

BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET COUNCIL

MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING

Thursday, 25th May, 2023

Present:- **Councillors** Michael Auton, Tim Ball, Alex Beaumont, David Biddleston, Colin Blackburn, Anna Box, Deborah Collins, Paul Crossley, Chris Dando, Jess David, Mark Elliott, Fiona Gourley, Kevin Guy, Alan Hale, Ian Halsall, Dave Harding, Gavin Heathcote, Steve Hedges, Saskia Heijltjes, Oli Henman, Joel Hirst, Lucy Hodge, Shaun Hughes, Dr Eleanor Jackson, John Leach, Hal MacFie, Ruth Malloy, Lesley Mansell, Matt McCabe, Paul May, Sarah Moore, Ann Morgan, Robin Moss, Michelle O'Doherty, Bharat Pankhania, June Player, Manda Rigby, Dine Romero, Paul Roper, Sam Ross, Onkar Saini, Toby Simon, Shaun Stephenson-McGall, Alison Streatfeild-James, George Tomlin, Malcolm Treby, Karen Walker, Sarah Warren, Tim Warren CBE, Andy Wait and David Wood

Apologies for absence: **Councillors** Alison Born, Sarah Evans, Duncan Hounsell, Samantha Kelly, George Leach and Joanna Wright

1 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

The Chair drew attention to the emergency evacuation procedure as set out on the agenda.

2 ELECTION OF CHAIR 2023 - 2024

It was proposed by Councillor Kevin Guy, seconded by Councillor Robin Moss and supported by Councillors Shaun Hughes, Tim Warren and Sam Ross and then

RESOLVED that Councillor Sarah Moore be elected Chair of the Council for the Council year 2023/24.

Councillor Sarah Moore made and signed her Declaration of Acceptance of Office, received the Chain of Office from Councillor Stephenson Mc-Gall and then addressed the Council. She thanked Members for their support and confidence in her and also the residents of Twerton and Whiteway. She explained she was looking forward to various aspects of the Chair role, including showcasing our wonderful city, towns and villages, presiding over important events and citizenship ceremonies. She expressed her intention to visit a large number of local charities and organisations to meet the volunteers who contribute to this vital role in the community.

FROM THIS STAGE OF THE PROCEEDINGS, COUNCILLOR SARAH MOORE PRESIDED AT THE MEETING.

3 APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIR 2023 - 2024

It was proposed by Councillor Shaun Hughes, seconded by Councillor Kevin Guy, and unanimously

RESOLVED that Councillor Karen Walker be elected Vice-Chair of the Council for the Council year 2023-24.

Councillor Karen Walker made and signed her Declaration of Acceptance of Office, received the Chain of Office from Councillor Sarah Moore and thanked the Council for her appointment.

4 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

5 MINUTES - 16TH MARCH 2023

On a motion from Councillor Chris Dando, seconded by Councillor Eleanor Jackson, it was

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of 16th March 2023 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

6 ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE CHAIR OF THE COUNCIL OR FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Councillor Sarah Moore presented Councillor Shaun Stephenson-McGall with his past Chair's badge.

It was proposed by Councillor Kevin Guy, seconded by Councillor Robin Moss, supported by Councillors Shaun Hughes, Sam Ross and Tim Warren and

RESOLVED that this Council places on record its appreciation of the services performed by Councillor Shaun Stephenson-McGall in the office of Chair of the Council for 2022/23.

Councillor Stephenson-McGall then addressed the Council and, in so doing, thanked Members and officers for their support during his year in office. He highlighted a number of the key moments of the year and made particular reference to presiding over the ceremonies that marked the death of Queen Elizabeth 2nd, and the proclamation for King Charles.

The Chair then;

1. Welcomed and congratulated all newly elected Councillors and invited the Council to place on record its appreciation of the past service given by the Members who retired following the election;
2. Invited the Council to note the appointment of Councillor Kevin Guy as Liberal Democrat Group Leader, Councillor Robin Moss as Labour Group Leader, Councillor Shaun Hughes as Independent Group Spokesperson, Councillor Joanna Wright as Green Party Group Leader and Councillor Tim Warren as Conservative Group Leader;
3. Reminded everyone to switch off/to silent their mobile phones and laptops;

4. Announced that the meeting was being webcast and invited anyone who did not wish to be filmed to make themselves known to the camera operators; and
5. Reminded Members to use their microphones so that their comments are picked up for the webcast.

7 TO ANNOUNCE ANY URGENT BUSINESS AGREED BY THE CHAIR

There were no items of urgent business.

