

Cabinet

Date: Thursday, 31st March, 2022
Time: 7.15 pm (or on the rise of the Special Cabinet meeting whichever is later)
Venue: Virtual Meeting - Zoom - Public Access via YouTube
<https://www.youtube.com/bathnescouncil>

Agenda

To: All Members of the Cabinet

You are invited to attend a virtual 'informal' meeting of the Cabinet on Thursday 31 March 2022 via Zoom (the link will be provided). This informal meeting will help to inform the decision-making meeting on 1 April 2022. This virtual meeting will be conducted in the normal manner but, as any decisions made will not be legally enforceable, they will be formally made on 1 April 2022.

Chief Executive and other appropriate officers
Press and Public

The agenda is set out overleaf.



Jo Morrison

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NOTES:

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

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

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

3. Recording at Meetings

The Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 now allows filming and recording by anyone attending a meeting. This is not within the Council's control. Some of our meetings are webcast. At the start of the meeting, the Chair will confirm if all or part of the meeting is to be filmed. If you would prefer not to be filmed for the webcast, please make yourself known to the camera operators. We request that those filming/recording meetings avoid filming public seating areas, children, vulnerable people etc; however, the Council cannot guarantee this will happen.

The Council will broadcast the images and sounds live via the internet www.bathnes.gov.uk/webcast. The Council may also use the images/sound recordings on its social media site or share with other organisations, such as broadcasters.

4. Public Speaking at Meetings

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

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

Further details of the scheme can be found at:

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

5. Supplementary information for meetings

Additional information and Protocols and procedures relating to meetings

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

Cabinet - Thursday, 31st March, 2022

in the Virtual Meeting - Zoom - Public Access via YouTube
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A G E N D A

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS
2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

At this point in the meeting declarations of interest are received from Members in any of the agenda items under consideration at the meeting. Members are asked to indicate:

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

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

4. TO ANNOUNCE ANY URGENT BUSINESS AGREED BY THE CHAIR
5. QUESTIONS FROM PUBLIC AND COUNCILLORS

Questions submitted before the deadline will receive a reply from an appropriate Cabinet member or a promise to respond within 5 days of the meeting. Councillors may ask one supplementary question for each question they submitted, up to a maximum of two per Councillor.

6. STATEMENTS, DEPUTATIONS OR PETITIONS FROM PUBLIC OR COUNCILLORS

Councillors and members of the public may register their intention to make a statement. Statements are limited to 3 minutes each. The speaker may then be asked by Cabinet members to answer factual questions arising out of their statement.

7. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS CABINET MEETING (Pages 5 - 30)

The Cabinet is asked to confirm the minutes of the following meetings as a correct record:

Informal virtual Cabinet meeting - 10 February 2022
Cabinet meeting - 11 February 2022

8. CONSIDERATION OF SINGLE MEMBER ITEMS REQUISITIONED TO CABINET

This is a standard agenda item, to cover any reports originally placed on the Weekly list for single Member decision making, which have subsequently been the subject of a

Cabinet Member requisition to the full Cabinet, under the Council's procedural rules

9. MATTERS REFERRED BY POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY BODIES

This is a standing agenda item (Constitution rule 14, part 4D – Executive Procedure Rules) for matters referred by Policy Development and Scrutiny bodies. The Chair of the relevant PDS Panel will have the right to attend and to introduce the Panel's recommendations to Cabinet.

10. SINGLE MEMBER CABINET DECISIONS TAKEN SINCE PREVIOUS CABINET MEETING (Pages 31 - 34)

A list of Cabinet Single Member decisions taken and published since the last Cabinet meeting to note (no debate).

11. ADOPTION WEST CONTRACT EXTENSION (Pages 35 - 70)

As part of the national regionalising adoption agenda, Bath and North East Somerset Council, along with five other Local Authorities, set up a Regional Adoption Agency named Adoption West. The Agency commenced operation on 1 March 2019.

The Cabinet is asked to agree that the term of the original Commissioning Agreement (as defined) be extended for a period of up to five years. The original agreement allows for this extension and the Adoption West Board, which includes all six Local Authorities, including B&NES Council; is in support of this.

12. HERITAGE SERVICES BUSINESS PLAN 2022-2027 (Pages 71 - 100)

The report introduces the Heritage Services Business plan for approval. The Plan sets out the strategy to rebuild visitor numbers and financial performance on a sustainable basis, whilst maintaining the high standards of visitor experience conservation and presentation that underpin commercial success.

The Democratic Services Officer for this meeting is Jo Morrison who can be contacted on 01225 394358.

BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET

CABINET

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

Thursday, 10th February, 2022

Present:

Councillor Kevin Guy (Ch)	Leader of the Council, Liberal Democrat Group Leader
Councillor Tim Ball	Cabinet Member for Planning and Licensing
Councillor Alison Born	Cabinet Member for Adults and Council House Building
Councillor Tom Davies	Cabinet Member for Adults and Council House Building
Councillor Manda Rigby	Cabinet Member for Transport
Councillor Dine Romero	Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, Communities and Culture
Councillor Richard Samuel	Deputy Council Leader (statutory) and Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Resources
Councillor Sarah Warren	Deputy Council Leader and Cabinet Member for Climate and Sustainable Travel
Councillor David Wood	Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Services

136 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair, Cllr Kevin Guy, welcomed everyone watching and participating at the virtual Cabinet meeting and made the following statement:

“Due to the ongoing Covid situation and a desire to retain a level of social distancing at Council meetings at this time, we are holding this ‘informal’ virtual Cabinet meeting to enable Cabinet, Councillors and members of the public to take part. This virtual meeting will be conducted in the normal manner but, as any decisions made will not be legally enforceable, they will be formally made at the physically reduced, quorate decision-making meeting tomorrow on 11 February 2022. We will review this approach for any future Cabinet meetings, in line with government and health guidance at that time.”

137 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

138 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Monitoring Officer explained that he had granted a general dispensation for item 11 (Budget and Council Tax 2022/23) for all those Cabinet members who pay Council Tax. He had also granted a special dispensation for those members in receipt of Council services.

The following members then made specific declarations:

- Councillor Kevin Guy declared that he has received a Covid relief grant from the Council in respect of his family business.

- Cllr Tim Ball declared that one of his grandsons is in receipt of social services support and two other grandchildren have EHCPs (Education, Health Care and Plans).
- Cllr Sarah Warren declared that a family member has an EHCP.

139 TO ANNOUNCE ANY URGENT BUSINESS AGREED BY THE CHAIR

There was no urgent business.

140 STATEMENTS, DEPUTATIONS OR PETITIONS FROM PUBLIC OR COUNCILLORS

Members of the public and Councillors made statements as follows:

- David Redgewell (South West Transport Board and Rail Future Severnside) – Budget on Transport (*David Redgewell lost connection to the virtual meeting so was unable to make his statement in person, however, a copy is attached to the Minutes as Appendix 1 and on the Council's website*)
- Cllr Dr Yuktेशwar Kumar – Collegiality (*a copy of which is attached to the Minutes as Appendix 2 and on the Council's website*)
- Katherine Howells – Proposed parking charges in Midsomer Norton (*a copy of which is attached to the minutes as Appendix 3 and on the Council's website*)
- Cllr Grant Johnson – Proposed parking charges in Midsomer Norton and Radstock. Cllr Johnson also presented an online petition to the Leader of the Council requesting that the proposal to introduce hourly car parking charges in Midsomer Norton and Radstock be dropped. The petition contained 1,164 signatures. He also presented a letter to the Leader of the Council signed by 48 local businesses in Midsomer Norton and Radstock stating that they feel that the introduction of hourly parking charges would have a negative impact on local businesses and residents.
- Cllr Michael Evans – Midsomer Norton car parking charges (*a copy of which is attached to the minutes as Appendix 4 and on the Council's website*)
- Cllr Alastair Singleton – Bristol Airport appeal (*a copy of which is attached to the minutes as Appendix 5 and on the Council's website*).
- Cllr Vic Pritchard – Council budget (*a copy of which is attached to the minutes as Appendix 6 and on the Council's website*)
- Malcolm Baldwin – Potential re-siting of the Fashion Museum

141 QUESTIONS FROM PUBLIC AND COUNCILLORS

There were 22 questions from Councillors and one question from a member of the public. Two Councillors asked supplementary questions.

[Copies of the questions and responses, including supplementary questions and responses, have been placed on the minute book as Appendix 7 and are available on the Council's website.]

142 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS CABINET MEETINGS

It was **RESOLVED** to recommend the approval of the following minutes:

15 December 2021 (virtual informal meeting)

16 December 2021

26 January 2022 (virtual informal special meeting)

27 January 2022 (Special meeting)

143 CONSIDERATION OF SINGLE MEMBER ITEMS REQUISITIONED TO CABINET

There were none.

144 MATTERS REFERRED BY POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY BODIES

Cllr Karen Warrington, Chair of the Corporate Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel, presented a summary of the comments of the PDS Panels on the proposed budget for 2022/23.

145 SINGLE MEMBER CABINET DECISIONS TAKEN SINCE PREVIOUS CABINET MEETING

It was **RESOLVED** to recommend the Cabinet on 11 February 2022 to note the report.

146 BUDGET AND COUNCIL TAX 2022/23 AND FINANCIAL OUTLOOK

Cllr Samuel introduced the Budget and Council Tax report for 2022/23 and made the following statement:

“Members will be aware that the covid pandemic has had, and continues to have, a lasting negative impact on the council’s finances. Two of our principal sources of income – heritage attractions and our commercial property are operating below full capacity. The former because of the downturn in tourism and a need to maintain safe circulation space in the Roman Baths and Pump Rooms, and the latter because of a 40% downward market fall in rents together with rent arrears that accumulated during the pandemic.

Less income means more pressure on our budget because we cannot rely on the income we normally use to fund our full range of services. We expect to receive £13m less income in the coming financial year. When this is added to the significant inflationary pressures in the wider economy and the post-lockdown service pressures, we have a perfect storm.

I do not expect the Council to emerge from this financial maelstrom until 2025/6 at the earliest by which time £82.3m gross will have lost forever. **I will repeat that.** The council expects to lose £82.3m from its income over 5 years. Just think what could have been done with that money. It is going to take several more years before our recovery is complete.

Against this background, the Cabinet set itself the task of maintaining the drive to improve living standards for B&NES residents by holding spending on transport, and substantially enhancing our vital neighbourhood services and beginning the task of building the first council houses in our area for a generation.

We also committed to try and keep any council tax rise to a minimum recognising that pressures on household incomes are severe at present due to the government's failure to fully protect households from the spike in energy prices.

Of course, the Council provides a very wide range of services to our residents and wherever possible these are being maintained at pre-pandemic levels. In some areas such as Children's Services there are long term funding pressures which have continued to intensify. We have therefore provided additional funds to support these essential services for young people. However, the central government support for these services is insufficient over the longer term given all the other pressures facing local government.

