

BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET

CABINET

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

Thursday, 9th March, 2023

Present:

Councillor Kevin Guy (Ch)	Leader of the Council, Liberal Democrat Group Leader
Councillor Alison Born	Cabinet Member for Adult Services and Council House Building
Councillor Tom Davies	Cabinet Member for Adult Services and Council House Building
Councillor Manda Rigby	Cabinet Member for Transport
Councillor Dine Romero	Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, Communities
Councillor Mark Roper	Cabinet member for Economic Development, Regeneration & Growth
Councillor Richard Samuel	Deputy Council Leader and Cabinet Member for Resources
Councillor Sarah Warren	Deputy Council Leader (statutory) and Cabinet Member for Climate and Sustainable Travel
Councillor David Wood	Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Services

67 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

68 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

The Senior Democratic Services Officer read out the emergency evacuation procedure.

69 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Tim Ball.

70 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr David Wood declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item no. 13 – Climate Annual Report and Ecological Emergency Action Plan. Cllr Wood is a Director of the Charity Avon Needs Trees which is referred to as a partner organisation in the Ecological Emergency Action Plan.

71 TO ANNOUNCE ANY URGENT BUSINESS AGREED BY THE CHAIR

There was no urgent business.

72 QUESTIONS FROM PUBLIC AND COUNCILLORS

There were 4 questions from Councillors and 10 questions from members of the public.

[Copies of the questions and responses, including supplementary questions and responses if any, have been placed on the Minute book as Appendix 1 and are available on the Council's website.]

73 STATEMENTS OR PETITIONS FROM PUBLIC OR COUNCILLORS

Members of the public and Councillors made statements as follows:

- Malcolm Baldwin – Liveable Neighbourhoods – Sometimes less can often mean more! *(A copy of which is attached as appendix 2 to these minutes)*
- Jackie Head – Sustainable Transport *(A copy of which is attached as appendix 3 to these minutes)*
- David Redgewell – Bus Franchising and Public Transport Network *(A copy of which is attached as appendix 4 to these minutes)*
- Jevon Smith – Bus Franchising and Public Transport Network. Mr Smith stressed the importance of public transport to elderly and disabled people and the need for joined up services in the region.
- Luke Emmett – New use for the old King Edwards School, using spaces in the Post Office and other empty shops in Bath *(A copy of which is attached as appendix 5 to these minutes)*
- Bob Goodman – The Real Climate Emergency *(A copy of which is attached as appendix 6 to these minutes)*
- Nicolette Boater – Climate Annual Report & Ecological Emergency Action Plan *(A copy of which is attached as appendix 7 to these minutes)*
- Cllr Lucy Hodge – Building back the B&NES Music Service after COVID *(A copy of which is attached as appendix 8 to these minutes)*

Cabinet members asked some factual questions of the speakers in order to clarify details mentioned in their statements.

74 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS CABINET MEETING - 9TH FEBRUARY 2023

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 9th February 2023 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

75 CONSIDERATION OF SINGLE MEMBER ITEMS REQUISITIONED TO CABINET

No single member items were requisitioned to Cabinet.

76 MATTERS REFERRED BY POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY BODIES

No matters were referred by Policy Development and Scrutiny Panels. Cllr Vic Pritchard informed Cabinet that the six-month pilot system separating the Adult and Children's Services Scrutiny work across alternate meetings has now been completed. This has worked well and there is now a strong argument to operate with two separate panels in the future. This would provide capacity to effectively

scrutinise the transformation programme as a number of community services are brought back in-house.

77 SINGLE MEMBER CABINET DECISIONS TAKEN SINCE PREVIOUS CABINET MEETING

The Cabinet agreed to note the report.

78 OPTIONS FOR BUS FRANCHISING IN THE WEST OF ENGLAND

Cllr Sarah Warren introduced the report, moved the officer recommendation and made the following statement:

“Our bus industry in England is broken almost beyond repair. Along with other parts of the public sector: the NHS, schools and local government - this industry forms part of the very fabric of society that this government is dismantling with alarming and accelerating speed. Yet thousands of people across Bath and North East Somerset rely on buses to get about every day. For many, buses are the vital lifeline connecting them to schools, work, hospitals, shops, to new opportunities, and to each other.

For far too long, residents have been forced to contend with a bus service that’s too confusing, unstable, unreliable, and expensive. This cannot continue and we can no longer afford to accept a public transport service that leaves behind the very people who need it most.

Bus services were deregulated by the Thatcher government in the 1980s, leaving services organised on a commercial, free market basis, and operators (more-or-less uniquely in the developed world) in full control of which services they will run, the fares they will charge, and the vehicles they will use. This has resulted in an uncoordinated network with a confusing array of ticketing options. Councils watch, impotent, as profitable routes are flooded with buses, leaving other areas at risk of becoming public transport “deserts,” with no alternative to the private car.

For public transport to be a viable option for our communities it needs to be frequent, reliable, fast, affordable, accessible, safe, comfortable, and go where people want to go. However, widespread market failure across the industry has led to rapidly increasing subsidy by local authorities of unprofitable but “socially necessary” services (which are no longer permitted cross subsidy from profitable routes). And this at a time when council income is falling. Following covid, we have seen this culminate in a near total collapse in the most socially important bus services across much of the country, including here the West of England.

With transport currently accounting for 29 per cent of carbon emissions in the Bath and North East Somerset area, and buses a vital lifeline for communities, we are committed to enabling more people to travel by bus. Using the powers that devolution has given us, we want to build an integrated transport system that’s faster, cheaper, cleaner, and more reliable.

This starts by taking back control of our buses to give us (rather than the private operators) greater control over fares, routes, vehicle specification and timetables.

That way, we can ensure buses integrate better with other modes of transport and offer simpler and more convenient ticketing.

In the Bus Back Better Strategy of 2021, the Government set out its support for Local Transport Authorities to access franchising powers as a way of rapidly delivering improvements for passengers. A franchise system would effectively mean that every bus service is paid for by the combined authority, who would in turn receive the income from fares, and they would contract with private bus companies like First or Stagecoach, to operate the services.

The model has been used in London for decades and is being introduced in Greater Manchester, whilst – in contrast - the West of England is the only combined authority nationally NOT to be investigating franchising. B&NES council backed franchising when bus services were discussed last October, and we are today joining other councils across the West of England in calling for the Metro Mayor to commission an independent review of options for the franchising of bus operations.

It is true that other Mayoral Combined Authorities have precepting powers, meaning they can raise a precept on Council Tax to fund mayoral responsibilities, including public transport, as part of their budget. That is why we are proposing that Mayor Norris should also explore this option to provide additional vital funding to support the bus network locally.

Franchising will be the most significant change in how buses are operated in the region since they were deregulated in the mid-1980s. We want to put the ‘public’ back into public transport by putting us in control of our bus services, and make these services work for us, rather than as a cash cow for private shareholders.

I say to Mayor Norris, bus franchising was a central plank of your manifesto, and you told us the possibility was “on the table,” but we learnt only this week that no formal analysis has been done on bringing buses back under public control. The power to do this lies with you, and with you alone. It’s time for new thinking that both contributes to our net zero targets and puts the needs of passengers first. Now let’s see you put your money where your mouth is, and commission a review of options, as step 1 on the long road to franchising. I move.”

Cllr Kevin Guy seconded the motion and made the following statement:

“Thank you Cllr Warren for an extremely clear explanation of the issues facing bus services in the West of England and indeed across the country as a whole. Councils are rather stuck in the middle when it comes to services. We have an uninterested government, a near monopoly company running most commercial services and the West of England Combined Authority, which is supposed to be in charge of buses, but which isn’t willing to grasp the bull by the horns.

And as usual it’s residents – particularly the most vulnerable and isolated – who are stuck in the middle. We desperately need better communication from the West of England Combined Authority with information being shared transparently and promptly, rather than being drip fed.

We have written several times to the West of England Mayor asking for engagement and public information around his new minibuses on demand scheme (or DRT) – a scheme we now hear will not be up and running this Spring, but instead will be

implemented in stages. We have also asked him to confirm which new 'spinal' services will be funded. When will North East Somerset residents know what options are available to them so they can plan ahead? (It's a particular problem for children who need public transport to get to school.) We don't know (we do know that the Mayor offered nothing for Bath residents). We want the DRT to work, but it's a big gamble.

Franchising seems to be one tool available to the Combined Authority to help deliver better services in B&NES. So far, the Mayor has been reticent about when – and indeed if – he will get started on franchising. It's a challenging and expensive process, which could take a long time. The Mayor is in charge of the buses and he needs to get on with it as soon as possible.”

Cllr Richard Samuel stated that WECA has let the region down and must now consider franchising along with precepting powers. The current transport levy is insufficient to run a franchising system. Certain routes will require funding through a precept.