8 URGENT DECISION BY CHIEF EXECUTIVE - ENTRY HILL DEPOT CALL-IN VALIDATION

Council noted the urgent decision that had been taken by the Chief Executive on 25th April 2023 to suspend the normal requirements on timing for the period in which a call-in meeting must normally be held, as the call-in had been received very close to the 4th May election, the issue was deemed too sensitive to be considered in the week leading to the election and no constituted Panels would be in place until after this Council AGM on 25th May 2023.

9 NOTIFICATION OF MEMBERS ELECTED ON 4TH MAY 2023

This item was noted.

10 APPOINTMENT OF LEADER

On a motion from Councillor Sarah Warren, seconded by Councillor Michelle O'Doherty, it was

RESOLVED that Councillor Kevin Guy be elected Leader of the Council for the 4 year term from May 2023 AGM to May 2027 AGM.

[Notes;

1. *The above successful resolution was carried with 49 Councillors voting in favour, 2 Councillors abstaining and 0 Councillors voting against.]*

11 APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES AND PANELS, AND OTHER ANNUAL BUSINESS

On a motion from Councillor Kevin Guy, seconded by Councillor Robin Moss, it was

RESOLVED to

1. Approve a structure for non-executive and regulatory decision making, and the scrutiny function as set out in the Constitution and as circulated to all Councillors in advance of the meeting (and appended to the minutes);
2. Approve the terms of reference for Committees and Panels etc as set out in Appendix 2 to the report and constitute those bodies accordingly;

3. Approve the appointment of Members to the Committees and Panels in accordance with the requirements of political proportionality and the nominations made by the political groups (whilst noting the non-proportional basis of operating for the Licensing Sub-Committee as explained in paragraph 3.10 of the report);
4. Appoint as Chairs of such bodies, those Councillors as may from time to time be nominated by the political group to whom the chairmanship of the body is allocated;
5. Authorise the Monitoring Officer to fill any casual vacancies in membership of all the bodies constituted and vacancy in the office of Chair of such bodies in accordance with the wishes of the political groups and the allocation of chairing entitlements made at this meeting;
6. Agree the bodies on which independent co-opted members have seats as either voting or non-voting members and appoint those members accordingly (as set out in the political proportionality table appended to the minutes);
7. Expressly disapply the proportionality rule to the Restructuring Implementation Committee (with no Councillor voting against), as set out in section 3.9 of the report;
8. Confirm that the chairing arrangement for the Standards committee set out in paragraph 3.11 of the report should continue (with an independent member taking the chair);
9. Agree to defer consideration of allocation of Political Assistants until the outcome of the Paulton election is known, and therefore confirm existing appointments until then, on an interim basis;
10. Appoint 3 members to Avon Fire Authority on a proportionality basis to be determined;
11. Note, in light of the decision taken earlier on the agenda to appoint a Leader, that the Leader will publish in due course, a scheme of delegation of executive functions;
12. Note the urgent executive decisions that have been taken in the last municipal year, as set out in paragraph 5.3 of the report;
13. Note the position regarding the frequency of meetings (as set out in Section 6 of the report) as the basis for enabling the diary of meetings to be prepared, including a date of 16th May 2024 for the May Council AGM, and to authorise the Monitoring Officer to project dates forward and prepare the diary on this basis;
14. Re-appoint the existing Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP);

15. Instruct the Independent Remuneration Panel to consider a Special Responsibility Allowance for the Cabinet Project Lead role, using the Job Description at Appendix 4 of the report;
16. Note the activity of the Member Advocates, as set out in Appendix 3 of the report;
17. Instruct the Monitoring Officer, in consultation with Group Leaders, to make appointments on non-executive outside bodies and note that the Leader or Cabinet Members will do so for executive outside bodies;
18. Confirm the scheme of delegations, previously agreed at Council, as set out at Part 2 of the Constitution; and
19. Authorise the Monitoring Officer to make and publicise any amendment to the Council's Constitution required, or take any other necessary action, as a result of decisions taken at this meeting on this and other reports within the agenda, or otherwise as required by law.

[Notes;

1. *The above successful resolution was carried with 49 Councillors voting in favour, 2 Councillors abstaining and no Councillors voting against.*
2. *During debate, Councillor Jackson queried whether SACRE should be included in the proportionality table and it was agreed this issue would be resolved outside the meeting.]*

12 PLEDGE TO CHILDREN IN CARE

Councillor Paul May moved this item, making reference to a slightly revised Pledge document which had been circulated to all Councillors (and is attached to these minutes). The amended wording is the second bullet point of the 'Your Care plan' section and set out below;

- ✓ "Your Care Plan will consider your age, gender identity, sexual orientation, disabled or non-disabled status, religion or beliefs, ethnicity and cultural needs"

In seconding the item, Councillor Dine Romero drew Members' attention to section 5.7 of the report, stating that it should refer to all Councillors, and not just Cabinet Members.