The same is true of Adult Services where there is little evidence that the government's recent proposals will lead to a better financial outcome for these crucial services.

Beneath the headlines, I highlight a series of important investment decisions:

- More funding for IT reflecting the move to remote home-based working
- Resources for a decent pay settlement for our hard-working staff
- Provision against the expected spike in energy prices
- More funds for maintaining and repairing our commercial property estate
- Hedges against expected contract inflation price rises
- Allowances for expected demographic growth
- More money for home to school transport
- More cash for recycling investment

All these and more show our intent to make proper provision for investment into services to ensure their fitness for the future.

I will leave other Cabinet members to expand on the improvements in their portfolios but in economic development I point to:

- Funding to develop the business case for the Fashion Museum to its new location in the Milsom Quarter and the development of a collections centre
- Funding for the regeneration of high streets in Bath and across North East Somerset
- Major development work at Bath Quays North and the completion of Bath Quays South and the opening of the new bridge and demolition of Avon St car park
- Completion of the Bath Western Riverside land swap and the bringing forward of two major planning applications
- Completion of the Radstock HLC
- Taking forward the Somer Valley Enterprise Zone
- Commencement of the Bath Riverline project phase 1

All these projects will bring forward jobs and increased economic activity to support our local economy.

Of course, to maintain that programme, there are balancing savings to be found as ever:

I have identified £11.8m of savings and income changes which include:

- £2m reduced borrowing costs from shrinking back the capital programme
- £2m from efficiency savings in adult services from service transformation
- Reductions in Foster care placement costs
- More money from recyclables sales
- More money for garden waste collections.
- Higher income from car park charges
- Introduction of a 2% staff vacancy rate saving £1.3m

At this point I am also able to announce two minor changes from my draft budget which has already been subject to public consultation.

We have listened carefully to the arguments advanced against the proposed introduction of car parking charges into Midsomer Norton and Radstock. Due to the relative weakness of the local economies in those towns I have concluded that the charges should not be introduced because of the potentially negative impact that might have on High Street businesses. I am grateful to those who have made statements arguing against the charges. These proposals therefore no longer form part of the budget plans, and an amendment will be made to the Council budget next week.

The second change I am making is reassure Bath Library users that there is no intention to relocate other council services wholesale into the library on any scale and that a wider review of customer services and the library operation will take place to identify the necessary savings. To this end I am reprofiling the savings of £126k over the next two years to allow this review to take place. I hope that library users will participate in this review to help shape its outcome whatever this turns out to be. There is no budget impact from this change.

Chair, this is a budget that maximises our ambition to make B&NES a better place, that maintains the move towards carbon reduction particularly in transport, that

invests in key services, and provides the building of new council houses for the first time in over 30 years.

It is also a budget that invests in the future not only for residents but also in the Council itself to enable it to become a better performing Council, able to do more and better for our residents.

This programme has to be fully funded and to avoid damaging cuts it is necessary to raise council tax but only as little as possible. A general council tax rise of 1.99% is therefore proposed which equates to £30.44 for a Band D property or 58p per week. In addition, the Social Care precept will rise by 1% making a total rise of 2.99% or £45.73 – 88p per week. This increase is well below the current rate of inflation which stands at 5.4%.

Finally, Chairman I want to highlight the difference between the Lib Dem approach and the Conservative approach advocated recently by its leader.

In a recent interview with Somer Valley FM he gave some clear pointers as to what residents can expect if, heaven forbid, his party takes control of the Council next year.

He said: “There will be a lot of reversals when we take control”. What this means is wasting resident's taxes simply changing things for right wing ideological reasons. So far, he has promised free parking, removing the city centre security measures, cancelling the work to implement the new Fashion Museum, scrapping the Entry Hill bike park. No doubt the list will grow. All unfunded populist promises running into millions. What will he cut to fund his promises? Let him say.

He went on to say that once again the Tories would be sacking 100s of hard-working Council staff, claiming that this would have no impact on services which is total nonsense.

Last time the Tories were in charge of the Council they sacked 184 staff at a cost of up to £7.8m in redundancy payments including six figure sums to managers. This included the cultural vandalism of closing the council's arts development service. They paid for this by raiding the council's capital funds. It was like selling the family silver to fund a holiday you couldn't really afford anyway. The legacy they left behind was unattainable savings and income targets, demoralised staff in under resourced and chaotic services. They also wasted millions in office. How can we forget the Park and Ride fiasco, the One Stop Shop/Bath Library debacle, the Visit Bath shambles? The Conservatives are also responsible for the privatisation of our community health services, handing them over to Virgin Care now sold on to a Private Equity Company. What else would they privatise?

The Tory party used to claim a reputation for sound financial management but that no longer exists. This is the party that is now responsible for the highest tax burden on citizens since the second world war. That forces people to feed themselves at food banks and lets fat cat energy companies get rich whilst many people have to choose to eat or heat. A party that gives tax breaks to millionaires whilst cutting universal credit. A party that illegally awarded contracts to its supporters estimated by the National Audit Office at £35bn, and that has had to write off over £4bn of Covid grants because of fraud. I would no more take a Tory promise than I would buy the elixir of life from a snake oil salesman.

By contrast Chair – whilst the Tory party lost its reputation for good financial management many years ago and is now the party that overpromises but underdelivers, that plays fast and loose with your money – our budget plans are well thought out, robust and deliver investment into our key services for local residents. We are building the first new council houses since the 1980s, we are investing millions in our High Streets, our transport plans are bringing down air pollution, our recycling is the best ever and we are investing its future, our parks are looking better than they have for years with 5 green flag awards, we have repaired Cleveland Bridge that had been left to deteriorate, our improvements to Sydney Gardens, the opening of Cleveland Pools and the new WH centre show our confidence in the future for our area. After the waste and incompetence of the last Tory administration we have brought the council's finances under control and are investing in the future of our area. We invest, they slash and burn.

We are the party of sound economic planning and delivery and we have proved that by our actions. I commend this budget to the Cabinet/Council.”

He then moved the officer recommendations with the following revision:

Cabinet approves:

That the budget proposal to Council on 15th / 16th February reflects the following change to Annex 2(i) – “2022/23 to 2024/25 Budget Savings and Income proposals”,

Removal of the following item:

Savings Title	How to be achieved	Portfolio Holder / Director	22/23 Saving £000	23/24 Saving £000	24/25 Saving £000
Income - Parking Charges Review	Introduce hourly based charging in Midsomer Norton and Radstock	Cllr Manda Rigby / Chris Major	20	55	

And incorporation of the saving requirement into the following item for achievement through a wider review of parking charges income.

Savings Title	How to be achieved	Portfolio Holder / Director	22/23 Saving £000	23/24 Saving £000	24/25 Saving £000
Original Proposal					
Income - Parking Charges Review	Increased Parking Charges	Cllr Manda Rigby / Chris Major	606		
Revised Proposal					
Income - Parking Charges	Increased Parking Charges	Cllr Manda Rigby /	626	55	

Review		Chris Major			
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A revised Annex 2(i) reflecting this change is attached as *Appendix 5* to these minutes.

(Note: At this point Cllr Tim Ball had to leave the meeting).

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

"I am extremely proud to second this budget paper. Once again, the Liberal Democrats have been able to balance the books, in extraordinary times. This is in contrast to the financial mismanagement of the previous Tory administration, who could not even balance the books when the sun was shining.

This is clear evidence of the dynamic and highly talented skill set within the Lib Dem Cabinet and the largely new senior management team at the council.

We, as Lib Dems, are not only showing prudent financial management but are delivering on the things that matter, such as building the first council houses in a generation.

The Tories spent years cutting services, reducing staff numbers and wasting millions of local taxpayers' money on redundancies. This Lib Dem administration has said no to this downward spiral of negativity.

We are doing the opposite. As Cllr Samuel has alluded to, we are investing in new staff, we are increasing spending on key services, we are enhancing our neighbourhood services, we are getting the basics right and we are protecting our children's and adults' services.

Local businesses are bouncing back from the hardship of Covid, and this budget supports local business, opposed to the constant negativity and talking down of our great city and area by the Tory Trolls.

The Tories have a track record of laying off hundreds of staff and bleeding vital services to death. While we Lib Dems through this budget are investing in services and the community.

Instead of burning, we are building.
Instead of moaning, we are doing.
Instead of hatred, we give hope.

I am proud to be the Leader of your hard working local Liberal Democrat team and I am equally proud to second this budget."

Cllr Rigby then made the following statement:

"Firstly, I'd like to echo my thanks to Richard and his officer team for the inordinate amount of work put into this budget, against a background of unprecedented challenges. These challenges include getting late notice of any national settlements we could anticipate, and the team has done a great job of preparing for all eventualities, and I hope the announcement of the levelling up fund made on

Tuesday where it looks like we will get an extra £4K from government hasn't thrown them out too much... don't spend it all at once.

Like other Cabinet members I will speak a little bit about my own portfolio, but I will also highlight where I am pleased there has been further investment. That's right, investment. Against a loss in revenue of circa £83m over the past two and a bit years because of Covid, we are still protecting what is important to you, the promises we made before election where we could in no way have anticipated the pandemic, we are still proposing we minimise cuts, invest in priorities, and in stark contrast to the approach adopted by the previous administration, and referred to as an approach to current budget setting on the radio, we are not slashing staff, cutting services to the point they can't help but fail. We are taking the hard decisions where we need to, but adding to central government underfunding, and losing a lot of headcount is counterproductive to what we need to deliver, not to mention morally repugnant.

So as examples, putting money aside to try again to combat the blight which gulls bring to residents, investing in getting the basics right, looking at the strategy for the whole area to reach net zero in 2030, and ensuring impacts of transport schemes are mitigated for those people who need the most support, is ambitious, forward thinking, and achievable if we work together as a team.

In my portfolio, probably the most remarkable thing is how we have been able to protect what we want to achieve, and there are fewer cuts than I would have anticipated. The vast majority of which can be addressed via accepting a level of unfilled vacancies, charging a more reasonable rate for some of the works we do, and contributing to funding the rest of our activity via parking income. As I am sure others have mentioned, the pandemic has thrown a focus on how dependent we had become on tourism, heritage and parking revenue, and I am proud to be part of a team which acknowledges it's our role to look long term and create a BANES which has a more sustainable and resilient funding model, especially as c.83% of our non-project income goes on our statutory services.

Assuming the budget goes through, over the next few weeks there will be updates on Liveable Neighbourhoods, residents' parking zones, active travel... to name a few; some of which sit in the sustainable travel portfolio sitting with Sarah, but there will also be speed limit consultations, crossings, reviews of the assets we own which have suffered from historic lack of maintenance, maybe the less headline catching work, but vital to our communities. I will sound a note of caution that many of the large capital projects are subject to cost of material and labour pressures, the Covid/Brexit double whammy.