Cllr Manda Rigby stated that the decisions and communication from WECA regarding bus franchising have been poor. She pointed out that the investigation of franchising was set out in the Mayor's manifesto prior to his election.

RESOLVED (unanimously):

To request the Council's Leader to write formally to the WECA Mayor requesting that the Mayor:

- (a) Commissions an independent review of options for the franchising of bus operations with the West of England, including considering the adoption of precepting powers; and provides a fully costed business case for the recommended changes engaging fully with each of the WECA constituent authorities at all stages of the review.
- (b) Provides regular updates to the Planning, Transport and Housing Board on the progress of the review.

79 CLIMATE ANNUAL REPORT AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN

Cllr Sarah Warren introduced the report, moved the officer recommendations and made the following statement:

“Exactly four years ago in March 2019, Bath and North East Somerset Council declared a climate emergency, pledging to provide the leadership for the district to reach net zero by 2030. Since that evening, we have seen an increase in global atmospheric carbon dioxide by around 8ppm from 412 to 420, bearing in mind that scientists consider the safe level for human civilisation to be 350.

And local weather events over the last year, like last summer's record-breaking heatwave which saw UK temperatures above 40°C for the first time ever, have re-emphasised the importance of this declaration. We can now all see the damage being done with our own eyes, telling us we must maintain our urgency for greater and faster action.

B&NES also declared an ecological emergency in 2020, with the objective of being “nature positive” by 2030. Scientists estimate that the world's biodiversity is now just 75% intact, significantly below the 90% threshold [scientists consider safe](#), with the UK languishing in the bottom 10% of countries for biodiversity.

Firstly, Cabinet, we are being asked this evening to note progress against our climate strategy over the last year. We are also asked to note the Climate Action Plan and route map, our updated Climate Strategy. Over that period, the pace of delivery has stepped up substantially with the creation of the Green Transformation Team and filling of a number of new posts.

Of all our many achievements, the one of which we should probably be most proud, is the adoption of our local plan partial update last month, making us the first Council in the UK to require net zero carbon in new build housing. We are also at the leading edge of councils in requiring 10% biodiversity net gain for developments – a year before this becomes mandated nationally.

Installed solar PV in B&NES has doubled in the last four years, assisted by the council's participation in the West of England Combined Authority's Solar Together scheme; we've installed solar PV on council buildings; and we're working with the West of England Combined Authority on their retrofit accelerator to support householders in making their existing homes more energy efficient.

On transport, we've published our Journey to Net Zero strategy; established our new Journey to Net Zero transport stakeholder forum to hear from transport campaigners; built new safe walking / wheeling / cycle routes and published plans for more; we are progressing our 15 liveable neighbourhoods; brought in a bike hangar trial; and opened electric vehicle charge points. And we have plans for much more.

On nature we are caring for 80 hectares of woodland and 100 grassland sites, as well as creating 12 new flower-rich meadows through Bathscape; securing funding to create nature-rich areas across 34 hectares of green space Somer Valley; and changing management practices across 32 hectares of our parks and green spaces to benefit pollinators through our Let's Get Buzzing campaign.

And this evening, we are approving our brand-new Ecological Emergency Action Plan. Highlights of this Plan, include the following priorities:

- Increasing the extent of land and waterways managed positively for nature across B&NES, for which we have secured millions of pounds. This will reverse the decline in wildlife and provide other benefits such as carbon sequestration and flood management. We will be increasing the amount of our own estate managed for nature and working in partnership with local charities to improve our engagement with farmers and landholders.
- Increasing the abundance and distribution of key species across B&NES through reducing: pollution, the use of pesticides, and the impact of infrastructure on wildlife, whilst improving our monitoring of wildlife so as to target our action towards the species most in need.
- Enabling more people to access and engage with nature, benefitting the health and wellbeing of our communities, and encouraging people to take

action for nature. In the next year we plan to secure funding for posts that will support communities in managing their local green spaces for nature.

In summary, the progress on climate and nature that we have made over the last 4 years is significant and impressive, and over the same period we have increased our capacity to do more and faster over the next four years. Adopting the new ecological emergency action plan is an exciting development finally bringing to life our ambitions for nature in our area.”

Cllr Tom Davies seconded the motion and made the following statement:

“As the paper and my colleague Cllr Warren has noted - whilst there is so much more to be done, the report undisputedly shows the significant impact that we are having as a Council in leading our area to the hugely ambitious target of net zero by 2030. I am also very pleased to see the Ecological Emergency Action Plan which I welcome as another very impressive and well considered approach to tackling this crisis.

Taking the Climate Emergency Report - decarbonising and generating locally our energy is an area of notable success which should be celebrated in this report as a collaborative effort across our area - in particular I am pleased to see that the rate at which domestic and business solar PV is being installed has doubled since 2019.

But in my capacity as Cabinet Member for Council House building, I would like to also focus on what is one of the huge challenges in us meeting as our local target - decarbonising our stock of buildings. The requirement for retrofitting our buildings is huge - with 65,000 properties identified as needing some degree of retrofitting to increase energy efficiency.

National Government - especially under this Conservative Government - have a terrible track record in tackling this key aspect of our carbon emissions - with failed and poorly designed retrofitting initiatives. I welcome the progress and the foundations for scaling up the region’s retrofitting work which are detailed in the report, but I am sure that all of us here are cautious and concerned about the scale of the work which is needed to tackle the challenge of our stock of buildings.

However, there are causes for optimism in this area too and I am particularly proud of the work which the Council is doing in its own stock of housing under our B&NES Homes Programme and through our subsidiary Aequus - I think for example of 23 Grosvenor Place - a grade 1 listed building, the recent refurbishment of which included measures that will see emissions drop by 40% - and the exemplar new Sladebrook Road development to name just two schemes.

And perhaps most exciting of all - there was the huge decision taken at the Council meeting in January in which we became the first council in England to adopt an energy-based net zero housing policy that places ambitious targets on housing developments and all new major non-residential developments.

And so yes - there is so much more to be done that will require us all - residents, the Council and the National Government to each play our part - but to those involved in this report tonight, and in particular to Cllr Warren and the leadership she has shown, and for everyone who has already played their part in taking us closer to our

ambitious targets to tackle both the climate and ecological emergencies and we pass on our collective thanks.”

Cllr David Wood highlighted the best ever recycling rates that have been achieved in B&NES, the building of a new recycling centre and also being on target to plant 100,000 trees.

Cllr Richard Samuel thanked Cllr Warren for the work she has undertaken and the progress that has been achieved. He noted that most people want to see action taken regarding the climate and stated that it is important to limit the growth in transport emissions.

RESOLVED (unanimously):

- (1) To note the positive progress and achievements over the last year on implementation of the Council’s Climate Strategy. This is summarised in the Climate Progress Report, at Annex 1, which includes a range of climate and nature case studies and the annual carbon performance dashboard for the whole area.
- (2) To note the particular progress made in understanding renewable energy in Bath and North East Somerset and in the development of the delivery pipeline shown in the renewables section of the Climate Progress Report, at Annex 1.
- (3) To note the Climate Action Plan and Route-map to 2030, at Annex 2.
- (4) To note the updated Climate Strategy, at Annex 3.
- (5) To note the development of the Ecological Emergency Action Plan, at Annex 4.
- (6) To note that the ambition on nature recovery contained in the Ecological Emergency Action Plan will only be fully realised with external investment and through working in partnership.
- (7) To approve the Climate Annual Report and the new Ecological Emergency Action Plan, before submission of the report package to full Council on 16 March 2023.

80 JOINT COMMUNITY SAFETY PLAN

Cllr Dine Romero introduced the report, moved the officer recommendation and made the following statement:

“Overall B&NES is considered a safe place this is reflected in the feedback Avon & Somerset Police received from local communities. But like much of the country there have been challenges, including directly and indirectly the consequences of the pandemic as well as vicariously of other global events. This is picked up in the work of the Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) which is targeting efforts on early trauma informed intervention supporting those children and young people most at risk of being involved in crime.

In 2022 12k recorded crimes which is a 15% increase on the previous year however anti-social behaviour reduced by 11.6% 380 fewer reports. Generally, crime and demand in police is returning to pre pandemic levels.

The Council, Avon & Somerset Police and office of the Police & Crime Commissioner have a clear shared aim which is to take every opportunity to protect and promote safer communities.

This plan focuses on joint working which very much fits with the way we in B&NES fulfil our statutory requirements with one board combining the functions of the local safeguarding children board, the adult board and the responsible authorities group.

The plan identifies key shared priorities and issues and shows how all partners will work together over the next 3 years to protect vulnerable people, prevent crime and build strong resilient communities.

This plan serves as both the community safety plan and local police and crime plan for B&NES. The overarching priorities are to protect vulnerable people from harm and to strengthen local communities and do improve outcomes for local people. “

Cllr Alison Born seconded the motion and made the following statement:

“One of the most striking elements of this report is the recognition of the extent of funding cuts across public services and the impact that has on crime and community safety.