It was then unanimously

RESOLVED to approve the Bath and North East Somerset Council Pledge to Children and Young People in Care and Care Leavers.

13 QUESTIONS, STATEMENTS AND PETITIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

Statements were made by the following members of the public;

Chad Allen made a statement calling on the Council to take action to remove English ivy from the trees in its area, as it was harmful to the tree population and affected the

tree's ability to filter clean air. He explained it was not a native species, having been introduced into the country in the 18th century.

Adam Reynolds made a statement calling for the pace of activity in delivering public realm improvements to be accelerated. The statement is attached in full. Councillor Saskia Heijltjes asked Mr Reynolds if he was clear about the guidance for liveable neighbourhoods, and what they could deliver. Mr Reynolds responded that he understood hard measures needed to be in place before softer measures could be introduced.

Mrs Harrington presented a petition of nearly 500 signatures with the following request, and spoke in support;

"We, the undersigned residents of Bath and North East Somerset, and/or regular users of the supported bus services from neighbouring villages in Somerset, petition the authority to reconsider its decision to withdraw the subsidy for the 82 Tynning, Radstock-Paulton via Westfield and Paulton Hospital services and find means of funding it, and to restore the 42 Odd Down to the RUH.

Because

- The elderly, disabled and those on low incomes are disproportionately affected, and have no alternatives so will be condemned to loneliness and isolation.*
- School children will not be able to travel independently to Midsomer Norton secondary schools.*
- Waiting for the no 4 (RUH) often means ill people standing for 20-30 minutes due to jams in Weston.*
- NE Somerset residents are being discriminated against.*
- There is a climate emergency. Using public transport reduce B&NES carbon footprint."*

Councillor Kevin Guy asked if Mrs Harrington was aware that the WECA Mayor was responsible for bus transport, not the Council. Mrs Harrington responded that the WECA Mayor had said that it was the Council, not WECA, who were responsible. Councillor Sam Ross asked Mrs Harrington if she was aware that WECA had asked all its constituent councils to increase their bus subsidy budgets. Mrs Harrington responded that locals would not mind paying towards this.

David Redgewell made a statement about various transport issues, including suggestions for addressing rural bus issues, and urged all parties to address this quickly by working together to find solutions. A copy of the statement has been placed on the Minute book. Councillor Kevin Guy asked if Mr Redgewell considered that, if BSIP money for these services is not provided, B&NES should advocate that it comes directly to the Council, as in North Somerset. Mr Redgewell responded that it was necessary to check the regulations and go through the proper processes. Councillor Saskia Heijltjes asked if Mr Redgewell was aware of an article regarding demand responsive transport likely failing if supported bus services were removed. Mr Redgewell replied that he was aware, and made the wider point that it was about connecting people, places and communities and that he was worried about parts of the region.

Alexander Robinson, SU President for the University of Bath, made a statement about further developing the civic relationship between the Council, students and education providers and gave the example of Nottingham who had developed a Student Living Strategy. The statement is attached. Councillor Kevin Guy asked if Mr Robinson would be happy to meet up, to which he replied that he would. Councillor Saskia Heijltjes asked how the Council could better support students to which he replied that active engagement was good. The campaign to encourage students to vote had been good, and this needed to continue with possible surgeries and events at the University.

Robbie Bentley made a statement highlighting the mental health aspects which needed consideration with regard to the public transport issues raised by earlier speakers. He urged collaboration with WECA and the Leaders of other Councils to provide solutions.

The Chair thanked all the speakers for their statements, which were referred to the relevant Cabinet Members.

14 QUESTIONS, STATEMENTS AND PETITIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

Councillor Eleanor Jackson made a statement about rural community bus services, a copy of which has been added to the Minute book and attached to the online record.

Councillor Saskia Heijltjes made a statement about effective scrutiny and the Green Party group's aspiration to be more involved in this vital part of the Council's decision making processes. A copy of the statement has been added to the Minute book and attached to the online record. Councillor Kevin Guy asked if her group would reconsider the offer of a place on the Corporate Audit Committee, which played an important role in scrutinising the Council's financial and governance position. Councillor Heijltjes replied that she would take this back to the group.

Councillor Sam Ross made a statement calling for collaborative working across the political groups and expressing regret that they had not been consulted earlier during the allocation of committee and panel places. A copy of the statement has been added to the Minute book and attached to the online record. As a North East Somerset Councillor, she highlighted that for small communities such as the one she represents, often needs are higher but investment is lower leading to inequity of provision. Councillor Kevin Guy asked Councillor Ross if she was aware that committees and panels were established on a proportional system. Councillor Ross replied that she was aware, as had been made clear by her statement. Councillor Karen Walker asked if Councillor Ross was aware that all councillors can make statements at PDS panel meetings, to which Councillor Ross replied that she was.