I trust that this budget, as amended goes through here at Cabinet, and look forward to it receiving the support it deserves at Council."

Cllr Dine Romero then made the following statement:

"Before I talk in more detail on other proposals within my portfolio, I think it is important to reassure residents on one particular issue straightaway.

Bath Central Library is not having services cut, and it is not being forced into a merger with One Stop Shop services.

This is not a re-run of the poorly thought through Conservative proposal of 2017, but a reflection of changes in service access and other facilities residents tell us they would value.

Over the last 2 years we have seen a large number of residents choose to access services digitally instead of face to face. This means that potential footfall for One Stop Shop services has fallen dramatically.

At the same time work at Lewis House has been on reconfiguring the ground floor to provide a new police station in the centre of Bath.

With these changes to the place where these services were delivered, and what is now being asked for by residents, we wanted to take the opportunity to consider if a couple of services such as issue and renewal of Discovery Cards, or of Blue Badges could be done from a better location to Lewis House – which many tell us hasn't been suitable for some years due to the lack of very nearby Blue Badge parking. The library is one space with Blue Badge parking in the basement with a lift to the front door. However, it is not the only suitable location, and potential alternatives are to be looked at.

In the budget papers before you, you will see that a sum of £100k was expected as a saving this year, if you refer to appendix 2i you will note that this saving is now to be reprofiled over both 2022/23 & 23/24 with the use of the smoothing reserve. This reflects the vacancies the service is currently holding. The remainder will be put into the 2023/24 budget saving and will only be crystallised following discussions with library users including Friends of Bath Library, and with any plans then being formally consulted on.

I hope this puts those concerned minds at rest. To sum up on this point a target saving is in the budget, but reprofiled, plans are not yet drawn up, we will seek input from users, and formal consultation will take place. This is in addition to a review of the service for MSN and Keynsham service, the mobile library service and an increase in investment in the home delivery service.

We are also looking at investment across a range of areas within my portfolio, including a focus on apprenticeships which will help with succession planning as well as giving people real new opportunities, regardless of age, previous experience or qualifications.

Other areas of interest are an expectation that we can reduce spend on Home to School Transport by 40k by centralising Alternative Provision on one site, instead of on the two, somewhat distant sites we currently have. We are looking at relocating both primary and secondary Alternative Provision onto the Culverhay school site. Please note though this still leaves a significant part of the site available for a new education offer for Bath, and B&NES which is as yet a work in progress. I hope to tell you more soon.

We are also able to reduce our spending by £50k on inter-agency adoption fees as this has been used less since the creation of Adoption West.

We are expecting reduced costs in foster care, through a transformation program and campaigns focussing on increasing foster care numbers, reducing other residential placements, and a new reunification transformation project which aims to

reunite where appropriate children and young people with their families, and so exit from residential placements. These 2 projects should release over £1million of committed costs. I am aware that this is an area of interest and so want to point to the full details which are outlined in my answer to Q10 in the Q&As earlier.

As everyone knows children and adult social care is where the biggest portion of any council budget goes, so I am pleased to be able to put forward these expected reductions in spending. I would like to stress that these are not cuts, and so these are not cuts to services.

Finally, I was delighted to announce the return of our traditional Bath Christmas Market. This is relevant to the budget discussion as the work in one department such in our events team on the Christmas Market brings significant income into parking services, and licensing, as well providing a huge boost for local traders, retail, hospitality and hoteliers, just as a reminder in 2019, the last year we were able to hold the Market in its traditional form, 400k visitors put an additional £32.5million into the local economy as well adding to the council's income and so is important in the Council's financial ability to provide vital services.

On that positive note I draw my remarks to an end, I will be supporting this budget as set out."

Cllr Tom Davies then made the following statement:

"Firstly, I would like to echo the comments of my colleagues and pass on my huge thanks to Cllr Samuel, the Council's Chief Financial Officer, Andy Rothery and everyone else involved in the preparation of this budget.

To have successfully navigated a process which has produced a balanced budget, with the significant headwinds and pressures which we face at present, is a remarkable achievement. But my thanks go beyond just the budget setting process – it also goes to their stewardship of the Council's finances over the past two and a half years.

This sound financial stewardship has enabled us tonight to consider a budget which, despite the very clear financial pressures we face as a Council, is extraordinary for the ambition it presents and the scale of investment in our local area which the budget unlocks.

Just take the details of the capital spend – with nearly £200m – approved and provisional – this Lib Dem administration continues to demonstrate its commitment to delivering for our local community.

The range of investment is huge and all of it focussed on improving the lives of our residents and ensuring at all times that we meet our commitments to tackle the climate and ecological emergencies. The investment will see us as an authority spend millions on local regeneration and economic development, renewable energy, liveable neighbourhoods, walking routes, cycling routes, special educational needs projects in our schools and colleges, upgrades to our recycling centres – the list goes on but all of it only possible because of this Lib Dem administration's excellent management of the Council's finances over the past two and half years.

You won't be surprised, though, to hear me bring particular attention to one of the largest items of capital spend detailed in tonight's report – the nearly £12m of investment which the Council is committing to so that we can deliver the first general needs council houses in a generation and the further £5m included for affordable housing.

In 2019 the Lib Dems committed to the people of Bath & North East Somerset that we would do just this – that for the first time in decades we would build and deliver council houses for social rent. The budget we are considering tonight secures the finances to enable us to do this and later this year we will see the first of these council houses open.

Never has the need for new council and affordable housing been so great. We are an area with some of the least affordable housing in the country, with thousands of our local residents currently on our social housing waiting list and so tonight, with this budget, we reaffirm our commitment to our residents that we, as a Lib Dem administration, will play a leading role in meeting this need, and I am delighted to therefore be speaking in support of tonight's budget paper."

Cllr Sarah Warren then made the following statement:

"This budget represents good news when it comes to both sustainable travel, and wider measures to tackle the environmental emergencies – despite the dire financial picture of ongoing and deepening austerity impacting local government across the country. Contrast our approach this evening with that of Bath and North East Somerset's leader of the opposition, who recently boasted that he would make further Council redundancies and still deeper cuts to Council services that we have spent almost 3 years rebuilding.

The areas of strategic priorities for the next two years that we have identified in this evening's paper include:

- Continued commitment to addressing the climate and ecological emergency and investing in renewable energy.

In this area, funded from council revenue thanks to Cllr Samuel and his team's excellent financial management, we are boosting our Sustainability Team, which will be led by a Head of Green Transformation. We are currently recruiting an Energy Policy and Strategy Manager, who will help us to increase the district's capacity for low carbon electricity generation, as well as increasing the uptake of energy efficient retrofit of our homes. This revenue funding is accompanied this year by almost £500k capital to support the installation of renewables onto council buildings. We continue to benefit from the West of England Combined Authority's contribution to the South West Energy Hub, which helps public sector and not for profit organisations get green energy projects up and running, as well as WECA's Low Carbon Challenge Fund.

Another of our defined strategic priority areas is:

- Investment in sustainable transport schemes across the council area, focusing on liveable neighbourhoods, active travel, and reduced reliance on the car.

On liveable neighbourhoods, we are currently in between co-design phases of the first 15 schemes, and this budget sets aside up to £1.7m of capital for next financial year to complete these.

As discussed at recent Cabinet meetings, the City Region Sustainable Transport Fund will provide Bath and North East Somerset with a historic settlement of £129m over 5 years for a capital programme that will include further rounds of liveable neighbourhoods, as well as improved cycling, walking and public transport infrastructure. This funding will also reverse many years of austerity cuts to the council's capacity to plan and build transport infrastructure, by creating a B&NES team led by a Head of Sustainable Transport. This programme will support the much-needed reduction of carbon emissions from transport, which have remained stubbornly high in B&NES, just as in the rest of the country.

Through the West of England Combined Authority, this budget also spells out that we will continue to share in improvements to Metrowest rail services, as well as seeing investment of £5m over next 2 years in the Bath Riverline to create a new riverside linear park and active travel corridor.

Particular highlights supporting cycling and walking transport in Cllr Rigby's revenue budget include £20k for cycle parking, funds for safer routes to school, and for reduced speed limits in rural areas.

All that remains this evening is to once again thank Councillor Samuel, Chief Finance Officer Andy Rothery, and their team for this excellent paper. I whole-heartedly support the recommendations."

Cllr Alison Born then made the following statement:

"I would like to comment on the adult social care elements of this budget. Central government funding for adult social care (in common with other council services) has been cut systematically over the past decade. During this time, the proportion of Council budgets spent on social care has increased significantly. More recently, the government has woken up to the fact that this is not sustainable and introduced the social care precept which is in effect a local tax designed to offset some of the reductions in the funding it allocates to local authorities.

The precept remains in place this year, raising much needed funding for adult social care and from April '22 central government will raise further funds through the Health and Social Care Levy, which will increase the cost of National Insurance paid by people in employment. This is a significant additional tax for people on low incomes, for example, people paid £20k per year will pay 10% more for their National Insurance contributions. It also increases the costs for employers, including those in the social care sector. The majority of the £12 billion a year expected to be raised through this levy will go to the NHS but about 20% will come to local authorities as a contribution towards the costs of this government's recently announced social care reforms which will come into place from October '23.

That provides some of the backdrop to this budget, the other important element in relation to social care is the staffing crisis, where low rates of pay and lack of career progression (a response to systemic underfunding) and staffing shortages caused by a combination of Covid and Brexit have led to serious staff shortages within the

sector. This has made it increasingly difficult to provide all the services that people need and this budget is taking steps to address that.

Given the pressures on finances, adult social care has, along with all other areas of Council services been required to make savings and some have been possible through the re-basing of areas where there have been changes in demand. We are however, investing in pay inflation and contract inflation to offset increases in employment and living costs and we are working towards all staff being employed on the rates set out in our Fair Price of Care policy. We are also investing in preparatory work to ensure that we are ready to implement the social care reforms in October '23. We know that these reforms will increase the costs of providing adult social care and we hope that further funding will be provided to support this from 2023 onwards.

Additional funding has also been identified to prepare for young people who we know will be transitioning from children's to adult services, to ensure that their needs continue to be met appropriately. I'm also delighted to note that significant capital investment has been identified to fix the roof at the Carrswood Day Centre. Carrswood provides services for people with very complex needs, including a significant proportion with profound and complex learning disabilities it also acts as a staff base and a venue. it's an essential service and the repairs should safeguard its future so that it can continue to support some of our most vulnerable residents."