As services have reduced and as crimes have become more complex, the need for agencies to work together and to pool resources and intelligence has never been greater and the B&NES approach to community safety supports that partnership approach. This plan recognises the particular needs of vulnerable people whilst also seeking to prevent crime and to support our communities, helping our residents to feel safe.

I commend the work of the community safety partnership and support the adoption of this report.”

RESOLVED (unanimously):

To agree the Joint Community Safety Plan and to recommend it for adoption at Council.

81 HERITAGE SERVICES BUSINESS PLAN 2023-2028

Cllr Kevin Guy introduced the report, moved the officer recommendation and made the following statement:

“I am very happy to propose the Heritage Services Business Plan for 2023 to 28. This report is the annual update to a rolling five-year plan, and it comes at a very positive and exciting time for the Heritage Services team.

I say positive as we are seeing a significant improvement in visitor numbers at the Roman Baths, following the shock of the pandemic. It's very pleasing to see visitor numbers returning to around two thirds of pre-pandemic levels. This is higher than

anticipated and spending in the Pump Rooms and Heritage Services' shops over the past year has also increased. These figures may be driven by recovering international tourism and domestic 'staycations'.

The report suggests we can expect to see a return to pre-pandemic visitor levels from 2025 – subject to the overall economic situation.

I welcome the ongoing projects to further improve the visitor offer at the Roman Baths and Clore Learning Centre, including an updated audio tour, a revised Audience Development Plan and additional investment in conservation activities.

We also have a lot of detail in the report about exciting projects being led by Heritage Services.

The new Fashion Museum is clearly the highest profile of these projects. Despite the disappointment of not receiving Levelling Up Funding, this council and this administration are fully committed to the Re-Fashioning Bath Project. The process of delivering the Levelling Up Fund bid demonstrated the inherent economic and societal benefits of the scheme, which will be of importance going forwards.

We have already secured the Fashion Museum's new home. The Old Post Office will be a fitting home for one of the world's greatest museum collections and will mean a wider range of people can access and engage with the collection in a more modern, prominent, and flexible location.

Later this evening we'll hear more from Cllr Roper about 'meanwhile uses' for the Old Post Office spaces and I note the Fashion Museum collection is now being protected at a high spec and secure storage facility owned by Dents glovemakers on the outskirts of Warminster. We are working closely with Bath Spa University on plans for the Fashion Collection Archive at Locksbrook.

We have a fantastic team in place to deliver the project, and I was very pleased to meet the new lead last month – Sophie McKinlay has joined us from the V and A Dundee.

Sophie joins a Heritage Services team with a solid track record of raising capital funding and delivering major capital projects, as demonstrated by the successful recent Archway project. Resources – from the West of England Combined Authority – are in place to develop a full vision, business case and funding strategy over the coming financial year. So, we can have the utmost confidence that the Fashion Museum will reopen in 4 or 5 years and will form the centrepiece of a new fashion destination in the Milson Quarter.

I would like to thank the Climate Emergency and Sustainability PDS panel for their work in scrutinising the business plan last week. Panel members raised some queries about the Victoria Art Gallery. It is clear that there has been a change in visitor behaviour from the Gallery's current visitor base and the figures are not yet where we would wish them to be.

The council continues to be fully committed to supporting and improving the Victoria Art Gallery to increase its appeal to residents and visitors. We have recently appointed a new senior curator and planned investment in the gallery includes:

- 230 thousand pounds to fix the roof;
- 75 thousand pounds – from external funding – to create new spaces and encourage community, family and commercial activation;
- the appointment of a new community engagement post – explicitly to deliver programming to appeal to a wider cross-section of local people and diversify the visitor base.

One of the greatest assets we have as a council is our staff. So, I'm pleased to see that the new Heritage Services strategy emphasises investment in staff development, engagement and welfare to ensure we can attract and retain the brightest and best officers.

I will turn to income generation in a moment, but I'll just mention some other objectives from the strategy which include:

- A clear focus on care of the monuments, buildings and collections in our care;
- Investment in the journey to net zero, which is something every council department is involved in;
- Continued distribution of Discovery Cards – with a focus on less well-off local communities – and I'm pleased that the council has issued 26,000 Discovery Cards since the scheme was relaunched in May 2022;
- Community engagement and audience development – and especially delivering direct benefit to local people
- Engaging with initiatives to improve the Destination and Culture across B&NES and the wider region – I particularly note the proposals around developing products with partners to encourage more overnight stays.

Clearly the focus of Heritage Services is the guardianship of our treasured historic assets and encouraging residents and visitors to make the most of them.

But the income from the council's heritage attractions helps fund the vital public services residents rely on. I'm delighted with the strong recovery of the department in this respect. Income is expected to return to pre-pandemic levels over the next financial year and this is a key aim of the service.

The figures in the report anticipate an £8.2 million pound surplus being returned to the council in 2023/24. This marks Heritage Services as one of the most commercially successful heritage organisations in the UK and I'd like to congratulate the whole team on this achievement.

Finally, as we're talking about heritage, I'd also like to take this opportunity to say how pleased we were to welcome the second General Assembly of the Great Spa Towns of Europe last week.

Bath's rare second UNESCO World Heritage Site inscription is a massive achievement, and I was very proud to accept the official UNESCO certificate confirming the city's inscription as one of the 11 Great Spa Towns of Europe on behalf of the community.

Cllr Richard Samuel seconded the motion. He noted the income stream provided from the Heritage Services Team which is very important to the Council. He stated that the heritage assets in the city provide a showcase to the world.

RESOLVED (unanimously):

To approve the Heritage Services Business Plan.

82 QUARTER 3 CORPORATE STRATEGIC PERFORMANCE REPORT 2022/23

Cllr Richard Samuel introduced the report and moved the officer recommendation. He stressed the importance of receiving regular reports on performance and to connect this with what the Council is doing in terms of finance. The report provides a spotlight on performance which enables the Council to improve.

Cllr Kevin Guy seconded the motion and stated that he was very pleased that the Council has implemented this new system for tracking progress against its corporate strategy, this is an important aspect of improving transparency and a good opportunity to highlight achievements.

He was very pleased to see the continuing engagement with residents through the Voicebox survey and the indication that 84% of residents are happy with the local area as a place to live and 59% are satisfied with the Council.

Cllr Tom Davies noted that this was Cllr Samuel's last Cabinet meeting. He thanked Cllr Samuel for his hard work and range of knowledge relating to his portfolio.

The Cabinet then unanimously passed a vote of thanks to Cllr Samuel in appreciation of all his work over the last four years.

RESOLVED (unanimously):

To note progress on the delivery of key aspects of the Council's service delivery, details of which are highlighted in section 3.6 and Annex 1 of the report.

83 MILSOM QUARTER UPDATE

Cllr Mark Roper introduced the report, moved the officer recommendation and made the following statement:

"This paper covers two topics relating to the Milsom Quarter project – the Post Office and the Old King Edwards School building – iconic properties in the city centre that all Bath residents know well - and many have watched and wandered at the sad state of the latter for far too long.

The Post Office conversion to the new and exciting Fashion Museum is a work in progress and there are solid plans being developed to raise the finance needed to create a fabulous new asset for our city. Proposal 3 in this paper delegates the decision on meanwhile uses for the Post Office whilst that plan is implemented – giving officers the ability to make quick decisions on short term lets and other usage for the building, raising revenue for the museum and offering local organizations the opportunity to, for example, run art exhibitions or pop-up sales by local makers – similar to No 11 New Bond Street, which has been hugely successful. Incidentally

colleagues may like to know that we will shortly be moving No 11 to a unit next door to the Post Office – because the demand for retail property in the centre is such that we need to release it to the open market- we are running out of stock of shops! The current vacancy rate in the centre is around 3% compared to a national rate of over 10% and footfall in the centre is nearly at 2019 levels – despite what you may read on some dubious Twitter feeds.

Proposal 1 and 2 are the follow up to work requested by this Cabinet last autumn where we asked for a workable solution to the long-term thorn in the side of our city that is the old King Edward School building. This architecturally important handsome property has sat empty for nearly 40 years. It is at risk. Visual inspections of the exterior show a deterioration in its condition. The paper outlines a methodology for the Council to help bring the old school back to its former glory. We can do this by our preferred route of working with the owner Samuel Smiths Brewery – and yet again I appeal to them to engage with us - but there are several other options available to us outlined in section 3.3 – and if all else were to fail then ultimately there is the last resort of a Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO). That however would be our least favoured option – and in effect a failure by the owner and the Council - and would be in no-one’s interest – apart from our respective lawyers. We know that there was a very similar situation in Bristol – and Samuel Smiths Brewery and Bristol City Council negotiated - and got the building back into use. We would be delighted to do that with you Samuel Smiths.

The recommendations in section 3.4 of this report are there for all to see and I commend them to cabinet. Yet again, this administration is tackling head on a difficult issue that previous ones have chosen to ignore.