The Chair thanked the Councillors for their statements which will be addressed by the relevant Cabinet Members.

The meeting ended at 7.51 pm

Chair

Date Confirmed and Signed

Prepared by Democratic Services

DRAFT POLITICAL PROPORTIONALITY TABLE – MAY 2023 – 57 COUNCILLORS

Compulsory cumulative proportionality	Number on Committee	Liberal Democrat (41) 72%	Labour (5) 9%	Independent (5) 9%	Conservative (3) 5%	Green (3) 5%	Chair Allocation	Vice Chair Allocation	Co-opted members
Corporate PD&S	9	7	1	1			LAB	LD	
Climate Emergency & Sustainability PD&S	9	7		1		1	LD	**	
Children, Adults, Health & Wellbeing PD&S	9	6	2*	1	(1)*		LD	LAB	4 non voting
Planning Committee	10	7	1	1	1		LD	LD	
Corporate Audit Committee	5	3 +1***	1			(1)***	LAB	-	1 non voting
Avon Pension Fund Committee	5	3	1			1	LD	LD	12 voting, 3 non voting
Employment Committee	3	3					LD	LD	
Standards Committee	5	3		1	1		LD	-	6 non voting *(current working practice is Chair is independent member unless Chair vote required)
TOTALS	55	39	5	5	3	3			

* Conservative Group offering one seat to the Labour Group

** to be agreed when Council considers the revised proportionality table in July 2023

*** Green group do not wish to take up this place, nor do the other parties so it defaults to LDs

Compulsory individual proportionality	No. on Cttee	LD	Lab	Ind	Con	Green			
Licensing Sub-Committee	3	2+1****	(1)****	(1)****	(1)****		LD		
Optional proportionality									
Licensing Committee	11	8	1	1	1		LD		
Fixed memberships									
WECA Overview & Scrutiny Committee	2	2							
WECA Audit Committee	2	2							
Health & Wellbeing Board	2	2 (appropriate Cabinet Members)	1 (observer)	1 (observer)	1 (observer)	1 (observer)	<i>Shared between CM & CCG Chair (or equivalent)</i>		
Pensions Investment panel	3 (Chair & Vice of APF)	2	1						4
Restructuring Implementation Committee	5	Group Leader	Group Leader	Group Spokesperson	Group Leader	Group Leader			
Charitable Trust Board *	5	1 Cab Mem + 3	1						
Alice Park Trust *	5	3				2* (Ward member)			2

- CTB - 5 councillors (to include Cabinet member responsible for Community Services) plus at least 1 Councillor who is not a member of controlling group but appointed by controlling group, plus 3 others).
- APT – 3 Councillors from the membership of the Charitable Trust Board (*excluding the Cab Member*) + the 2 Ward members for Lambridge as voting members + 2 co-opted non-voting members.

**** No other group prepared to fill the Licensing Sub place hence 3 LDs

What is the Pledge?

It is the Councils Promise to you on what you can expect from us during your time in care, and when you move on.

Where the Pledge talks about 'We' it means the Adults at the Council, Councillors, Social Workers and professionals who are responsible for you while you are in care. 'We' are your Corporate Parents and are here to support you to achieve the best in your childhood, adolescence and into adulthood.

'We' know we will not always get things right, but we Pledge to do our best.

Bath and North East Somerset's Pledge to Children Looked After and Care Leavers

Your Social Worker

- ✓ You will have a social worker and we will try our best to make this the same social worker over time
- ✓ You will have your social workers contact details so you can reach them when you need to, however they may not always be available but there will be someone in the team that will be able to help until your social worker is available.
- ✓ If you contact us, your social worker, or someone else in the team, will return your call within two working days
- ✓ Your social worker will be in touch with you regularly, at least every 6 weeks, depending on your needs

How we make decisions

- ✓ We will involve you in planning our services and explain our decisions
- ✓ This means that we will.
 - Ask you what you want
 - Listen to what you say
 - Act on what you have told us
- ✓ We will try our best to do what you ask, but sometimes we will not be able to make this promise and when this happens, we will explain why.