Cllr Wood then stated that when he was elected the situation with regard to neighbourhood services in B&NES was not good. The Conservative administration had made a number of staff redundancies and service cuts. The recycling service was understaffed, and the streets were full of rubbish. There was also very little enforcement. He was proud that the Liberal Democrats have turned things around by investing in services including enforcement and recycling. As a result, fly-tipping numbers are down, and recycling is up. This has been a record year for recycling and B&NES is now the 4th best unitary authority in the country for recycling. The budget is ambitious, full of good ideas and is delivering for residents. New recycling centres will be built, and an extra £2m will be provided to fix roads and an extra £1m to deliver cleaner, greener streets. The alternative under a Tory administration would be more cuts and more redundancies. He stated that he was proud of the proposed budget and looked forward to the year ahead and making the area cleaner and greener.

Cllr Samuel summed up by thanking the Cabinet members for their hard work along with the Senior Leadership Team and the Finance Team. He pointed out that good finance leads to investment in Council Services.

RESOLVED (unanimously) to recommend that the Cabinet on 11 February recommends that Council approves:

- a) The General Fund net revenue budget for 2022/23 of **£126.74m** and the individual service cash limits for 2022/23 as outlined in Annex 1 of the report.
- b) The amended savings and income plans as set out in revised Annex 2(i) (attached as an *appendix* to the minutes), funding requirements 2(ii) in conjunction with the Equalities Impact Assessment Report in Annex 3 of the report.

- c) An increase in Council Tax of 1.99% in 2022/23 (an increase of £30.44 per Band D property or 59p per week).
- d) An increase of 1% to Council Tax for the Adult Social Care Precept is approved in recognition of the current demands and financial pressures on this service. This is equivalent to an increase of £15.29 on a Band D property (29p per week).
- e) The movement in reserves outlined in section 5.6 and the adequacy of Un-earmarked Reserves at £12.58m within a risk assessed range requirement of £11.9m - £13.2m.
- f) The Efficiency Strategy attached at Annex 4 of the report.
- g) The Capital Programme for 2022/23 of £96.064m including new and emerging capital bids outlined in Annex 5(i), planned sources of funding in 5.8.2, and notes the programme for 2022/23 to 2026/27 and that any wholly funded projects coming forward during the year will be added to the Capital Programme in line with the Budget Management Scheme.
- h) The delegation of implementation, subject to consultation where appropriate, of the capital programmes set out in Annex 5(i) to Annex 5(iv) of the report to the relevant Director in Consultation with the appropriate Portfolio Holder.
- i) The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) allocations and amendments outlined in Annex 5(v) of the report.
- j) The Capital & Investment Strategy attached at Annex 6 of the report.
- k) The MRP Policy attached at Annex 7 of the report.
- l) The Establishment and funding of a Business Change Hub outlined in paragraph 5.2.6 of the report.
- m) The Capital Prudential Indicators outlined in paragraph 5.8.7 of the report.
- n) The Annual Pay Policy Statement at Annex 8 of the report.
- o) The Community Contribution Fund pilot 12-month extension outlined section 5.5 of the report.

147 REVENUE & CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING, CASH LIMITS AND VIREMENTS – APRIL TO DECEMBER 2021

Cllr Richard Samuel introduced the report and made the following statement:

“Although the budget report is the main event on tonight’s agenda, I want to highlight a quiet building success story.

The revenue budget outturn is forecast to be under budget by £60k at the year end. If we reach that milestone then this Liberal Democrat administration will have

delivered 12 consecutive quarters of balanced financial management. This is something the last administration got nowhere near. My aim is that by May 2023 that balancing of budgets will add a further four quarters to that total. Sixteen consecutive quarters of tight financial management.

Why does that matter? Well first of all it highlights that the council is managing within its resources. Not overspending. Not wasting money on vanity projects. Not taking from reserves to prop up overspending. Not failing to deliver year on year savings. Not spending scarce capital funds on making staff redundant.

In short it is about being a well-managed, well run efficient council that taxpayers can rely on to manage their money properly. A council that takes strong action when it needs to such as the emergency Covid budget we put through in 2020.

Of course, there are always ups and downs in any organisation that is spending over £300m each year. In this quarter we report increased spending on Children's Services and the continuing downturn in heritage income, but this is balanced by lower than expected spend on adult services.

The capital programme has experienced a considerable slow-down in the delivery of projects largely due to the pandemic, but this has had the bonus of reducing borrowing costs in the short term.

Chair this report is a positive health check on the state of play of the council's finances and I thank the senior management team for their continuing vigilance on our behalf. I move the recommendations set out in the report."

The motion was seconded by Cllr Kevin Guy.

RESOLVED (unanimously) to recommend the Cabinet on 11 February 2022:

- (1) To note the 2021/22 revenue budget position (as at the end of December 2021).
- (2) To note the revenue virements listed for information only in Appendix 3(i) of the report.
- (3) To note the capital year-end forecast detailed in paragraph 3.25 of the report.
- (4) To note the changes in the capital programme including capital schemes that have been agreed for full approval under delegation listed in Appendix 4(i) of the report.

148 TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT 2022/23

Cllr Richard Samuel introduced the report and made the following statement:

"The Council is required to have a Treasury Management Strategy that sets out the Council's policies for managing its investments and how the security and liquidity of those investments will be secured.

The strategy is kept under continuous review and regularly reported to the Cabinet and Council throughout the financial year. Each year the policy is updated to reflect

wider market conditions. The content of the strategy is set out in the report. The role of the cabinet today is to consider the proposed strategy before its presentation to the full meeting of the Council next week as the 22/23.

The main changes to the 21/22 strategy are as follows:

The most substantive change last year was the inclusion of an Environmental, Social and Governance section to the document. As this was new last year, a lot of detail was included in the 2021/22 TMS but this has been reduced this year making the section more proportionate to the overall TMS.

Some of the other updates this year relate to the changes in the revised CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities which was issued on 20 December 2021. This revised Code has been released as a soft launch for the 2022/23, and as such full compliance with the code is not required until 2023/24. However wherever practicable, alignments to the revised code have been made in 2022/23.

I would draw the Cabinet's attention to the looming black clouds over the UK economy. Growth has slowed to below the Eurozone. Inflation is way over the Bank of England target of 2%. There are few levers available to the bank to control the inflation in prices as the majority are driven by commodity prices. The deflationary acts of the April National Insurance rise and the simultaneous rise in energy prices will drive down consumption and interest rate rises will further deflate the economy. The Bank expects 2022/23 to be a very difficult year for UK citizens, with prices exceeding wage growth. This has clear implications for discretionary hospitality spending."

Cllr Samuel then moved the recommendations set out in the report.

Cllr Tom Davies seconded the motion stating that he supported Cllr Samuel's remarks.

RESOVED (unanimously) to recommend the Cabinet on 11 February 2022:

- (1) To recommend the actions proposed within the Treasury Management Strategy Statement (Appendix 1 of the report) to February Council.
- (2) To note the Treasury Management Indicators detailed in Appendix 1 of the report and to delegate authority for updating the indicators prior to approval at Full Council on 16 February 2022 to the Chief Finance Officer and Cabinet Member for Economic Development & Resources, in light of any changes to the recommended budget as set out in the Budget Report elsewhere on the agenda for this meeting.
- (3) To note that any comments made by the Corporate Audit Committee at its meeting on 3 February 2022 will be reported to Full Council on 15 and 16 February 2022.

149 TREASURY MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE REPORT TO 31 DECEMBER 2021

Cllr Richard Samuel moved the recommendations set out in the report. This was seconded by Cllr Alison Born.

RESOLVED (unanimously) to recommend Cabinet at the meeting on 11 February 2022:

- (1) To note the Treasury Management Report to 31 December 2021, prepared in accordance with the CIPFA Treasury Code of Practice.
- (2) To note the Treasury Management Indicators to 31 December 2021.

150 QUARTER 3 STRATEGIC PERFORMANCE REPORT 2021-22

Cllr Richard Samuel introduced the report and made the following statement:

- “Over 70% of environmental issues are now being reported online through Fix my street. This dataset is updated daily giving the service near real time information. It is hoped that this will improve even further as it becomes part of the work for the Council’s new Customer Contact strategy.
- Children on an Education and Health Care Plans (EHCP) has increased by over 8% since the beginning of the year to over 1,741 plans. In common with other Local Authorities, B&NES continues to see an increase in the number of children on EHCPs.
- We are above our target for supporting adult service users in employment. Employment is a significant factor in improving people's mental health and this demonstrates how well we are supporting some of our most vulnerable adults.
- Q3 waste performance in terms of recycling/composting is down, this is impacted by seasonal variation, as garden waste volumes decreased. When this is considered alongside the below-target amount of waste produced per household, the service is progressing towards its zero-waste ambition.
- We have a statutory responsibility to ensure that people's needs are being met by, as a minimum, an annual review of Adult Social Care (ASC) Our current performance is 70% against our target of 80%. Despite this, performance has steadily improved during the year irrespective of the significant and ongoing pressures on the ASC service because of the COVID pandemic.
- There has been a steady decrease in the number of fly tips reported to the Council.
- There has been a steady increase in the number of contacts to the Energy at Home Information Centre, which means more residents are being given vital information on how to improve the energy efficiency of their homes.
- Since its peak in 2019, the number of children looked after by the Council has remained relatively constant.
- The number of Children with Child Protection plans also remains very consistent and is low compared to similar local authority areas.
- We have made very good progress reducing Adult Social Care admission rates and are well under our target, although changed funding arrangements during the pandemic has been a factor in the reduced rate, with health funding some of the placements that social care would have previously picked up.

- Members should also note that from January 2022, the Council has been requested to undertake another round of Business Grants.”

He informed the Cabinet that he has asked the Corporate PDS Panel to consider this issue after one year whether the performance reports are working and whether they wish to suggest any improvements. The Chair of the Panel has agreed to this.

Cllr Samuel then moved the recommendations set out in the report.

Cllr Kevin Guy seconded the motion and thanked Cllr Samuel and the officers for all the hard work they have put in to producing all the reports for this meeting.

RESOLVED (unanimously) to recommend the Cabinet at its meeting on 11 February 2022:

- (1) 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.
- (2) To agree to receive update reports on a quarterly basis.

The meeting ended at 8.05 pm

Chair _____

Date Confirmed and Signed _____

Prepared by Democratic Services

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Friday, 11th February, 2022

Present:

Councillor Kevin Guy (Ch)
Councillor Alison Born
Councillor Tom Davies
Councillor Manda Rigby
Councillor Richard Samuel

Leader of the Council, Liberal Democrat Group Leader
Cabinet Member for Adults and Council House Building
Cabinet Member for Adults and Council House Building
Cabinet Member for Transport
Deputy Council Leader (statutory) and Cabinet Member
for Economic Development and Resources

1 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS AND EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

The Chair, Cllr Kevin Guy, welcomed everyone to the meeting and made the following statement:

“This meeting is being held as part of the contingency arrangements put in place, recognising the need to remain cautious. For this reason, there is only a quorum of Cabinet Members present at this meeting. A virtual ‘informal’ meeting of the full Cabinet took place last night to inform voting at this meeting. That meeting is available to view on the Council’s YouTube channel.”