Thank you to the officers involved in preparing this excellent report. It has been a pleasure working with you over the last 6 months.”

Cllr Richard Samuel seconded the motion and moved an amendment to the motion to add the following additional wording:

“Officers are requested to produce a public report on the internal and external condition of the building for consideration at the next scheduled meeting of the Cabinet.”

The amendment was accepted by Cllr Roper, mover of the original motion.

Cllr Samuel then stated that the King Edwards School building is deteriorating and has water damage. It is on the national at-risk register. The building is important to the Milsom Quarter regeneration and progress must be made to safeguard it.

RESOLVED (unanimously):

- (1) To confirm the Council objectives with regards to the King Edward’s School building as being the following:
 - (a) To assist in expediting the delivery of a suitable scheme for the King Edward’s School building to bring it back into use;
 - (b) To safeguard its listed building status;

- (c) To ensure that the building makes a positive contribution to the broader regeneration of Milsom Quarter and Bath city centre in general;
 - (d) To avoid excessive cost and risk for the Council.
 - (e) Officers are requested to produce a public report on the internal and external condition of the building for consideration at the next scheduled meeting of the Cabinet.
- (2) To delegate approval to the Director of Sustainable Communities, in consultation with the s151 Officer, to agree to “meanwhile use” lettings (as described in paragraph 3.7 of the report) of vacant units within the Old Post Office block at less than open market value for regeneration purposes, on the basis that the benefit of the regeneration-led meanwhile use proposals outweighs the need to achieve best consideration on a case-by-case lettings basis.

The meeting ended at 8.00 pm

Chair _____

Date Confirmed and Signed _____

Prepared by Democratic Services

CABINET MEETING – 9 MARCH 2023

STATEMENTS FROM PUBLIC AND COUNCILLORS

1. Malcolm Baldwin – Liveable Neighbourhoods - Sometimes less can often mean more!
2. Jackie Head – Sustainable Transport
3. David Redgewell – Bus Franchising and Public Transport Network
4. Jevon Smith – Bus Franchising and Public Transport Network
5. Luke Emmett – New use for the old King Edwards School, using spaces in the Post Office and other empty shops in Bath
6. Bob Goodman – The Real Climate Emergency
7. Nicolette Boater – Climate Annual Report & Ecological Emergency Action Plan
8. Cllr Lucy Hodge – Building back the B&NES Music Service after COVID

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS - COUNCILLORS

M	01	Question from:	Cllr Eleanor Jackson
<p>In the letter dated 26 January 2023 which the cabinet member for Climate Change and the Leader of the Council sent to parish councils urging them to write to the WECA mayor about the five new 'spinal routes', there is mention of Midsomer Norton, Radstock and Timsbury, but Westfield, which will be very seriously impacted by the loss of the 82 bus service, is omitted.</p> <p>In Cllr Karen Walker's question to February Council, M01, the 82 is described as Paulton-Midsomer Norton when in fact it runs from a really isolated settlement in Tynning, Radstock, through the former council estates and the Waterside in Westfield and past Norton Hill School to Midsomer Norton, then on to Paulton. It is similarly omitted from Cllr Warren's answer to a member of the public, P04.</p> <p>With 4,813 voters and their families Westfield should not be ignored in this way. Westfield lies along the Fosseway, just as important now as in Roman times, and with two schools and a college campus, it is, in the words of the parish council, 'a community committed to enterprise and education.'</p> <p>A substantial number of Westfield residents demonstrated on the steps of the Guildhall on 21 February. Why are their needs not being considered by this council to whom they pay council tax in the same proportion as the residents of Bath, who are getting all the supported services?</p> <p>Does it not make a mockery of 'levelling up' and the high streets programme if there is no regular bus service to MSN high street, or Radstock shops?</p>			
Answer from:			Cllr Sarah Warren
<p><i>As the local Transport Authority, the West of England Combined Authority is responsible for bus services within the West of England.</i></p>			

This week I have had the opportunity to meet with a number of residents who use the 82 and am grateful for the time they spent with me outlining their travel needs.

Westfield will be served by WECA's new DRT service, which, we understand from WECA, is contractually bound to collect residents within an hour of booking and will bring residents to MSN High Street and Radstock shops. *DRT provides a unique opportunity to transform the way that our communities can travel around the region, but it is essential that timely investment is made by WECA both in engagement with local communities, supporting them in making the switch to using DRT, and reliable spinal services for the DRT to connect to.*

We are continuing to lobby the Mayor to invest the resources necessary to commit these resources to enable the success of the DRT system.

M

02

Question from:

Cllr Joanna Wright

Vital subsidised bus routes in North East Somerset have been cut.

This means that the more vulnerable in our community, children, older people and those who are unable to drive will not have a local bus service. Those least able to give their views will have bus services, that improved their lives, cut.

Please can you give full details of the Equality Impact Assessment that was carried out to make this decision?

Answer from:

Cllr Sarah Warren

WECA is the transport authority so please direct this question to WECA.

M

03

Question from:

Cllr Joanna Wright

This administration is clearly aware of the debacle with the proposed P&R on the Meadows in Batheaston and that the streets on the east of

Bath are an unofficial Park & Ride. How is this administration addressing this this urgent issue?

Answer from:

Cllr Sarah Warren

The administration does not accept the characterisation of the east of Bath as an unofficial Park & Ride, but nevertheless has many plans, highlighted in its Journey to Net Zero plan, aimed at reducing congestion and car use, and increasing the attractiveness of alternative modes. The Joint Local Transport Plan 4 also includes a commitment to explore and support options for increasing travel choices and reducing single occupancy vehicle use into our urban areas.

One such measure is the report published last year investigating feasibility of the East of Bath Express, which investigates whether a Link & Ride is viable along the A4 linking Chippenham and Bath. Link and Ride works in a similar way to a traditional Park and Ride, by intercepting traffic before it reaches the city centre. However, instead of having one large Park and Ride interchange hub, which people potentially have to drive further to reach, Link and Ride provides multiple, smaller interchange hubs at strategic locations along a set route.

The feasibility study tested different scenarios to better understand how a Link and Ride bus service could work between Chippenham and Bath. The introduction of a series of small interchange hubs, in locations along the A4, could enable more people to walk, wheel, or drive to a local hub before catching a quick and direct bus service into Bath city centre.

The report sets out our initial findings and recommendations and provides a good platform to move forward and discuss the idea further with the West of England Combined Authority, as the region's transport authority, Wiltshire Council and local transport stakeholders. Further in-depth analysis, including community and stakeholder engagement, would be required before any decisions to progress could be made.

Other measures that might assist to the east of Bath include the extension of residential parking zones to the area. The council continues to work with local communities to develop and implement these to manage the intrusion of commuter vehicles into residential neighbourhoods and promote active travel and more sustainable modes of transport.

M	04	Question from:	Cllr Joanna Wright
<p>The budget sets out cost to the city centre anti-terrorism measures. The cost to deliver these measures has now risen from £1.5 million to £7.4 million. Why have the costs to this project spiralled?</p>			
Answer from:			Cllr Richard Samuel
<p><i>The budget for the City Centre scheme was set in 2019/20 at £673,885.36, with a provisional approval of £2,356,000. This gave a total overall budget of £3,029,885.36</i></p> <p><i>In 2019/20 the Council was making its first investigations into the provision of Hostile Vehicle Mitigation (HVM) measures in crowded places that lay in the vicinity of the Roman Baths/Bath Abbey. This work was being carried out in response to the recommendations set out in the National Counter Terrorism Security Office (NaCTSO) report issued to the Council in 2016.</i></p> <p><i>A budget estimate was carried out in 2019/20 to forecast costs for the City Centre Security works which gave a forecast of £3,029,000 and included preliminary estimates of:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>1. the civil engineering works costs</i> <i>2. HVM sliding and static bollards</i> <i>3. Traffic management costs</i> <i>4. Highways design fees</i> <i>5. Consultation/ engagement, including a Public Inquiry</i> <i>6. Other costs such as TTROs and cellar surveys</i> <p><i>The main areas where cost increases have occurred include:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>1. The civil engineering works costs were initially estimated at approximately £0.5m and are now of the order of £2.5m. At the early</i> 			

*stage that the estimate was made, complications and difficulties associated with the specialist security nature of the works, traffic management requirements, statutory undertakers diversions had not been anticipated. **Cost increase £2m.***