Your Care Plan

- ✓ You will have an up-to-date Care Plan that is designed to meet your needs
- ✓ Your Care Plan will consider your age, gender identity, sexual orientation, disabled or non-disabled status, religion or beliefs, ethnicity and cultural needs
- ✓ We will have high aspirations for your opportunities, and support you to achieve your goals, and will celebrate these
- ✓ Your Care Plan will be written down and you will be given a copy
- ✓ We will act on your Care Plan
- ✓ Your Care Plan will be reviewed at least every six months
- ✓ Meetings to review your Care Plan will be run by an Independent Reviewing Officer. You will know their name and how to contact them

Your Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO)

Independent Reviewing Officers check that children in care are looked after well and listened to

- ✓ You will have an Independent Reviewing Officer, (IRO), who will work with you, your social worker, carers and family to ensure that your needs are being met, and that your wishes and feelings are being listened to, and where possible acted upon.
- ✓ We will try to ensure you have the same IRO for every review. If your IRO needs to change, we will talk with you about this, and ensure you meet your new IRO before any meetings take place.
- ✓ Your IRO will contact you before your reviews to obtain your views, wishes and feelings. This can be through a meeting (face to face), telephone or letter, you and your IRO can agree on the best way to communicate with one another.

Where you live

- ✓ We will find you a home that is as near to your family and friends as possible
- ✓ We will find you a home that suits you and meets your individual needs
- ✓ If you move, we will try to keep you at the same school or early years setting (if that is what you want)
- ✓ We will offer you an independent advocate before you move, except in an emergency.
- ✓ If you move, your Independent Reviewing Officer will review your Care Plan within four weeks

Friends and Family

- ✓ We will ask you who you want to stay in touch with
- ✓ We will help you to stay in touch with your family, friends and other people who are important to you
- ✓ If you are not allowed to see someone, your social worker will make sure you understand the reasons why

Your Education

- ✓ Our Virtual School is here to help you.
- ✓ We will help you to do the best that you can
- ✓ We will make sure you get a place at the best school for you
- ✓ Your school will have a named teacher for children in care and their job is to look after your needs. We will make sure you have their name and contact details
- ✓ You will be fully involved in plans to support you in school. These plans will be in your Personal Education Plan (PEP)
- ✓ We will offer you high quality work experience opportunities
- ✓ We will support you to remain in education after you are 16 years, or alternatively on a traineeship or apprenticeship

Your Identity

- ✓ We will meet your religious and cultural needs
- ✓ We will ensure that you have opportunity to meet other people who share your way of life or culture
- ✓ We will encourage you to develop your talents, interests and hobbies and support you to do the things that you enjoy
- ✓ We will celebrate your successes and achievements

Your Health

- ✓ We will look after your emotional needs as well as physical health needs
- ✓ We will encourage you to be healthy
- ✓ We will make sure there is always someone to talk to about how you feel
- ✓ We will make sure you get regular health checks ups with a nurse or GP
- ✓ We will make sure you get regular dental and optician check ups

You will be given the contact details for the nurse for children in care, who can give you confidential advice and help you be as healthy as you can.

Leaving Care and Moving On

- ✓ You can stay in care until you are 18. You may even be able to continue living with your carers or in your care setting after you are 18
- ✓ We will ensure that a Pathway Plan is created to plan for your move towards independence. The IRO will ensure this reflects what you need and the support you may require when you become 18
- ✓ Your Pathway Plan will be reviewed every six months
- ✓ We will support you to move on from care
- ✓ We will support you to do what you decide
- ✓ If you want to go back into education or training between 18-25, we will make a new plan to support you
- ✓ We will stay in touch with you until you are 25 years old
- ✓ You will have a copy of your Pathway Plan

Local Offer

Our Local Offer is the support and services we offer to you when you leave or are about to leave care. We know it is a big step when you move out of care and start living on your own or with friends, but we don't stop caring for you. We want to make sure you feel safe and supported and know where and who to go to for help and advice.

Here is the link to the Local Offer <https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/care-leavers-local-offer>

Helping you sort out problems and worries

- ✓ We will work hard to sort out any problems or worries that you have
- ✓ If we can't do what you ask, we will explain the reasons why
- ✓ We will make sure you know how to get an independent advocate – that's someone who will listen to you and work with you to get things changed
- ✓ We will make sure you have all the information you need to make a complaint and we promise to always take your complaints seriously
- ✓ You can contact your IRO if you are worried or don't feel listened to, they will try to help and can support you should you wish to make a complaint



In Care Councils

What is the In Care Council?

They provide an opportunity for children and young people in care, and those Leaving Care, to have their voices heard and make a positive difference within the community. OTR regularly holds meetings, trips, and fun activities where you can spend time with other children and young people, share experiences, have influence, and develop your own skills.