2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Monitoring Officer explained that he had granted a general dispensation for item 11 (Budget and Council Tax 2022/23) for all those Cabinet members who pay Council Tax. He had also granted a special dispensation for those members in receipt of Council services.

Councillor Kevin Guy declared that he had received a Covid relief grant from the Council in respect of his family business.

4 TO ANNOUNCE ANY URGENT BUSINESS AGREED BY THE CHAIR

There was no urgent business.

5 STATEMENTS, DEPUTATIONS OR PETITIONS FROM PUBLIC OR COUNCILLORS

The Chair explained that members of the public and Councillors who wished to make a statement did so at the virtual meeting of the Cabinet held on 10 February 2022. Their statements, where provided, are attached to the minutes of this meeting.

6 QUESTIONS FROM PUBLIC AND COUNCILLORS

The Chair stated that the question-and-answer sheet (with any supplementary questions) will be published with the minutes of the meeting.

7 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS CABINET MEETINGS

RESOLVED that the minutes of the following meetings be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair:

15 December 2021 (virtual informal meeting)

16 December 2021

26 January 2022 (virtual informal special meeting)

27 January 2022 (Special meeting)

8 CONSIDERATION OF SINGLE MEMBER ITEMS REQUISITIONED TO CABINET

There were none.

9 MATTERS REFERRED BY POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY BODIES

The Chair explained that Cllr Karen Warrington, Chair of the Corporate Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel, attended the virtual meeting held yesterday to present a summary of the comments of the PDS Panels on the proposed budget for 2022/23.

10 SINGLE MEMBER CABINET DECISIONS TAKEN SINCE PREVIOUS CABINET MEETING

The Cabinet agreed to note the report.

11 BUDGET AND COUNCIL TAX 2022/23 AND FINANCIAL OUTLOOK

Cllr Richard Samuel moved the officer recommendation with the following revision:

That the budget proposal to Council on 15th / 16th February reflects the following change to Annex 2(i) – “2022/23 to 2024/25 Budget Savings and Income proposals”,

Removal of the following item:

Savings Title	How to be achieved	Portfolio Holder / Director	22/23 Saving £000	23/24 Saving £000	24/25 Saving £000
Income - Parking Charges Review	Introduce hourly based charging in Midsomer Norton and Radstock	Cllr Manda Rigby / Chris Major	20	55	

And incorporation of the saving requirement into the following item for achievement through a wider review of parking charges income.

Savings Title	How to be achieved	Portfolio Holder / Director	22/23 Saving £000	23/24 Saving £000	24/25 Saving £000
Original Proposal					
Income - Parking Charges Review	Increased Parking Charges	Cllr Manda Rigby / Chris Major	606		
Revised Proposal					
Income - Parking Charges Review	Increased Parking Charges	Cllr Manda Rigby / Chris Major	626	55	

A revised Annex 2(i) reflecting this change is attached as an appendix to the minutes.

This was seconded by Cllr Kevin Guy.

RESOLVED (unanimously) to recommend that Council approves:

- The General Fund net revenue budget for 2022/23 of **£126.74m** and the individual service cash limits for 2022/23 as outlined in Annex 1 of the report.
- The amended savings and income plans as set out in revised Annex 2(i) (attached as an *appendix* to the minutes), funding requirements 2(ii) in conjunction with the Equalities Impact Assessment Report in Annex 3 of the report.
- An increase in Council Tax of 1.99% in 2022/23 (an increase of £30.44 per Band D property or 59p per week).
- An increase of 1% to Council Tax for the Adult Social Care Precept is approved in recognition of the current demands and financial pressures on this service. This is equivalent to an increase of £15.29 on a Band D property (29p per week).

- e) The movement in reserves outlined in section 5.6 and the adequacy of Un-earmarked Reserves at £12.58m within a risk assessed range requirement of £11.9m - £13.2m.
- f) The Efficiency Strategy attached at Annex 4 of the report.
- g) The Capital Programme for 2022/23 of £96.064m including new and emerging capital bids outlined in Annex 5(i), planned sources of funding in 5.8.2, and notes the programme for 2022/23 to 2026/27 and that any wholly funded projects coming forward during the year will be added to the Capital Programme in line with the Budget Management Scheme.
- h) The delegation of implementation, subject to consultation where appropriate, of the capital programmes set out in Annex 5(i) to Annex 5(iv) of the report to the relevant Director in Consultation with the appropriate Portfolio Holder.
- i) The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) allocations and amendments outlined in Annex 5(v) of the report.
- j) The Capital & Investment Strategy attached at Annex 6 of the report.
- k) The MRP Policy attached at Annex 7 of the report.
- l) The Establishment and funding of a Business Change Hub outlined in paragraph 5.2.6 of the report.
- m) The Capital Prudential Indicators outlined in paragraph 5.8.7 of the report.
- n) The Annual Pay Policy Statement at Annex 8 of the report.
- o) The Community Contribution Fund pilot 12-month extension outlined section 5.5 of the report.

12 REVENUE & CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING, CASH LIMITS AND VIREMENTS – APRIL TO DECEMBER 2021

On a motion by Cllr Richard Samuel, seconded by Cllr Guy it was,

RESOLVED (unanimously):

- (1) To note the 2021/22 revenue budget position (as at the end of December 2021).
- (2) To note the revenue virements listed for information only in Appendix 3(i) of the report.
- (3) To note the capital year-end forecast detailed in paragraph 3.25 of the report.
- (4) To note the changes in the capital programme including capital schemes that have been agreed for full approval under delegation listed in Appendix 4(i) of the report.

13 TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT 2022/23

On a motion from Cllr Richard Samuel, seconded by Cllr Tom Davies it was,

RESOLVED (unanimously):

- (1) To recommend the actions proposed within the Treasury Management Strategy Statement (Appendix 1 of the report) to February Council.
- (2) To note the Treasury Management Indicators detailed in Appendix 1 of the report and to delegate authority for updating the indicators prior to approval at Full Council on 16 February 2022 to the Chief Finance Officer and Cabinet Member for Economic Development & Resources, in light of any changes to the recommended budget as set out in the Budget Report elsewhere on the agenda for this meeting.
- (3) To note that any comments made by the Corporate Audit Committee at its meeting on 3 February 2022 will be reported to Full Council on 15 and 16 February 2022.

14 TREASURY MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE REPORT TO 31 DECEMBER 2021

On a motion from Cllr Richard Samuel seconded by Cllr Alison Born it was,

RESOLVED (unanimously):

- (1) To note the Treasury Management Report to 31 December 2021, prepared in accordance with the CIPFA Treasury Code of Practice.
- (2) To note the Treasury Management Indicators to 31 December 2021.

15 QUARTER 3 STRATEGIC PERFORMANCE REPORT 2021-22

On a motion from Cllr Richard Samuel, seconded by Cllr Kevin Guy it was,

RESOLVED (unanimously):

- (1) 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.
- (2) To agree to receive update reports on a quarterly basis.

The meeting ended at 12.10 pm

Chair

Date Confirmed and Signed

Prepared by Democratic Services

Bath & North East Somerset Council

Cabinet Single-Member Decisions and Responses to Recommendations from PDS Panels

published from 1 February 2022 until 22 March 2022

Further details of each decision can be seen on the Council's Single-member Decision Register at <http://democracy.bathnes.gov.uk/mgDelegatedDecisions.aspx?&dm=3>

RULE 16 - Appendix H to the Discretionary Rates Relief Policy

An update to Appendix H of the Discretionary Rates Relief Policy is required to allow officers to be able to make further awards of Business Rates Relief to qualifying ratepayers in respect of the 2022/23 financial year and beyond.

Decision Maker: Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Resources

Decision published: 09/03/2022

Effective from: 09/03/2022

Wards affected: (All Wards)

Decision:

The Cabinet Member agrees to approve the proposal relating to these reliefs as set out in Appendix H attached to the report.

Lead officer: Rob Brunton

Revised Fees & Charges for the Building Control & Public Protection Service 2022/23

This is to seek approval for the revised fees and charges for the Building Control & Public Protection teams for 2022/23

Decision Maker: Cabinet Member for Planning and Licensing

Decision published: 08/03/2022

Effective from: 16/03/2022

Decision:

The Cabinet Member agrees for:

1.1 Formal adoption of the new fees and charges for Building Control & Public Protection (BC&PP), as proposed.

1.2 That these are to be implemented on 1 April 2022 to minimise the loss of potential income to the Authority.

1.3 That delegated authority be given to the Head of BC&PP to agree fees and charges (where in accordance with the financial plan) which vary from the standard inflation clause if the cost base changes, or new services are introduced and that this can be done throughout the year if external factors influence the cost base significantly throughout the financial year.

Wards affected: (All Wards)

Lead officer: Phil Mansfield

Midsomer Norton High Street Renewal Programme - Love Our High Street Funding

Decision to delegate approval for Sophie Broadfield, Director of Sustainable Communities to accept the £895k Love our High Streets Funding from WECA (West of England Combined Authority), to deliver the new town square outside the Town Hall, part 1 of the High Street Renewal Programme for Midsomer Norton, in line with the Delivery Programme agreed via SMD in February 2020.

Decision Maker: Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Resources

Decision published: 01/03/2022

Effective from: 09/03/2022

Decision:

The Cabinet Member agrees that approval to accept the £895k Love our High Streets grant from WECA can be delegated to the Director of Sustainable Communities, in consultation with the s151 officer. These funds will be spent over a two-year period in line with the Full Business Case and the approved concept designs. This will allow full approval of the confirmed £845k in capital funds for the Market Square project (and Midsomer Norton High Street Renewal scheme) and confirmed £50k for revenue budget support (one off for spend 2022-2024) as outlined in Section 5 of the SMD report. It will also enable the Provisional Capital Budget of £1.015m to be approved and moved into the Approved Capital Budget.

Wards affected: Midsomer Norton North; Midsomer Norton Redfield;

Lead officer: Cleo Newcombe-Jones

Retention of the Recycling Centre Booking System

As part of the re-opening of the recycling Centres during COVID-19 restrictions in 2020, a booking system was introduced at the Midsomer Norton and Bath Recycling Centres.

The booking system received positive feedback from site users. Surveys indicate overwhelming support for it to remain in place now that COVID restrictions have been removed as the system eases congestion, speeds up visits and makes for a more pleasurable customer experience

Retaining the booking system provides several benefits; residents have certainty that they will be able to access the site at the time booked and no wasted trips as the site is too busy; it reduces vehicle queues and the associated pollution from idling engines, alongside removing any congestion on the surrounding road network.