2. *Sliding bollard costs – Only initial estimates had been obtained from the market at the time of the original estimate. **Cost increase £0.2m.***
3. *Statutory Undertakers' diversions – More complicated than initially anticipated. **Cost increase £0.2m.***
4. *Traffic Management requirements – Significantly more complex than originally estimated these are the traffic Marshals required for the construction works across the four sites (Cheap Street, Hot Bath Street, Lower Borough Walls and Upper Borough Walls). **Cost increase £0.9m***
5. *Design fees – The initial anticipation was for a faster delivery of the scheme, and had not fully anticipated the level of engagement required, both internally within the Council and with other stakeholders, together with appointment of specialist consultants in Accessibility and Security and the resultant decision to accommodate access for Blue Badge Holder's into Cheap Street/ Westgate Street. **Cost increase £0.7m.***
6. *Parking suspensions were not included within the original estimate. **Cost increase £0.2m.***
7. *Costs associated for external structural consultants, extent of Orders, etc. **Cost increase £0.1m.***
8. *Costs for the Automated Access control system more expensive than initially estimated. **Cost increase £0.1m.***

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS - PUBLIC

P	01	Question from:	Sam Ross
<p>A school street is defined as follows: “a road outside a school with a temporary restriction on motorised traffic at school drop-off and pick-up times. The restriction applies to school traffic and through traffic.”</p> <p>How many of the Liveable Neighbourhoods, which are being delivered across B&NES will include a school street?</p>			
Answer from:			Cllr Sarah Warren
<p><i>I understand that school streets are being considered with communities as part of two of our 15 liveable neighbourhood projects.</i></p>			
P	02	Question from:	Sam Ross
<p>A school street is defined as follows: “a road outside a school with a temporary restriction on motorised traffic at school drop-off and pick-up times. The restriction applies to school traffic and through traffic.”</p> <p>Are there any plans for standalone school streets in B&NES in the next budget?</p>			
Answer from:			Cllr Sarah Warren
<p><i>There is no specifically dedicated funding in the budget for next financial year for school streets outside the liveable neighbourhood programme, but discussions are ongoing with Schools and external sources of funding are actively being sought.</i></p>			
P	03	Question from:	Sam Ross
<p>How many trees have been planted to date in B&NES with regard to your attempt to plant 100,000 by 2023?</p>			

Answer from:	Cllr Dave Wood	
<p><i>At the end of the 2021/2022 planting season, the total number of trees planted across Bath and North East Somerset through both Council led projects and planting by our partners totalled 64,000.</i></p> <p><i>Current data indicates that the 100,000 tree target (net) will be exceeded this season. However, as the planting season has several weeks left to run, exact figures will not be available until later this month at the earliest.</i></p>		
P 04	Question from:	John Leach
<p>I believe the Government is currently conducting yet another “strategic review” of how traffic could flow between the M4 and the Dorset coast. It should be perfectly clear to all that the A36/A46 route is completely unsuitable for this traffic given the newly uncovered structural weakness of Cleveland Bridge and the fact that Bath now has a Clean Air Zone. May I ask, what is the timetable for the government’s latest strategic route study to be published, and what assurances can the Council provide that the government will not impose yet more HGV traffic on Bath?</p>		
Answer from:	Cllr Manda Rigby	
<p><i>The M4 to South coast study has been ongoing over the past year and is getting close to the stage where preliminary recommendations can be made to the decision maker, the Secretary of State.</i></p> <p><i>In essence, the study has looked at all the routes available with a view to checking if the current designations are still the best ones, and what investment is needed were there to be any redesignations.</i></p> <p><i>It is hoped that by early Summer the report will go to ministers for their consideration, and I am very pleased with its progress. The suitability of the A46/A36 for both volume and weight of traffic has been assessed, alongside the heritage and health impact of using this route on the residents of the City of Bath, and its Grade II* listed asset, Cleveland Bridge. Similar work has been carried out on all the other alternates, and a scoring system has been applied in order to help decision making and I fully support the direction of travel so far.</i></p>		

In addition, there is a project looking at moving freight back on to railways where there is redundant capacity, again with a view to lessening the impact of often empty HGVs using local towns and cities as a cut through.

P	05	Question from:	Saskia Heijltjes
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The consultation period for the consultation on the installation of up to 20 additional cycle hangars is only 11 working days (from 27 Feb to 13 March), including the day of publication, which seems very short. Could you please provide best practice guidelines for a public consultation like this one and if there were any particular reasons for this very short consultation period? How did you make sure the target audiences knew about this consultation and had the chance to respond?

Answer from:	Cllr Manda Rigby
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The consultation has been developed with advice from our community engagement team and communications teams to ensure it reaches as much of the community as possible within the available timeframe. Determining the consultation period was a balance between giving people enough time to respond, whilst complying with the timescales available with the project funding. We also considered that this a simple survey which should take no more than 5 to 10 minutes to complete.

We have worked with the community engagement team to send details of the consultation directly to area forums, town councils and other relevant community groups. The communications team have sent out a press release and social media posts to further raise awareness amongst the community. This consultation is the first of an ongoing programme of consultations on this issue and more will be launched when appropriate to reflect the growing demand for cycle hangers and available funding secured to deliver the schemes.

P	06	Question from:	Saskia Heijltjes
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During the budget meeting on 21 February 2023, it was said that there is funding available for School Streets in 2023, including from the funding available for the Liveable Neighbourhoods programme. Please provide information on the process for schools to request a school street, including for schools that are not within one of the 15 Liveable Neighbourhood areas.

Answer from:	Cllr Richard Samuel and Cllr Sarah Warren
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The use of measures, including traffic calming measures and improved pedestrian facilities, and the exclusion of motor vehicles at school arrival and departure times is a feature of Liveable Neighbourhoods policy and the council is keen to take forward the use of School Streets in order to make roads outside of schools safer and better environments for people to walk, cycle or wheel to school. It is important that the school involved is fully supportive. We consider requests from the community in consultation with local ward councillors, and the council's Highway team will then collate the requests and make an initial assessment as to whether such a scheme is likely to be feasible. These will then be shortlisted for potential consideration and funding in our extended TIP Plus programme for 2023/24, or the Transport Improvement Programme for 2024/25 or for consideration within a future Liveable Neighbourhood scheme

P **07**

Question from:

Jackie Head (On behalf of CVAF C&NE(ST)WG)

We are grateful to Kevin Guy and Sarah Warren for writing to Dan Norris putting the case for the introduction of BSIP fixed routes which were scoped and put out to tender by WECA and then not progressed (with the exception of the 522). Thank you for forwarding our report which makes a case for the retention of the 672 to Dan Norris.

In an email response to Sarah Warren from Dan Norris, forwarded to our group by Sarah Warren, it appears to be clear that the WECA Mayor is not considering bringing in the other BSIP proposed routes which impact on the Chew Valley (517 Chew Magna to Wells, 526 Chew Valley circular, 527 Chew Magna to Bristol) on the grounds that they are too expensive are not now and are not likely to become commercially viable within the 2 year life of the BSIP funding.

Please can you clarify:

Additional funding for 672: Will you now reconsider your own position in terms of funding the 672 as a bus service in the light of the detailed evidence of present need, potential growth when coupled with DRT and also when the proposal is seen through the lens of decarbonisation goals?

Answer from:

Cllr Sarah Warren

We are actively exploring the options to maintain support for the 672.

P 08	Question from:	Jackie Head (On behalf of CVAF C&NE(ST)WG)
<p>Proper Comms about the DRT project: Our own attempts to connect with Dan Norris have been less successful and we will be taking this up with him via WECA democratic processes, but would you agree with us that there is a need for much clearer comms to yourselves, your officers, and B&NES communities about the introduction of DRT from the WECA Mayor and WECA comms? Will you lobby WECA for a clear comms plan to be produced that can be shared with those who are being asked to make this significant change and those supporting them to make the change?</p>		
Answer from:		Cllr Sarah Warren
<p><i>We have made repeated calls to the Mayor to release a properly thought out and resourced comms and engagement plan to support our communities in transitioning to DRT, and will continue to do so.</i></p> <p><i>Time is rapidly running out, and it is imperative that the Mayor acts immediately to ensure that communities are able to access this new service.</i></p>		
P 09	Question from:	Jackie Head (On behalf of CVAF C&NE(ST)WG)
<p>Making time for behavioural change: If B&NES is not in a position to fund 672 <i>indefinitely</i>, would you agree with us that 2 months will not be a sufficient extension of time to bring regular vulnerable users of the 672 across to using DRT, particularly in the light of such a dearth of accurate comms at present? Therefore, will you consider some further extension, perhaps 6 months rather than 2 is a more realistic target? Our own understanding of behaviour change tells us that when people are angry and anxious and lacking clear information, they are more likely to cling on to the known, and that they will need time and considerable support to move to a different <i>attitude</i> to change, not just be facilitated pragmatically.</p>		
Answer from:		Cllr Sarah Warren
<p><i>As the local Transport Authority, the West of England Combined Authority is responsible for bus services within the West of England.</i></p>		

We have already increased our levy contribution which has enabled us to fund the continuation of the 672 for two months to support our communities in transitioning to DRT and are actively exploring the options to maintain support for the 672.

(This response was sent within 5 working days of the meeting).