Off the Record BANES <https://www.offtherecord-banes.co.uk/> are funded by B&NES to support our Senior and Care Experienced in Care Councils. There are three groups you can join:

Junior In Care Council for those aged 8-13

Senior In Care Council for those aged 14 – 17

Care Experienced Council for those aged 18-25

The In Care Council help monitor this Pledge to make sure the Council are supporting you

Contact OTR on:



01225 312 481



ICC@offtherecord-banes.co.uk

Children's Rights and Advocacy

OTR are also funded by B&NES to run an 'Advocacy' service.

An Advocate is someone who makes sure that your views and wishes are heard. They help you speak out when things aren't going well and will give you the support you need and help you understand your rights.

Contact OTR on:



01225 312481



advocacy@offtherecord-banes.co.uk

Are we keeping our promises?

You can let us know how well we are doing by sending your comments to:

Head of Service: Care Outcomes

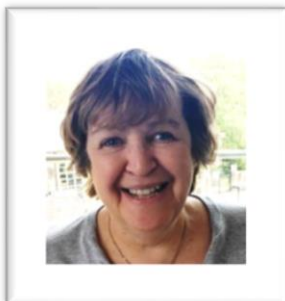


01225 477914



OR

If you want to make a complaint



Sarah Watts

Complaints and Data Protection Team Manager



01225 477931



sarah_watts@bathnes.gov.uk

**Thank you for reading this Pledge –
It's your Pledge and it's your right to ask
questions.**

COUNCIL MEETING 25TH MAY 2023

STATEMENTS FROM PUBLIC

PUBLIC	Item 14		Statement circulated
1	Chad Allen	English Ivy & Bath CAZ	
2	Adam Reynolds	Liveable Neighbourhoods	✓
3	Mrs Harrington	Rural bus services	
4	David Redgewell	Transport issues	✓
5	Alexander Robinson	Students as Residents of the City of Bath - Developing the civic relationship between B&NES, students and education providers	

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27 years ago in 1996, the Bath Cycling Campaign had its inaugural meeting. Over decades the campaign has evolved and changed and now, as Walk Ride Bath, champions walking, wheeling, and cycling. We are in it for the long haul because it's what we believe in.

We have helped and supported the council in delivering millions in public realm improvements, from simple things like making paths more accessible, through to working with officers to bid for and win funding for new projects. Some of this is nationally and internationally recognised and celebrated. Walk Ride Bath will always be a patient critical friend to the council and we want to lend out knowledge, skills and experience if you will allow us to do so. We want to see you succeed but we do not want to see weak schemes that do not enable walking, wheeling, and cycling, and these days, neither does Active Travel England.

Today I want to talk about time. How long it takes to get things done. From conception to opening, the Two Tunnels Greenway took SEVEN years. The Quays Bridge took EIGHT years. Scholars Way was proposed SEVEN years ago and probably will take at least TEN to deliver. The Bath and Bristol Railway Path: Bath extension was proposed SIX years ago and Walk Ride Bath has been diligently engaging with developers along the route to ensure they make provision for active travel corridors for this game changing project which will yet likely take another FIVE years to fully deliver. Since last year we have been encouraging your officers to engage with Wessex Water to ensure a new Sewage Works Bridge can be used as part of a new route connecting the Bath to Bristol Railway path at Saltford to Kelston and Swineford. Hopefully that will be built within the next FIVE years. Not much happens very quickly.

And when it comes to the West of England Combined Authority £6m Liveable Neighbourhoods programme, you have at most FOUR years to spend the money available from the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement. Realistically you should be looking to spend it in under THREE years. That's a big problem for this council given the conditions that the Metro Mayor has placed upon the programme and the current design outputs of some community workshops not meeting those conditions. If I was a North East Somerset councillor wanting to make a real difference to my community through the Liveable Neighbourhood programme, I'd be working with residents associations, parish councils, and local community groups to come up with fast track schemes that can be trialled and consulted on using Experimental Traffic Regulation Orders. For Bath councillors, I suggest you **urgently** need the city's Circulation Plan to be published. The circulation plan is the skeleton road network which will enable you to identify the areas where you can spend available money quickly and effectively.

Most importantly if you don't agree with the Metro Mayor's Liveable Neighbourhood programme conditions, make it clear. It gives those councillors that do buy into it even more money to get more done.

Good luck. The clock is ticking - and we may already be running out of time.

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This is to give notice I would like to speak to the council about the west of England mayoral combined transport Authority and support bus service Network and west link Demand responsive bus services.

The city region transport strategy.

Corridor from Bristol bus and coach station Bristol Temple meads station to Arnos vale, Brislington, Keynsham, Saltford, Newbridge, Weston and Bath spa bus and coach station .