Keynsham Recycling Centre would remain as a site with no booking system, so that residents can access this at any time during opening hours.

Decision Maker: Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Services

Decision published: 09/02/2022

Effective from: 17/02/2022

Decision:

The Cabinet Member agrees that:

- The booking system will be retained for residents using Old Welton and Bath Recycling Centres on an ongoing basis.
- Keynsham Recycling Centre will remain as a site with no booking system.

Wards affected: (All Wards)

Lead officer: Sarah Alder

Advisory Board for Bath CIL

The agreement of new terms of reference for an Advisory Board that will make recommendations for spending the receipts from The Community Infrastructure Levy (Neighbourhood Portion for Bath).

Decision Maker: Council Leader

Decision published: 08/02/2022

Effective from: 16/02/2022

Decision:

To agree:

- The change to the process for the agreement of recommendations that are put forward by the Neighbourhood CIL for Bath Community Infrastructure Levy Advisory Board.
- The change to the membership of the make-up of the Advisory Panel for Neighbourhood CIL for Bath.
- The new Terms of Reference for the Advisory Panel for Neighbourhood CIL for Bath.

Wards affected: (All Wards)

Lead officer: Mark Hayward

Energy Efficiency Retrofitting and Sustainable Construction Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

Following the Council's Climate Emergency declaration, the existing Sustainable Construction & Retrofitting SPD and Energy Efficiency & Renewable Energy in Historic Buildings SPD have been reviewed and combined in order to better align with, and help deliver, the core aims of this resolution by providing more positive, practical and up-to-date advice to improve the energy efficiency of B&NES's building stock. The reviewed and combined draft 'Energy Efficiency Retrofitting & Sustainable Construction SPD' has been subject to statutory consultation under Regulation 12 (b) of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. Following consideration of the issues raised in the consultation and some amendments to the SPD it is proposed to approve and adopt the final version.

Decision Maker: Cabinet Member for Planning and Licensing

Decision published: 02/02/2022

Effective from: 10/02/2022

Decision:

The Cabinet Member agrees:

- Delegated authority for the Head of Planning to make any necessary editorial changes, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Planning and Licensing, prior to the adoption of the Energy Efficiency Retrofitting & Sustainable Construction SPD; and
- The Energy Efficiency Retrofitting & Sustainable Construction SPD is then adopted.

Wards affected: (All Wards)

Lead officer: Richard Daone

Bath & North East Somerset Council		
MEETING/ DECISION MAKER:	Cabinet	
DECISION DATE:	31st March 2022	EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN REFERENCE:
		E 3340
TITLE:	Adoption West Contract Extension	
WARD:	All	
AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM		
<p>List of attachments to this report:</p> <p>Please list all the appendices here, clearly indicating any which are exempt and the reasons for exemption</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: flex-start;"> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Variation agreement - Adoption West - Sch - Adoption West.docx</p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Variation agreement - Appendix 3.docx</p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Service Specification</p> </div> </div>		

1 THE ISSUE

- 1.1 As part of the national regionalising adoption agenda, Bath and North East Somerset Council, along with five other Local Authorities, set up a Regional Adoption Agency (RAA) named Adoption West (AW). Adoption West commenced operation on 01 March 2019.
- 1.2 Adoption West was created as a wholly owned local authority company, limited by guarantee, for the delivery of adoption services on behalf of the six participating authorities (Bath and North East Somerset Council, Wiltshire Council, Bristol Council, Gloucestershire County Council, North Somerset Council and South Gloucestershire Council). It is unique in being the only regional adoption arrangement using this vehicle as its delivery model
- 1.3 The contractual commissioning agreement for the provision of an Integrated Adoption Support Service comes to an end on 28 February 2022. All 6 Local Authorities agreed to a temporary 3-month extension of the contract in December 2021 to ensure stability of Adoption West pending Executive support to the contract extension. B&NES approved the contract extension via delegated authority on January 21st, 2022, extending the contract from February 28th 2022, to May 28th 2022.

- 1.4 This report seeks approval to extend the existing arrangements for a further five years until 28 February 2027. The original Commissioning Agreement (as defined) provides an option to extend its term for a period of up to 5 years commencing 01 March 2022, subject to the agreement of the participating local authorities.
- 1.5 This report also seeks approval to amend the current financial agreement (as defined) for a period of 5 years and expiring on 28th February 2027
- 1.6 This report also seeks approval to replace the current service specification (schedule 2) to the Commissioning Agreement (as defined) with the Service Specification set out in schedule 1 to the Attached draft variation agreement

2 RECOMMENDATION

The Cabinet is asked to;

- 2.1 Note that all other 5 Local Authority owners of Adoption West have approved the contract extension through their respective Executives.
- 2.2 Approve the extension of the Commissioning Agreement with Adoption West for the delivery of services as per the original contractual specification, by 5 years until 28 February 2027; and directs the Director Of Children's Services and Education in consultation with the Directors of Finance, and Legal and Democratic Services and in consultation with the Cabinet member for Children's Services and Education to agree in writing, in accordance with clause 3.2 of the Commissioning Agreement, a five year contract extension and execute any and all related documents required to implement that extension.
- 2.3 The AW Board, which Mary Kearney-Knowles, Director of Children's Services and Education is part of; is unanimously supportive of the contract extension. This recognises that Adoption West is realising its potential, and delivers a good quality, consistent offer for children and adoptive families across its operational footprint

3 THE REPORT

- 3.1 To seek agreement for the original Commissioning Agreement (as defined) to extend its term for a period of up to 5 years commencing 01 March 2022. The original agreement allows for this extension and the Adoption West Board, which includes all 6 Local Authorities, including B&NES Council; is in support of this
- 3.2 The services provided by Adoption West on behalf of B&NES Council are central to the Council's Corporate Strategy. The Council's priorities in respect of 'Improving People's Lives' and 'Focusing on Prevention' are intrinsically linked. The successful delivery of adoption services in B&NES is a statutory obligation, and a requirement in supporting children to fulfil their potential; be protected and become part of strong communities.
- 3.3 The participating authorities entered into a Members' Agreement which clearly sets out the purpose of the collaboration and assigns roles and responsibilities to each of the participating authorities. It also deals with the governance and issues such as dispute resolution.

- 3.4 In addition to the Members' Agreement each of the participating authorities has a Commissioning Agreement in place to commission services from the Regional Adoption Agency.
- 3.5 The management of Adoption West is headed by a Service Director with overall responsibility for operations and strategic leadership and is supported by hub managers.
- 3.6 A Board of Directors is established which further fulfils the oversight and ownership responsibilities.

4 STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS

- 4.1 The Regional Adoption Agency has allowed the local authorities to provide a more cohesive, efficient and effective use of resources and development of practice.
- 4.2 The key objectives shared jointly by the RAA and partnering local authorities are:
1. To provide children with the right adopters at the right time, approving those equipped to meet the needs of children waiting.
 2. To minimise changes of plan away from adoption
 3. To reduce delay and improve timescales for matching and placement for all children – working with care planning processes in each LA to improve early identification / twin track planning and to achieve best practise and consistency across the region.
 4. To improve earlier permanency planning
 5. To form strong and productive partnerships with:
 - Adopters
 - Adoptees
 - Voluntary sector providers
 - Health and education
 6. To ensuring that customer feedback and the views of service users are obtained and considered in the development and future operation of the service
- 4.3 The Integrated Service will at all times maintain an appropriately qualified and skilled workforce that is sufficient to fulfil all of its statutory duties as an adoption agency, as well as any specific requirements, targets and outcomes of this specification
- 4.4 The Integrated Service is responsible for providing a service to:
- Children who require adoption
 - Adults who wish to adopt

- All adoptive families living in the region eligible for adoption support
 - Adopted adults
 - Facilitate contact between adoptive and birth family members
 - Birth parents and former guardians eligible for adoption support
 - Independent support to birth parents who risk losing their child to adoption
- 4.5 The Integrated Service operates on a full-time basis providing core services flexibly, as required by the needs of services users
- 4.6 The Integrated Service will at all times, maintain a volume of service that is sufficient to fulfil all of its statutory duties as an adoption agency, as well as any specific requirements, targets and outcomes of this specification
- 4.7 The Integrated Service will at all times comply with safe employment practice including statutory background checks, confirmation of identity, confirmation of entitlement to work in the UK, disclosure and barring checks, employment and personal references
- 4.8 The Integrated Service will at all times maintain a system for the management of complaints and representations that complies with minimum standards for timeliness, transparency and information sharing
- 4.9 The Integrated Service will at all times maintain a system for data protection and handling that complies with the Data Protection Act.
- 4.10 These key objectives are mainly being met for children in B&NES, as evidenced through Operational Leads meetings, Adoption Tracker meetings and Local Liaison meetings to review performance and processes.

5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCE, PROPERTY, PEOPLE)

- 5.1 The contract was originally set up in 2019, with the financial value being based on the expenditure on the services by each local authority in the period immediately before the contract commencement date. For B&NES, this equated to 7.63% (£247,031). In order to allow Adoption West set up costs and time to embed new procedures and ways of working; no efficiencies were removed prior to centralising and activity data was not used to indicate an appropriate level of contribution from local authorities. In addition, the Board agreed to a permanent increase in staffing for family finding and business admin in July 2020.
- 5.2 The intention was always to move towards a fairer and more transparent financial arrangement and finance and operational officers met virtually in 2020 to discuss and decide on a better model moving forward. This model is based on adoption and adoption support activity and, to provide a level of protection against large swings in activity, the new model phases in changes equally over a 5-year period. The changes this model made to the funding mechanism that determines each Local Authority commissioner's contribution, was agreed by the Board on 18th December 2020, and reflected in the 2021-22 Local Authority Contributions. The model continues to reinvest any underspend back into Adoption West reserves and support any overspend however, this is closely monitored by the Board and every effort is made to avoid this.

- 5.3 Due to the way Adoption West is constituted and funded it is important for reserve funding to be available. Access to funds enables flexibility within contract periods and for the organisation to respond in a timely way to manage risks and issues as they arise and to capitalise on opportunities in the best interests of the local authorities as both owners and commissioners.

For B&NES, the contract value has increased for inflation as we would expect, and the proportionate share of costs has increased slightly due to activity levels from 20/21 to 21/22. In 21/22 the budget for the Adoption West contract payment is equal to the charges at £269,498. Future years budget will align with the predicted annual cost increases from inflation and transition to activity-based charges, through the budget setting process. This annual process will ensure service resource planning aligns to future budgeted contract costs.

6 RISK MANAGEMENT

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

7 EQUALITIES

- 7.1 The Joint Scrutiny Committee, chaired by Cllr Jon Hubbard, discussed this proposal and endorse the contract extension as proposed. Cllr Michelle O'Doherty represents B&NES on the Joint Scrutiny Committee.