P 10

Question from:

Edmund Cannon

In the response to a question from Cllr Joanna Wright (9 February 2023 Cabinet Meeting, q.25) it was reported that £12,500 was spent on refurbishing the Keynsham public toilets in Ashton Way car park and that running costs to that point had totalled £2,750. Since it costs 20p to use the toilets I assume that it is possible to work out total usage from revenue received.

1. How well used have the toilets been since re-opening (how much money has been collected and hence how many people have used it)?
2. What benefit-cost ratio was envisaged by the council when re-opening these toilets and has this been achieved?

Answer from:

Cllr Dave Wood

A total of £414.60 has been collected from its use by 2,073 people since opening in May 2022.

The income forecast was £1K per annum, this has not yet been realised. The facility does however continue to provide a convenient provision next to a busy town centre car park and the main bus stop connecting Bristol and Bath.

(This response was sent within 5 working days of the meeting).

MALCOLM BALDWIN – STATEMENT TO CABINET – 9TH MARCH 2023

As we and our city fast approach its next local elections, with purdah only a couple of weeks away, it's not a bad time to perhaps take some sort of stock.

In this context, I make no apologies for returning to the subject of Liveable Neighbourhoods (LNs), which should NOT be merely a discussion about Low Traffic Neighbourhoods much as parts of the media and some other organisations might like to attempt to over-simplify the dialogue. They are wrong in doing so!

Cabinet, implementation of LNs was always potentially going to be a bumpy ride so let's just re-fasten our seatbelts and get fully motivated and focused on the real advantages created by a fully-fledged and meaningful LN. Delivering overall improvements to the public realm and to the health and social well-being of a particular neighbourhood and its total and often diverse community are and remain essential elements.

There remains, in my view and as I have said before, sound logic in sensitively introducing a meaningful Liveable Neighbourhood where potentially linked public realm improvements already targeted to assist the well-being of a local community have commenced.....and again, as I have said before where advocates ('champions', if you like) of LNs already exist.

Councils, cabinets, chairs of residents' associations don't get everything right! Those who might have thought that traffic/parking 'interventions' were potential "low hanging fruit" perhaps don't have an in-depth knowledge of horticulture.

Cabinet, it's as important to have a good outcome to an idea, as to have the initial idea itself. Liveable Neighbourhoods ARE a good idea but in simple terms perhaps they also need to be made more 'loveable' as well as 'liveable'.....I have emphasised before; we need a realistic and substantive template to demonstrate their real value.

So, let's move forward positively, with not a change but maybe, just maybe, a 'tilt' of focus:

- Don't leave a void in explaining the case for LNs -- you risk others filling it!
- Recognise that the citizens of B&NES are suffering from serious, and I mean SERIOUS consultation fatigue recognise the implications of that on the nature and quality of ongoing responses to future consultations.
- Explain better that consultations are NOT referendums and equally importantly why they are not.
- Respond energetically to reasonable criticisms where and when they arise.
- Beware of and identify 'orchestrated' responses and input they have already commenced!
- Emphasise and re-emphasise that implementation trials, mean trials and are NOT imposed solutions.

and most importantly:

- Implement a meaningful Liveable Neighbourhood which brings added value to our city, our citizens in a more general sense as well as to our local and tourist/visitor economies.

Whatever the nature of our Council's structure following May's local elections, our city needs and deserves the benefits implicit within an effectively implemented and trialled LN scheme.

Later tonight, Cabinet, you will be considering how best to enhance and maximise the benefits of Bath's heritage assets. A focused, well managed implementation of a 'fully-fledged' Liveable Neighbourhood, within an appropriate heritage neighbourhood and with a combination of significant local and visitor footfall, would add real value to our city as a whole as well as to that particular local neighbourhood.

Let's get one significant implemented Liveable Neighbourhood right and demonstrate the value of your case.....remember:

"Less can often mean more!"

Statement to B&NES Cabinet meeting on Thursday 9th March

I am making this statement on behalf of the Sustainable Transport subgroup of the Chew Valley Area Forum Climate & Nature Emergency Working Group.

Firstly we wanted to thank you for continuing to support the weekly meeting between our group and Transport officers in B&NES & WECA: this has been invaluable for us in being able to feedback local issues, influence some aspects of DRT delivery, and know that we are passing on accurate information to people in the Chew Valley via our “Bus Transition in the Chew Valley” Facebook group.

Thank you too for your positive feedback to our report ‘Making a case for the 672’ which was created from granular research into the needs of people who are reliant users of the 672, featuring the unique voices of 33 people in the Chew Valley .

We also believe now is a moment of opportunity to create a modal shift from cars to buses, as a primary transport choice in this large rural area.

This is a bold vision, but wholly in line with B&NES own desire to decarbonise transport. With 29% of all emissions in B&NES coming from public transport, and the Chew Valley being a large geographical area, this is a huge and *necessary* challenge.

Whilst our group is happy to gather and share evidence from ‘Early Adopters’ of DRT we believe there is larger project in need of B&NES’s co-ordination.

We ask the council to work with local communities to amplify good news stories of DRT and public transport generally, and to reach into schools, groups and businesses in B&NES to support its use. The House of Lords ‘In our hands’ report clarified that 32% of action on climate change before 2035 must be *private* individuals making changes to their *daily* habits, but an understanding of behavioural change shows the importance of practical and psychological capability, motivation and opportunity.

A combination of DRT, more frequent main corridor routes and the 672 provides opportunity in the Chew Valley, but there is work to be done and time needed to unlock the motivation to change.

The speed of change will be influenced by

- An individual’s attitude to change, and past experiences of managing change
- How well the DRT service works in practice and how many ‘good news’ of bad news’ stories they hear

- Their motivation from a range of factors: cost, convenience, belief in the need for change
- The narratives and behaviour of their peers and those leading schools, businesses and organisations
- The weight of evidence that something is going to bring more positives than negatives to their lives

The post of School Travel Plan Officer was not filled after Alasdair Yule left B&NES in 2021, and as a result the Mode Shift Stars Scheme has stalled in some local schools. Teachers need support in encouraging lower carbon transport options. Young people need education and inspiration to enable them to make good choices that will last a life-time. Parish Councils need to be convinced of the value of this modal shift and to have the tools to communicate clear messages and win hearts and minds to alternative transport choices.

We know DRT is the responsibility of WECA, but the broader decarbonisation agenda is of vital importance to B&NES, so please, work with us on this, clarify who is tasked with transport decarbonisation education and let's take this forward.

Jackie Head

On behalf of CVAF C&NE(ST)WG

8/3/2023

DAVID REDGEWELL PUBLIC STATEMENT TO CABINET – 9TH MARCH 2023

We are very concerned to see the high-risk statement in the Audit report for Public transport Network. Especially the Demand responsive bus services with bus drivers' risk.

But we would also raise the risk of the contract not being awarded to Abus or coach company for Demand responsive bus services as in Somerset Gloucestershire and Wiltshire. With Somerset County council own bus and coach company. Pulham coaches in Gloucestershire and Lydney dial ride bus services. Go ahead group South Coast bus services in Wiltshire.

But it may be that the Demand responsive bus services and via can get agency drivers for the Network in North Somerset council Banes South Gloucestershire council and part of Greater Bristol but apart from Brislington, Keynsham, Totterdown and Avonmouth this service is in Deep rural areas. It does not replace the secondary bus Network in Greater Bristol and Bath which will be withdrawn on the 1st April 2023 and June 2023. Leaving many communities without public transport in North East Somerset South and East Bristol and Towns in south Gloucestershire. Leaving major bus Network gaps. With bus Franchising as an option the issue is the timescale to set it up - 5 years. By which time the west of England mayoral combined transport Authority and North Somerset council, which will need to be part of the Authority west of England mayoral combined transport Authority, will need to purchase bus Depots in Bath wells Hengrove and Lawrence Hill Bristol and Weston Super Mare from First Group. 700 buses Patchway Depot in Bristol from stagecoach west 150 buses and other bus Garages.

The Franchising process take 5 years to let across the Network. The west of England mayoral combined transport Authority has no precepting powers for the mayor Dan Norris and the Authority. So the council levy will have to pay the mayor for the franchise Network through council tax.

Franchising is an option to be look at by the metro mayor Dan Norris with councillor Steve Bridger from North Somerset council. But will not change the situation on the need to fund bus services in northeast Somerset council Bristol city council South Gloucestershire council area plus North Somerset council.

Mayor Andrew Burnham is proceeding over the next 4 year to Franchise Greater Manchester combined transport Authority buses. Andy Street mayor of the west Midlands combined Authority and mayor Steve Rotherham, Liverpool city region,

The mayors of the south Yorkshire combined Authority. West Yorkshire combined Authority and the New Tyne and Wear Authority are also looking at Franchising.

But remember the west of England mayoral combined Authority has no Block Grant from the Department for transport and precepting powers for public transport Network.