Wells bus and coach station Farrington Gurney Clutton Temple cloud Pensford whitchurch, Hengrove, Knowle , Bristol Temple meads station Bristol bus and coach station.

Bath spa bus and coach station to Peasedown St john Radstock Westfield Midsomer Norton, Paulton, Chilcompton and shepton mallet and wells bus and coach station.

Bath spa bus and coach station.

Improvement programme.

Toilets cleaning and travel centre

Passenger information across North Somerset and west of England mayoral combined transport Authority and out of date travel posters at main bus and coach stations Bath city centre.

Radstock Town centre Keynsham town centre and Midsomer Norton town centre.

Public transport Network and Green travel plans

And the transport levy to the west of England mayoral combined transport Authority or precepting of money for the west of England mayoral combined transport Authority with North Somerset council as a full member.

Western gateway transport Board.

North Somerset council joining the west of England mayoral combined Authority.

With the west of England local Enterprise partnership.

New west of England metro train service starting 23 rd may 2023 .

Bristol Temple meads station Keynsham, Oldfield park, Bath spa, Freshford, Avoncliff, Bradford on Avon , Trowbridge, Westbury Dilton marsh Warminster Salisbury and Westbury to Frome .

David Redgewell South west transport Network and Railfuture Severnside.

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Alexander Robinson

Students as Residents of the City of Bath - Developing the civic relationship between B&NES, Students and Education Providers

Dear Council,

I am speaking today as the outgoing President of the Students' Union at the University of Bath. I come in support of the tens of thousands of Student Residents that live within Bath and North East Somerset and make up roughly one third of the population of the City of Bath.

Students contribute significantly to the local economy in Bath, through spending in local businesses, renting, working or in the cultural capital that makes Bath a vibrant place to live.

The Student Community Partnership (SCP) exists as bridge between the Educational Institutions, their Students' Unions, and the Local Authority in Bath. They campaign for good neighbourly relations, safety, sustainability and other aspects of community awareness through campaigns, events, and volunteering. I pay thanks to a number of councillors who engage with their partnership and support its work.

I do, however, believe that there is more that our Universities and the Council should be doing together to improve the experience that all residents have in Bath by listening to the needs of the student population.

One example is how The Universities in Nottingham and their city council have come together to develop a Student Living Strategy, the first priority being to improve 'quality, safety, affordability and location of accommodation and promoting growth in affordable options across the city'.

All residents here in Bath and North East Somerset would benefit greatly from this type of collaboration. At the moment, both Universities find themselves renting buildings from private companies through nominations agreements in order to house students in the city – often at high rates which are passed on to students, for example with the new Centurion house, the cricket ground development, single rooms are priced at £220 per week, (£11k a year). In the private sector over the road, rooms start at £330 a week, (£17k a year). In addition, modelling of the bed-stock capacity across HMOs taking into account both all student residents and the wider population of the city, could help us to better understand how the city should respond to calls for more and better affordable housing for all.

A collaborative approach between universities and the local authority could help to challenge the status quo. Would the council be willing to look at Nottingham's work and consider forming a group to work on something similar?

More generally, what will this session of council do differently to previous councils to engage with its student residents and ensure that meaningful conversations and consultations occur for the benefit of all residents of Bath and North East Somerset?

Thank you

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COUNCIL MEETING 25TH MAY 2023

**STATEMENTS FROM
COUNCILLORS**

COUNCILLORS	Item 15		Statement circulated
1	Eleanor Jackson	Subsidised rural bus services	✓
2	Saskia Heijltjes	Scrutiny	
3	Sam Ross	Democracy and scrutiny	

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Thank you very much for allowing me to speak tonight on the contentious issue of rural community bus services. As Jesus said, 'The last shall be first, and the first shall be last'. He was not talking about *First* buses, but about how the marginalised, the poor and downtrodden and the disabled would take precedence over rich and powerful. Tonight Mrs Harrington has spoken up for those who need a bus service in Westfield – the last ward in B&NES, but where the parish council stands up for all its residents to get them a better deal.

The merits of the 82 bus service, the 768 sublime scenic drive through Clandown, Camerton, Timsbury, Englishcombe and so on, and the 42 hospital service have been debated extensively. We are all aware, after Mental Health Week last week, of the problems of isolation, loneliness, and depression, but there are also too many hilly areas around here where walking with a pram or a wheelchair is simply not practical, even if the pavements were wide enough, and not pothole ridden. We are all, I hope, aware of the Climate Emergency. A modern, reliable bus service, properly marketed, is the antidote. Here's the plan.

Firstly, we need to talk to the CEO of Libre Buses and the other companies delivering community subsidised services to see how they could be made profitable. Surely 140+ passengers *a day* would be. Secondly, myth-busting. The problem is not driver shortage, the drivers tell me. It is the rotas and working conditions, that make them leave.