8 CLIMATE CHANGE

- 8.1 The RAA intends to provide a sustainable long-term solution and environmental considerations will be factored into specific proposals relating to service delivery changes. There are no perceived explicitly environmental implications arising directly from this report

9 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 9.1 The decision to extend the existing arrangements and contract for a further 5 years is the preferred option of all 6 Local Authorities and is supported by the Adoption West Board through an independent chair. The recommendation is that approval is given by Cabinet to extend the contract to its full term of 28 February 2027.

There is really only one viable alternative option and that would be for one of the 6 local authorities to take on responsibility and host the RAA. This was considered 3 years ago when the current model was agreed, and nothing has changed since then to suggest this model would now be more favourable. This will remain an option for consideration moving forwards; and will be considered in detail prior to the end of any contract extension.

10 CONSULTATION

- 10.1 The following people have been consulted in developing this report:

- (1) Legal and Democratic Services
- (2) procurement
- (3) Section 151 Officer

- (4) Lead Member for Children Services and Education
- (5) Deputy Chair PDS, Joint Scrutiny Committee lead for B&NES
- (6) Head of Service Care Outcomes and B&NES Operational Lead Adoption West

Contact person	Mary Kearney-Knowles 01225 394416
Background papers	Cabinet Approval to create Adoption West Regional Adoption Agency 12.04.2017 https://democracy.bathnes.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=122&MId=4650&Ver=4
Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format	

Variation Agreement relating to Adoption West

Schedule 1 – Variations - Financial Mechanism

1. The variation amends the Commissioning Agreement, Schedule 6 - Financial Mechanism, 1.1 'Charges'.
2. The original commissioning agreement set the following proportional contributions from each of the LA partners:

Bath & North East Somerset	7.63%
The City Council of Bristol	20.21%
Gloucestershire County Council	27.06%
North Somerset Council	12.42%
South Gloucestershire Council	8.46%
Wiltshire Council	24.22%
3. These proportions are replaced by a revised financial mechanism based on a combination of the following metrics:
 - 3.1. Number of Looked After Children under 5 years old
 - 3.2. Number of Adoptions (previous 3 years)
 - 3.3. Adoption Support resource calculation comprising:
 - 3.3.1. Adoption support fund application volumes
 - 3.3.2. Contact arrangement volumes
 - 3.3.3. Birth Family support case volumes
 - 3.3.4. Adopter support mailing list numbers
4. The significance attributed to each of the three metrics are as follows:

4.1. Looked After Children under 5 years old	15%
4.2. Number of Adoptions	50%
4.3. Adoption Support	35%
5. The introduction of the revised financial mechanism away from the original contract proportions will be phased in 20% increments over 5 years, beginning 2021/22, to alleviate the immediate impact of any change to an individual local authority contribution.

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Dated

2021

VARIATION AGREEMENT

relating to Adoption West

Between

BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET COUNCIL

THE CITY COUNCIL OF BRISTOL

GLOUCESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

NORTH SOMERSET COUNCIL

SOUTH GLOUCESTERSHIRE COUNCIL

WILTSHIRE COUNCIL

ADOPTION WEST

BETWEEN:

- (1) **BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET COUNCIL**, The Guildhall, Bath, BA1 5AW;
- (2) **THE CITY COUNCIL OF BRISTOL**, City Hall, College Green, Bristol, BS1 5TR;
- (3) **GLOUCESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**, Shire Hall, Westgate Street, Gloucester, GL1 2TG;
- (4) **NORTH SOMERSET COUNCIL**, Town Hall, Walliscote Grove Road, Weston-super-Mare, BS23 1UJ;
- (5) **SOUTH GLOUCESTERSHIRE COUNCIL**, Council Offices, Badminton Road, Yate, BS37 5AF; and
- (6) **WILTSHIRE COUNCIL**, County Hall, Wiltshire Council, Bythesea Road, Trowbridge, Wiltshire, BA14 8JN

(each individually a **Member** and collectively **Members**); and

- (7) **ADOPTION WEST** a company incorporated in England and Wales under company number 11139404 whose registered office is at c/o Wiltshire Council Children's Service, Floor 2, Old County Hall, Bythesea Road, Trowbridge, Wiltshire, BA14 8JN (the **Company**).

1 Interpretation

- 1.1 In this Agreement unless the context otherwise requires:
- 1.2 The **Principal Agreement** means the agreement made between the parties dated 1 March 2019
- 1.3 Words and expressions defined in the Principal Agreement shall have the same meaning in this Agreement except to the extent that they are expressly stated otherwise in this Agreement.

2 Background

- 2.1 This Agreement is supplemental to the Principal Agreement
- 2.2 The Principal Agreement provides (in clause 3.2) that the Term may be extended by agreement of the Parties and also provides (in clause 37.1) that any variation to the Principal Agreement shall only be effective if it is in writing and signed by the Parties (acting through their duly authorised representatives) and is expressed to be for the purpose of such amendment or variation.
- 2.3 It has been agreed by the Parties that the Term of the Principal Agreement shall be extended and the Principal Agreement otherwise varied as set out in this Agreement.

3 Extension to the Term

The Parties agree that the Term shall be extended for a period of 5 years, from 1 March 2022 to 28 February 2027

4 Variation

- 3.1 The Parties agree that, with effect from xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx 202x the Principal Agreement shall be varied by the incorporation of the variations set out in Schedule 1 to this Agreement.
- 3.2 Save to the extent that the Principal Agreement is varied by this Agreement it shall continue in full force and effect.

4 Contracts (Rights of Third Parties) Act 1999

It is agreed for the purposes of the Contracts (Rights of Third Parties) Act 1999 that this Agreement is not intended to and does not give to any person who is not a party to this Agreement any rights to enforce any provisions contained in these Agreement.

5 Counterparts

This Agreement may be executed in one or more counterparts. Any single counterpart or set of counterparts executed, in either case, by all the parties shall constitute a full original of this Agreement.

6 Governing Law and Jurisdiction

The law of this Agreement is English law and the English courts shall have jurisdiction with regard to all matters arising under it.

Signed on behalf of each of the parties as set out below;

On behalf of BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET COUNCIL

Authorised Signatory.....

On behalf of THE CITY COUNCIL OF BRISTOL

Authorised Signatory.....

On behalf of GLOUCESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Authorised Signatory.....

On behalf of NORTH SOMERSET COUNCIL,

Authorised Signatory.....

On behalf of SOUTH GLOUCESTERSHIRE COUNCIL,

Authorised Signatory.....

On behalf of WILTSHIRE COUNCIL

Authorised Signatory.....

On behalf of ADOPTION WEST

Authorised Signatory.....

The Principal Agreement shall be varied as set out below:-

Funding Mechanism	
Service Specification	

ADOPTION WEST REGIONAL ADOPTION AGENCY SERVICE SPECIFICATION

1. Background:

- 1.1 This schedule sets out the vision, objectives and details of roles and responsibilities to be fulfilled under this agreement by the Regional Adoption Agency and Local Authorities.

2. An Integrated Adoption Service – the Vision

- 2.1 The local authorities in the partnership wish to build on the success of their existing services to improve performance in meeting the needs of those children who require permanence through adoption. This will be achieved by bringing together the best practice from each authority into an Integrated Service. Entering into a Regional Adoption Agency will allow the local authorities to provide a more cohesive, efficient and effective use of resources and development of practice.
- 2.2 All partners are agreed that collaboration should be underpinned by two guiding principles;
- a. That looked after children and prospective adopters are advantaged by doing so and
 - b. That a regional adoption service is demonstrably more efficient and flexible in delivering the service.
- 2.3 All partners share the ambition to improve performance particularly;
- a. In reducing the time that children have to wait for adoptive placements
 - b. In improving the experience for prospective adopters from initial inquiry, through the assessment process, panel approval and placement matching and the delivery of post adoption support services.
- 2.4 All partners agree that the joint aim is to improve the adoption system for children and adopters, and that this will involve systemic and cultural changes within local authorities, as well as the development of the RAA. The RAA in isolation will only be able to effect limited change making effective partnership working between RAA and LA staff critical.

3. Key Objectives

- 3.1 The key objectives shared jointly by the RAA and partnering local authorities are
- a. To provide children with the right adopters at the right time, approving those equipped to meet the needs of children waiting.
 - b. To minimise changes of plan away from adoption
 - c. To reduce delay and improve timescales for matching and placement for all children – working with care planning processes in each LA to improve early identification / twin track planning and to achieve best practise and consistency across the region.
 - d. To improve earlier permanency planning using:
 - i. Concurrent Planning

- ii. Fostering for Adoption
 - e. To take innovative approaches to placing 'hard to place' children. e.g.
 - i. Linking children with adopters from enquiry stage onwards where appropriate
 - ii. Thoroughly preparing child and family for placement
 - f. To reduce the likelihood of placement breakdown through timely and improved matching, preparation and adoption support.
 - i. Providing a range of pre and post adoption support and intermediary services in conjunction with statutory and voluntary sector providers
 - ii. Establishing effective working links with key partnership agencies (e.g. schools and health providers)
 - g. To form strong and productive partnerships with:
 - i. Adopters
 - ii. Adoptees
 - iii. Voluntary sector providers
 - iv. Health and education
 - h. To ensuring that customer feedback and the views of service users are obtained and considered in the development and future operation of the service
- 3.2 All activity in the RAA will ensure compliance with requirements set by legislation, regulation, national minimum standards and local procedures. The RAA will operate under an agreed performance management framework, will be subject to inspection and auditing bodies, and will work closely with the National Adoption Leadership Board.
- 3.3 In the longer term it is anticipated that the new agency will, dependent upon agreed resourcing, extend its offer to support wider permanence options for children including Special Guardianship Orders.
- 3.4 The DfE have made it clear that they wish to see Voluntary Adoption Agencies and Adoption Support Agencies as integral partners in the regional agencies. Action for Children, After Adoption, CCS Adoption, The Centre for Adoption Support and Education, and Adoption UK are invited to join the partnership. The relationship with voluntary agencies will be set out in a memorandum of understanding and separate commissioning arrangements to sit outside this agreement.

4. Outline specification of services and responsibilities

- 4.1 The provision of adoption services is acknowledged to be the function of a complex system involving a number of agencies. Each part of the system has to play its own role and to work

collaboratively with the others in order to deliver positive outcomes for children. The following table sets out the respective responsibilities of each agency under this agreement.