We welcome Banes council and Bristol city council and North Somerset council asking the metro mayor Dan Norris to looking at Franchising the bus Network, but it will not solve he bus service funding issues over the next 18 months on the west of

England mayoral combined transport Authority Network. We welcome the 7 million pounds award of a contract to enhance bus service corridor to first group plc west of England buses to enhance peak hour service on a number of routes.

North Somerset council has carried out consultation on its bus service improvements plan. And its meetings have been in public. But this is not the case at the west of England mayoral combined transport Authority with the Housing and Transport Board meeting in private. The only combined transport Authority to hold its meeting in private in England.

On support services because the transport levy being frozen by South Gloucestershire council Banes and South Gloucestershire council. We have service cuts back on the 1st of April 2023 and June 2023. The poorest communities will be left without bus services.

More needs to be done on Bus service improvement plan bus services in the city region. Including equalities impact assessments.

We welcome this plan for bus and public transport corridors.

The risk here is lack of delivery by the local councils Banes South Gloucestershire council and City and county of Bristol. On bus priority and sustainable transport corridor delivery.

The high risk is transport inflation and council delivery for the west of England mayoral combined transport Authority. We need to transfer Transport staff from Bristol city council, South Gloucestershire council and Banes council. Bristol city council is to transfer staff and infrastructure bus shelters and interchanges facilities.

But bus shelters and interchanges are an example of west of England mayoral combined transport Authority and North Somerset council do great work on designs and then build out. But the council have very little money to maintain bus shelters or clean or maintain the new shelters and interchanges.

It's important to passenger that all infrastructure is maintained by the mayor of the west of England mayoral combined transport Authority jointly with North Somerset council. Value for money with one Transport Authority.

Metro west railway Network. Need strong region governance on delivery. Progress is being made on the Bristol Temple meads station to pill and Portishead line.

On Bristol to Gloucester central line New station at Charfield to get planning permission this week.

Bristol Temple meads station Ashley Down Filton North station both have planning permission but Henbury station planning permission is delayed.

Delaying this part of metro west.

The Authority committee of the mayor Dan Norris metro mayor and local authority leader need to work together and remember that they are delivering for voters and passengers.

It feels like the bus coach rail and ferry service are disjointed from their meetings. This is not the case in west Midlands combined Authority, Greater Manchester Liverpool city regions with elected mayors. Or Transport for London which appears to be west of England mayoral combined transport Authority and North Somerset council proposed model.

West of England joint committee meeting is very important on joint public transport Network issue with metro west railway Network and bus service improvement plan working as 2 transport Authorities. North Somerset council is much open government on public transport Network issue. Transport and housing Board meeting. Should be meeting in public as per all other mayoral combined Authorities. Must meet in public.

Bus service improvement plan. Bus service Advisory Board. And Advisory panel must meet in public online. Like Somerset County Council that works very well. And have public statements and questions times same rules as public access to west of England mayoral combined Authority committees.

The passenger bus forums by the mayor Dan Norris metro mayor and councillor Steve Hogg transport executive North Somerset council and bus operators work very well and the mayor Dan Norris and Steve Hogg transport executive councillor North Somerset council talk to passenger and is good open government.

The needs to be a lot more passenger information consultation at bus stations interchanges facilities railway stations ferry terminal talking to passengers and stakeholders. Realtime information systems need to work in bus stations such as Bath. Bus shelters clean should be a top priority.

Greater Manchester combined transport Authority metro mayor Andy Burnham is on the ground talking to passengers, is Andy Street mayor of the west Midlands combined Authority and Liverpool city region mayor Steve Rotherham and staff.

West of England mayoral combined transport Authority and North Somerset council have very little staff on the public transport Network but are spending million on taxpayers' money on public transport Network services.

Complaint phone and email contact are not available and clear to the travelling public. There are numbers but with answer phones.

Bristol city council have a public transport Department but have not had responsibility for the public transport Network for years and confusing to passengers.

We welcome all the hard work by mayor Dan Norris and His team trying to set up a transport Authority, but we need real partnership with the 4 local Authorities and co-production.

5 hours to decide public transport issue in meeting does not happen in Transport for London west of England mayoral combined transport Authority role mode on buses rail trams and ferries. Except west of England mayoral combined transport Authority and North Somerset council are not providing universal bus services. West Midlands combined Authority meeting on public transport Network.

Greater Manchester meeting on public transport Network.

It needs to focus at meeting on public transport Network delivery. It's also unusual to see leaders of councils and chief executive officers taking decisions on public transport delivery.

Most combined transport Authorities the metro mayor or his transport Deputy mayor take decisions with Transport Executive councillors and Transport officers some meetings include public transport companies giving reports.

The public transport users group have worked so hard to see an integrated transport Authority with North Somerset council and the Local Enterprise partnership as members. We wish to see good Authority governance with co-production of public transport Network service and Delivery plans that work for voters and passengers.

Buses are buses and west of England mayoral combined transport Authority and North Somerset council are responsible for all services.

Support service.

Enhanced quality partnership bus services.

Demand responsive bus services

Coach services.

The issue is the west of England mayoral combined transport Authority

Transport levy has been frozen and the mayor Dan Norris unlike any other transport Authority has not precepting powers for running bus services railway services coach services ferry services and future mass transit systems.

Transport for Greater Bristol.

FOSBR.

Railfuture Severnside.

Somerset catch the bus campaign.

Somerset bus partnership.

Gloucestershire catch the bus campaign.

Bristol and Bath tram Network.

South west transport Network.

Bristol disabled equalities forum.

South Gloucester disability equalities Network.

LGBTQ community.

Want to see a well-run west of England mayoral combined transport Authority In Partnership with North Somerset council and a future full member.

Delivery for stakeholders and passengers

The risk is clear accountability for public money which is allocated by Mark Harper MP secretary of state for transport as Taxpayers money is delivery on the ground for passengers and money on consultants is fully accountable.

West of England mayoral combined transport Authority need it only professional transport staff.

The Red flags of risks on support bus services and Demand responsive bus services must be addressed, as should the city region transport plan delivery and metro west. We need clear governance review and delivery plans for Transport services delivery. Perhaps the mayor should bring in an Advisor from Greater Manchester combined transport Authority to help.

We are very concerned that we need to make progress on a mass transport system for Greater Bristol and Bath city region. But putting the west of England mayoral combined transport Authority and North Somerset council bus service improvement plan as our top priority with Mayor Dan Norris.

And metro west railway Network. The light rail system exists in West Midlands combined Authority area. Greater Manchester. Sheffield city region. Newcastle upon Tyne. Merseyside. Blackpool.

Now being built in Cardiff and the valleys in Wales.

Edinburgh Glasgow Scotland.

Dublin Ireland.

And now in Leeds West Yorkshire.

Gloucestershire county council in Gloucester and Cheltenham.

We must not drop mass transit overground with some tunnels like on the seven Beach line railway at Clifton Down.

Mass transit system works with metro west railways and coach services ferry service.

We must make progress in Greater Bristol and Bath city region at the 17th March 2023 West of England mayoral combined Authority and joint committee meeting. Not drop a modern mass transit system in Great Bristol and Bath city region.

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Good evening. I'm here tonight to talk about the former King Edward's School building on Broad Street, The Fashion Museum and use of vacant shops throughout the city.

I am broadly in support of the Council taking back ownership of the KES building if CPO is the route they choose to go down. Bringing it back into public use could be massively beneficial to the city, as long as all of the proper building inspections, financial plans and risk management procedures are properly observed, and safeguards put in place. It has remained empty for the last 37 years (which to put into context is as long as I've been alive).

Samuel Smith Brewery also own two sites in Bristol, both of which they have also let fall into decline. The Old Seaman's Mission and a plot of land by the Arnolfini. After the efforts of Cllr Nicola Beech, a Labour cabinet member from Bristol, the Old Seaman's Mission was finally put on the market for £550,000 in February this year. So, there is hope.

The Bath Preservation Trust have made numerous pleas over the years for something to be done to safeguard the future of this building. One idea they had was to re-locate the records office and collections there and make them more accessible to members of the public.

A few years back I had a conversation with local historian Kirsten Swift, and we both noted that there isn't currently a museum dedicated solely to the history of Bath. An all-encompassing, museum of Bath. So perhaps taking back this building could present the opportunity to finally rectify that.

The Fashion Museum

Firstly, I would like to offer a note of welcome to Sophie McKinlay as the new leader of the Fashion Museum. For Bath to snag such a powerful and inspirational female leader shows the real ambition and drive behind the project to relocate the Fashion Museum. Bath needs more strong cultural leadership and I, for one, am massively excited that someone of her calibre will be taking the reigns here in Bath. Sophie will be a massive asset to the cultural sector in Bath and will help to guide us safely into the future.

