried out unnecessarily - involve the parishes in the programme eg white line painting.	Parish Liaison meeting 13.7.22	Action: Parish Charter update – decision and reporting process required.
Highways	Ownership of Assets	Historic ownership of street lighting assets needs to be reviewed.	Parish Liaison meeting 13.7.22	Action: Need to investigate with parishes.
Planning	Strategic development sites and planning uses.	Various issues were raised about future development and planning uses.	Parish Liaison meeting 13.7.22	This will need to be addressed through the Local Plan Partial Update.

Issues log – for Parish Charter Refresh 2022

Service area	Issue		Raised at..	Response / Action
Planning	Improvements needed – how information is shared and remain available for planning applications	<p>Quality of drawings for projecting at Parish Meetings</p> <p>Redacted or missing information on Applications</p> <p>Non notification of non-material changes</p> <p>Residents' comments/objections disappearing</p> <p>Elevations not always easy to understand</p>	Parish Liaison meeting 13.7.22	Action: explore opportunity for parish working group to work alongside council and identify areas for improvements.
Planning	Lack of communication on planning applications and update from officers.	<p>Not sent applications to consider.</p> <p>Lack of response when trying to contact officers.</p> <p>Suggested an update 2 or 3 times a year to explain why certain applications are successful and others refused.</p> <p>Need training for councillors on planning applications.</p>	Parish Liaison meeting 13.7.22	<p>Parishes need to report issues directly to the Planning team as they arise.</p> <p>Action: Parish Charter update – decision and reporting process required.</p> <p>Explore opportunities to develop a planning training programme for parish councillors.</p>
Planning	Lack of enforcement and	Suggestion of breaches during Covid in particular and lack of	Parish Liaison meeting 13.7.22	Local knowledge on what is taking place is key, as is alerting the enforcement team.

Issues log – for Parish Charter Refresh 2022

Service area	Issue	Raised at..	Response / Action
	communication	resource in Enforcement leading to delays.	There has been a high turnover of staff in the enforcement team and it is under resourced at present.
Waste and Cleansing	Debris left after recycling collections	<p>In some areas the recycling teams leave debris after their collections.</p> <p><i>This was not the experience of all as some parishes were complimentary of the teams who said they cleared up any debris.</i></p>	Parishes should report any issues via Fix My Street.
Waste and Cleansing	Information about recycling stats and data	Parishes were interested in information and data about recycling usage. Keen to assist promoting messages in their areas.	Action: to share data and key messages and any articles for wider distribution in local areas.
Waste and Cleansing	Litter including collection and	<p>Difficulty in getting rubbish bags from the Council for community litter pickers.</p> <p>Some litter bins are overlooked and some are being used by commercial companies to dispose of waste.</p> <p>Leaves are a big problem in certain areas.</p>	<p>Parishes should report any issue via Fix My Street.</p> <p>Community Green bins can be requested for dealing with leaves that cause problems.</p> <p>Action: Parish Charter update – decision and reporting process required.</p>

Issues log – for Parish Charter Refresh 2022

Service area	Issue		Raised at..	Response / Action
Waste and Cleansing	Street Cleansing	Parishes not sure of the cleansing programme and how to request the mechanical sweeper.	Parish Liaison meeting 13.7.22	Action: Parish Charter update – decision and reporting process required. Look at ways to share programme. To assist clerks in responding to complaints need to consider how best to share the information to manage residents' expectations.
Parks	Verge and general grass cutting programmes	Parishes have many complaints about grass cutting. There was a number of frustrations around the grass cutting programme – sometimes it's not done enough, other times it is carried out unnecessarily or without the knowledge of the parish council.	Parish Liaison meeting 13.7.22	Action: Parish Charter update – decision and reporting process required. Look at ways to share programme. The programme changes due to unforeseen issues. To assist clerks in responding to complaints, need to consider how best to share the information to manage residents' expectations.
Parks	Nature reserve and tree planting	Unaware of new initiatives (nature reserve and parish tree planting) and how to get involved. Trees available to local residents – does the council provide information about appropriateness Are we about to give trees to the Council to relocate?	Parish Liaison meeting 13.7.22	Action: to update parishes on the programme
Cemetery	Sharing of resources	Would parishes be able to borrow equipment from B&NES, particularly in relation to	Parish Liaison meeting 13.7.22	<i>Note - whilst this request related specifically to one area, there is opportunity to explore further what could</i>

Issues log – for Parish Charter Refresh 2022

Service area	Issue	Raised at..	Response / Action
		cemeteries.	<p><i>be made available to parishes.</i></p> <p>Action: Parish Charter Update - to agree resources that can be shared and a process for this.</p>

**West of England Combined Authority
B&NES elected representatives**

Body/Meeting	Representative/s	Reserve/s	Links
WECA	Cllr Kevin Guy	Cllr Tim Ball Cllr Richard Samuel	https://democracy.bathnes.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=598 https://westofengland-ca.moderngov.co.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=192
West of England Combined Authority Audit Committee	Cllr Rob Appleyard Cllr Hal McFie	Cllr Winston Duguid	https://democracy.bathnes.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=601 https://westofengland-ca.moderngov.co.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=144
West of England Combined Authority Business Board	Cllr Richard Samuel		https://democracy.bathnes.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=603
West of England Combined Authority Joint Committee	Cllr Kevin Guy	Cllr Tim Ball Cllr Richard Samuel	https://democracy.bathnes.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=627 https://westofengland-ca.moderngov.co.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=192
West of England Combined Authority Overview & Scrutiny Committee	Cllr Hal McFie Cllr Winston Duguid		https://democracy.bathnes.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=599 https://westofengland-ca.moderngov.co.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=143
West of England Combined Authority Planning and Housing Board	Cllr Tim Ball Cllr Tom Davies		https://democracy.bathnes.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=602
West of England Combined Authority Skills Board	Cllr Dine Romero		https://democracy.bathnes.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=604

West of England Combined Authority Transport Board	Cllr Sarah Warren	Cllr Manda Rigby	https://democracy.bathnes.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=647
West of England LEP Board	Cllr Kevin Guy		https://westofengland-ca.moderngov.co.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=135 https://www.westofengland-ca.gov.uk/about-us/local-enterprise-partnership/lep-board/

Joint meeting - West of England Combined Authority Committee and West of England Joint Committee

<https://westofengland-ca.moderngov.co.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=141>