Thirdly, we need urgent action from the relevant scrutiny panel to set up a working party, and maybe hold a scrutiny 'open day' like the climate change day. A review of transport policy is urgently needed, and now, at the beginning of a four year term, is the right time. We need long term, sustainable policies. My proposal is for an SPD, like the SPD for the provision of *affordable* housing, that will mean that any developer of more than 10 residences has to provide a set percentage of their value, instead of there being ad hoc decisions, and derisory sums.

The other possibility would be to investigate business support. The 82 was originally established with S106 money from Tesco. We believe from informal contact that Tesco, other businesses and health services might contribute. Having people wholly dependant on shopping on line will impact their sales and services.

All this will take time. May I suggest the Leader of the Council look in his 'back pocket', and find enough from the contingency reserves to keep

our buses running for another three months, or even wring some 'levelling up' money out. This might even scotch the NES belief that Bath gets all the goodies under this administration.

Eleanor Jackson (Cllr)

25 May 2023

Saskia Heijltjes statement

The role that overview and scrutiny can play in holding an authority's decision-makers to account makes it fundamentally important to the successful functioning of local democracy."

This quote taken from the foreword of the government report 'Overview and scrutiny: statutory guidance for councils and combined authorities' published in 2019 was mentioned in an induction session for new councillors on policy development and scrutiny, which I attended last week.

In the training session, there was an emphasis on our culture and the importance of scrutiny for the effective functioning of a council.

This is an opportunity for us to work together for the good of our community, questioning, discussing, and challenging each other to find the best possible solutions.

As a newly elected councillor I am excited to represent my local community and participate in democratic, intellectually rigorous, and collaborative processes such as scrutiny.

I was very disappointed, however, to find out that the Green group was excluded from critical discussions on the panel and committee allocations and not invited to take up a single seat on any of the Policy Development and Scrutiny panels.

The chairs of Policy Development and Scrutiny panels have an important role to play and decide how to respond to Council or requests from the Executive.

In the previous administration, all three panels were chaired by members of the opposition.

This time around, the administration has proposed that 2 out of the 3 are chaired by members of their own group.

This administration will recognize that this contradicts its own call for different and better representative and collaborative politics backed by its support for the Green Party motion on Proportional Representation in public office.

As newly formed Green Party group, we were especially disappointed to find out we weren't initially invited to sit on the Climate Emergency and Sustainability Policy Development and Scrutiny panel.

We have expertise within our group and we would like to use this to help support real change and improvement in the area of climate and environment. We all recognize that, no matter how bright the team, it is dangerous to mark our own homework, at best there will be questions on motives, at worst there will be avoidable and costly mistakes.

I understand that there is a proportional system in place to determine the minimum allocation of seats on panels and committees, but why not be more welcoming to other groups to play a leading role in effective scrutiny and performance in our council?

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Statement on accountability, scrutiny and local democracy

As a new councillor, I have been surprised by the lack of communication on the appointment of committee places to the various political groups.

While I appreciate that a proportional system based upon the number of seats gained is used to determine the overall split, this should not negate good relations through respectful and timely contact with all political groups to inform them of the intended allocation and to take on board suggestions.

On the training session about policy development and scrutiny last week, there was discussion around the accountability and good practice in councils being higher where the chairs of these committees were not automatically filled by members of the leading party.

While it is noted that one of the PDS committees is to be chaired by a member of the opposition during this term, it is disappointing to see that the other two are not.

What does this say about the leadership's consideration of accountability and scrutiny?

In addition, only a few months ago, this council resolved, "To write to his Majesty's Government calling for a change in our outdated electoral laws to enable Proportional Representation to be used for general and local authority elections."

In response to the request for better representation on the various committees, it appears that the aim of proportional representation has taken a backward step. While the leading party is keen to point out that they have gained the majority of the seats across the district, they simultaneously fail to acknowledge that their vote share actually went down, while most of the opposition groups gained greater support from voters district wide.

What does this say about the leadership's consideration of local democracy?

Finally, as a Ward Councillor in a rural area of NE Somerset, I would like to point out the impact of decisions which create inequity in small communities, where it is well known that needs are higher, but investment is significantly lower. This has been highlighted well tonight through statements relating to transport needs outside of the city of Bath.

I sincerely hope that the current level of communication between groups isn't an indicator of what can be expected going forwards. Respect for the breadth of knowledge and experience brought to the council from all democratically elected members is key and will allow effective collaboration and improvements to all areas of Bath and NE Somerset.

CLlr Sam Ross

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