The Council have said they have the ambition to temporarily use the Old Post Office for other short-term lets. I think this is a really positive idea. I personally would like to see you hold pop-up fashion or culture exhibitions in the space so that our brilliant collections are not just locked away until 2027. I think a temporary use of the space may provide an opportunity to do this and perhaps tie it in with one of the many festivals that happen throughout the city?

In the past few years vacant shops have been taken over for several different projects. The brilliant video posted by Cleo and the regeneration team this week shows how these vacant units can be transformed, and beneficial to the community. I would love to see more of this happening.

Another project which caught my eye was shared by Jason Dorley-Brown on Instagram and showed how vacant shop fronts had been taken over by artists who created gorgeous artistic views of Bath to brighten up the shop windows. This project shows tons of promise and I'd like to see the Council pledge to support this and build upon the brilliant work that has already been done. Thank you for your time.

CLIMATE EMERGENCY

I suspect you will be pleased this is your last Cabinet Meeting, so you do not need first hand to hear me telling the truth about how poorly your Administration has treated the City and the wider North East Somerset community.

The Climate & Ecological Emergency is very important to me and, quite frankly, to all our residents.

When I read, and I quote:

“Cabinet is asked to note the positive progress and achievement over the last year on the implementation of the Council Climate Strategy”.

Wow – how I wish this was completely true.

I've taken the trouble to read the Report on the Action Plan and wonder how many of you have read it in detail – some may have, but if you all had, then you would not be proceeding with the destruction of the Tufa-Field which a Cabinet member had said to residents he will spend whatever it takes in obtaining Planning Permission – what an admission.

And when you continue to waste money and have new surveyors spending days on the site recently and openly admitting recently that the Field is too wet to build on, it says it all, why do you want to save face before the Environment. You should be ashamed of your decisions.

This Project must not go ahead if the Climate & Ecological Emergency means anything, and no animals or reptiles should be killed as they were a few years' ago on the field by contractors, instructed by this Council.

It is good to hear some honesty in the Report saying you are not on track to deliver net-Zero by 2030 or to reverse the decline in wildlife by the same date, but then read on and the blame game begins.

In the recommendation to Cabinet, you are to note progress in understanding renewable energy in BANES. I wonder if your new Renewable Energy Manager has looked at the failure of your Development Company to provide PV's on the roof of Keynsham Riverside, despite this being strongly promoted in the Planning Permission and part of that Consent. We've all heard the excuses year after year – I know why it's not been provided– but do you?

Why are you putting all your 'eggs in one basket'? I see no reference to Wind Turbines. Why I may ask – I'm sure if you took the trouble to speak to officers, you would know I've spoken at a Conference on Wind Turbines at the House of Commons and my speech, even if I say it myself, was well received.

What progress has been made since then on Turbines – by the look of it; none. It's been put on the back burner.

I see you are triumphing Air Source Heat Pumps at Charlton House; perhaps you should have been more concerned about what was happening to the residents sitting in their own urine before having pictures taken alongside heat pumps. Still, those Cabinet members do not have the gumption to resign – that is disgraceful.

I support engagement in retrofitting insulation to Listed Buildings – there is much more to be done, and those at Historic England must be persuaded that some Listed Buildings can have good retrofitting. This must be a high priority.

I fully accept there is more to do on traffic, but the way you are going about it is alienating residents – you must bring them with you and look to proper consultation which MUST not be ignored. YOU MUST LISTEN.

The excuse of a slow response to the Ecological Emergency using Covid, and shortage of staff on not working on the plans is just not acceptable.

I remember only too well my discussions with the Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency prior to the motion on Ecological Emergency being put to Full Council, and her reluctance to do so. I suspect I shamed her in making her change her mind.

I still am immensely upset that I was forced to resign as a Trustee of Avon Wildlife Trust because this Council did not like my criticism of what was happening at Entry Hill and other Ecological Areas – I wonder which one of us has been proved right.

Even now, there is a Cabinet member promoting the Cycle Park. Its' a good job Cllr Roper understands the issues and puts a halt to it. Let's hope it stays that way.

Stop playing politics and put the Climate and Ecological Emergency FIRST.

Statement to 9.3.23 Cabinet meeting, B&NES Council

Thankyou chair

I speak as a citizen of Bath whose twin passions are creating thriving resilient places, and regenerating social and economic systems. Whilst there is much in the climate and ecological emergency reports that I applaud, that is not why I'm here. I'm here because our planet is burning and nature is dying around us, and because these reports suggest that we are not on track to turn this around,

However it seems to me there are 3 underutilised keys to unlocking change at the pace and scale we require.

1. Innovative governance, business models and funding approaches for collaborative ventures

The flexible holistic contextual approach of the Waterscape, Bathscape, Somer & Chew Valley partnerships are already delivering desired ecological outcomes, and the aspiration to build and develop more such purposeful & focussed land recovery partnerships in the in Ecological Action Plan is admirable. But are appropriate collaborative governance, not for profit business models and funding mechanisms in place to attract "external investment" that will enable and empower this? For mainstream market driven approaches can't be relied on to do so.

2. Better embody the 2019 commitment to "just transition" in emergency actions

For if net zero emissions are achieved across the district by 2030 but health, wealth & power¹ inequalities have continued to increase, the Council will have failed in its mission. In this regard its disturbing that so few of the Initiatives in the Climate Progress report are labelled as addressing Equity, and of those that that are so labelled, the depth & extent of their 'equity' commitment is variable. Similarly rigour in ensuring poorer and less well connected citizens are represented in land improvement actions seems to be lacking. And notwithstanding 'Giving People a Bigger Say' being an overarching priority alongside that of 'Tackling the Climate and Ecological Emergencies' in the Council's Corporate Strategy, there is little in the report to persuade me that this is happening.

3. Better strategic framing, with supporting narratives and metrics

However I'm glad to see that Council officers are exploring Doughnut approaches to operationalising equity as well as ecological goals in its next Corporate strategy, and I hope that this will lead swiftly to a wide and diverse array of communities as well as local businesses and anchor institutions being included in its definition, portrayal and development at a formative stage – vital to not only dissipating power and wealth disparities, but also nurturing life affirming uplifting place rooted narratives that lead to the much needed behaviour change for addressing scope 3 emissions and nurturing nature and countering the extractive degenerative narratives that abound around us. As well as improved strategic framing, supporting narratives, a holistic approach to evaluating outcomes is much needed. Rather than resting on its laurels by the invitation to participate with Ashden in developing cobenefit concepts, develop or rather co-develop appropriate dashboards for these, and preferably well ahead of the 2025 update of the Climate Strategy

Nicolette Boater,

*Creating thriving resilient places, regenerating economics & governance,
and unfolding potential in the Bristol Avon Bioregion*



¹ For example, despite, whilst it is reported that “over half of BANES parishes were actively engaged through dedicated workshops on renewables, transport and local nature action planning” the reports are silent about the Bath democratic deficit highlighted as a weakness in a local authority peer review early on in the current administration.

Thank you for this opportunity to make a short statement on the B&NES Music service.

I would like to ask for consideration of funding to help the service build back after COVID, which saw numbers fall dramatically.

Already this year the service, which employs almost 50 part time music tutors, has supported music in 92% of state schools. Its services, funded by an Arts Council England grant, must ensure that every child, from 5 to 18, has an opportunity to engage with music. It delivers lessons, ensembles, live music, professional development for staff and more. Ensembles range from samba to saxophones, wind bands, choirs and a philharmonic orchestra.

You will have noted on the agenda a decision on the Future Governance of the Music Service which responds to a new vision for delivery of music education from the Department of Education. The intention is for the B&NES service to merge, in the near future, with those of North Somerset and South Gloucestershire local authorities to form a tri-hub alliance to better attract grant funding whilst still retaining its own identity.

The reason for this request now is that the service has been through a challenging time, trying to build back after COVID whilst being in a transitional period in terms of delivery model and organisational change.

During COVID, numbers of instrumental learners plummeted and the numbers participating in ensembles dropped by half to just 100. Though there has been a gradual improvement in learners since then, the number taking part in groups, has been slower to recover.

Young people coming together at music centres helps build back social engagement and mental health well-being post COVID.

The music service very much wants to increase engagement across B&NES and build back participation. Additional funding would enable the following:

Firstly, responding to student feedback through the Bath Festivals – Routes Through Music project, the service would diversify to include music production, purchasing equipment and specialist instruction to

take around schools and youth centres, particularly meeting the needs of rurally isolated students.

Secondly, to attract young people who are not currently accessing music activities, they will run a programme of music-making workshops across B&NES leading to a festival day at a music centre, introducing a new cohort to the bands and orchestras.

Thirdly, they aim to add new ensembles to include absolute beginners and a wider range of genres.

Finally, engagement with young people to identify barriers to participation will be prioritised.

These additional measures starting in April will enable the service to at last kick-start its post pandemic recovery and create a sustainable local action plan to build back participation.

Our administration is committed to supporting the arts and what better way to do this than by supporting all our young people to discover and enjoy a wide range of musical activities.