- 4.2 The Adoption and Children Act (2002) places a statutory requirement on each participating Authority and, therefore, the Integrated Service, to:
- a. Recruit, assess and support potential prospective adopters
 - b. Work in partnership with the child's social worker in seeking a permanent placement for the child through adoption
 - c. Assess, support and plan for children who are relinquished by their birth parents
 - d. Assess, support and plan for children who have a parallel plan for adoption
 - e. Assess and support parent/partner and family relatives who wish to adopt a child
 - f. Assess and support those adults who are seeking to adopt from another country (inter-country adoptions)
 - g. Provide counselling advice and information to adopted adults post 18.
 - h. Provide Independent support to birth parents involved in proceedings.
 - i. Manage and support Adoption Panels which make recommendations to approve prospective adopters and on the matching of individual children to adopters
 - j. Provide professional advice on best practice and regulations to agency decision makers
 - k. Provide a quality assurance role across the Integrated Service

5. Service collaboration and rationale

- 5.1 Adoption West, formed as a local authority controlled company limited by guarantee will be commissioned to deliver the new Integrated Service and will bring together the adoption services of the following local authorities:
- a. Bath and North East Somerset Council
 - b. Bristol Council
 - c. Gloucestershire County Council
 - d. North Somerset Council
 - e. South Gloucestershire Council
 - f. Wiltshire Council
- 5.2 The following legislation forms the legal framework within which the new service will operate:
- a. Local Government Act 1972
 - b. Children Act 1989

- c. Adoption (inter-country Aspects) Act 1999
 - d. Adoption & Children Act 2002
 - e. Children and Adoption Act 2006
 - f. Education and Adoption Act 2016
- 5.3 The legislation above is supported by the following guidance within which the new service will operate:
- a. Statutory instruments 2005 no. 389, children and young persons, England social care, England; The adoption agencies regulations 2005 as amended by Statutory Instruments 2013 No. 985, Children And Young Persons, England, The Adoption Agencies (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2013
 - b. Statutory Guidance on Adoption for local authorities, voluntary adoption agencies and adoption support agencies July 2013
 - c. Adoption: national minimum standards July 2014
 - d. Early permanence placements and approval of prospective adopters as foster carers; Statutory guidance for local authorities and adoption agencies July 2014

6. Eligibility criteria

- 6.1 The Integrated Service will be responsible for providing a service to:
- a. Children who require adoption
 - b. Adults who wish to adopt
 - c. All adoptive families living in the region eligible for adoption support
 - d. Adopted adults
 - e. Facilitate contact between adoptive and birth family members
 - f. Birth parents and former guardians eligible for adoption support
 - g. Independent support to birth parents who risk losing their child to adoption
- 6.2 Aspects of these services may be externally commissioned.

7. Service delivery

- 7.1 The Integrated Service will operate on a full-time basis providing core services flexibly, as required by the needs of services users.

- 7.2 The Integrated Service will at all times, maintain a volume of service that is sufficient to fulfil all of its statutory duties as an adoption agency, as well as any specific requirements, targets and outcomes of this specification.
- 7.3 The Integrated Service will at all times maintain an appropriately qualified and skilled workforce that is sufficient to fulfil all of its statutory duties as an adoption agency, as well as any specific requirements, targets and outcomes of this specification.
- 7.4 The Integrated Service will have in place a detailed contingency plan to deal with workforce absence caused by planned leave, sickness and vacancies that is cost effective and causes minimum disruption to service delivery.
- 7.5 The Integrated Service will at all times comply with safe employment practice including statutory background checks, confirmation of identity, confirmation of entitlement to work in the UK, disclosure and barring checks, employment and personal references.
- 7.6 The Integrated Service will at all times put the needs of users at the heart of service delivery and maintain a system that ensures their involvement in service design and delivery, as well as decision making.
- 7.7 The Integrated Service will at all times maintain a system for the management of complaints and representations that complies with minimum standards for timeliness, transparency and information sharing.
- 7.8 The Integrated Service will at all times maintain a system for data protection and handling that complies with the Data Protection Act, as amended from time to time.

8. Performance measures

- 8.1 Building on the key objectives of the Regional Adoption Agency, set out in section 3, the Integrated Service will develop a performance management framework and comply with the key performance indicators set and report upon performance in relation to these indicators to the Board of Directors, the Adoption Leadership Board and any other statutory body as required.
- 8.2 The performance management framework will include quantitative indicators which will allow performance on the above outcomes to be measured.
- 8.3 The performance management framework will also include qualitative feedback from adopters, service users and key professionals who have contact with the agency.
- 8.4 Additionally, regional good practice standards will be developed to clarify service expectations, measure outcomes and ensure that services provide good value for money.

9. Outcomes

- 9.1 Outcomes in adoption have traditionally focussed on placement disruption and breakdown. The data collected is usually quantitative rather than qualitative. To ensure a culture of continuous improvement the new agency will move the focus of evaluation from outputs to outcomes by implementing a review system so that learning from disruptions and breakdowns is captured. This learning will then be used to develop a greater understanding of the factors which present a risk to placement outcomes.

10. Contract monitoring

- 10.1 The Integrated Service will provide quarterly data submissions and associated reports to the Board of Directors. Additionally, in accordance with the terms of reference of the Management Board, the Integrated Service will be responsible for conducting an annual review of the quality of the service it provides. Mechanisms to monitor the quality and outcomes of the service will include:

- a. Effective line management, supervision, support and training of staff employed by the service
- b. A set of regional policies, procedures and practice standards
- c. A range of methods to obtain feedback on the functioning of the regional service from service users, local authorities and other stakeholders
- d. Systems to audit the performance of the service against performance indicators and compliance with legislation and standards;
- e. A system to monitor and manage complaints against the service

11. Ofsted inspection

- 11.1 The RAA will comply with whatever inspection regime is in place from the start of the operational period.

12. Detailed division of roles and responsibilities in the new agency.

- 12.1 Recognising the successful delivery of the new service will be dependent on a high level of joint working between LAs and the RAA, table 1 below breaks down the respective roles and responsibilities identifying where the agencies will have to collaborate in the best interests of children

13. Summary of proposed service provision, improvements and performance evaluation

- 13.1 An outline of proposed service provision, improvements and performance evaluation is summarised in table 2 below.

TABLE 1 – DIVISION OF ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1.1 THE CHILD

SERVICE AREA	RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY	RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE RAA	NOTES
1. Case Responsibility	<p>The local authority will retain case management responsibility for the child until the making of the Adoption Order.</p> <p>The local authority will be responsible for all statutory functions including but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statutory Visits • Management and supervision of contact between child and family members. • Supervision, administration and finance of foster placements and communication with foster carers (including Fostering for Adoption placements). 	<p>The RAA will provide specialist advice and support to assist LA staff to fully understand the adoption process, influencing and promoting best practice.</p>	
2. Early identification of children requiring adoption	<p>The local authority is responsible for identifying, as soon as there is a possibility that a child will need permanence outside their birth family, the children who may require adoption and making them and their needs known to the RAA, providing relevant and timely information. The RAA will assist LAs in adjusting working practices to ensure close involvement in care planning to assist with the earliest identification.</p> <p>LA to be receptive to external challenge.</p>	<p>The RAA will allocate a Family Finder to each child identified as possibly requiring adoption. Staff from the RAA will be involved in identifying children for early permanence placement.</p> <p>Representatives of the RAA will be able to attend meetings in each local authority (such as legal planning meetings, looked after review meetings, care planning meetings etc) to better understand the needs of the children who may require adoption and, where</p>	<p>Detail for each LA to be developed in conjunction with care planning leads.</p> <p>The RAA will be invited to relevant meetings to enable better practice in planning for children to permanence.</p>

SERVICE AREA	RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY	RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE RAA	NOTES
		<p>appropriate, to begin to identify suitable adopters at an early stage.</p> <p>RAA to provide challenge to improve LA practice and performance</p>	
3. Early Permanence Service (Concurrent Planning/ Fostering to Adoption)	<p>The LA will identify all children for whom an EP placement is a possibility and refer these children to the RAA.</p> <p>Children and family social workers will make use of the training, advice and guidance offered by the RAA regarding Early Permanence.</p> <p>The LA will make the decision regarding the most suitable placement for the child, with support and guidance from the RAA.</p> <p>The LA will continue to update the RAA on the progress of the child care plan until the Adoption Order.</p> <p>The LA will make the statutory visits to the child placed with EP carers.</p>	<p>Where appropriate, and in agreement with the local authority, the RAA will make available an Early Permanence Service (Concurrent Planning/ Fostering to Adoption) for children who may benefit from the possibility of early permanence with potential adopters. Placements will depend on the availability of appropriate carers.</p>	<p>For temporarily approved foster carers under reg 25a, the LA will delegate the fostering supervisory social worker role to Adoption West. Adoption West will provide the LA with records of this function in accordance with the specific fostering regulations.</p>
4. Twin Tracking of the children requiring adoption	<p>Where appropriate to the child and family circumstances the Care Plan will include a plan for permanence for the child, while setting objectives for work with the child, birth family and carers in relation to the child's assessed needs.</p> <p>The LA will progress adoption plans in conjunction with the RAA at the same time as pursuing other options for</p>	<p>The RAA will provide advice and guidance and work with the LA to support the Care Plan for the child.</p>	

SERVICE AREA	RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY	RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE RAA	NOTES
	children.		
5. Tracking Child Care Plans and Progress to Adoption	<p>The LA will track the progress of children in care proceedings or looked after under section 20 (Children Act 1989) so as to maintain an up-to-date knowledge of their potential need for an adoption placement.</p> <p>The LA will be responsible for reporting to the Adoption Leadership Board child level data for the children in their care in the adoption process. They will also continue to provide data on Special Guardianship Orders.</p>	<p>The RAA will also actively track all children who may require a plan for adoption or for whom initial information indicates that adoption may be required.</p> <p>The RAA will be responsible for reporting adopter level data only. They will be treated as distinct entities, with separate URNs to the LAs.</p>	
6. Pre-placement Reports	<p>The LA will be responsible for the completion and cost of all reports prior to an adoption placement being made including Child Permanence Reports.</p>	<p>The RAA will advise on and support the completion of the Child Permanence Report and early profile of the child. The RAA will provide support and challenge to help ensure that CPRs are of a consistent high quality across partnership LAs.</p> <p>The RAA will be responsible for the early and any subsequent profile of the child (even before the CPR is compiled) & in identifying early matching considerations. This will include taking into account information and advice from post adoption support services on the potential needs of the child[ren] once placed, and potential sources of future support. The RAA will also provide support guidance to enable the LA to undertake more specialist assessments e.g. sibling assessments.</p>	
7. Assessment of	The local authority will be responsible for assessing the	The RAA will provide additional information	

SERVICE AREA	RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY	RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE RAA	NOTES
needs	child's needs in respect of a future placement and in ensuring that any required financial support for a future adoptive placement is available.	and advice on the placement needs of the child and the likely need for post adoption support services. It will be necessary for the RAA and LA to work closely and collaboratively to ensure that the needs of the child can be met and that planned support is sustainable.	
8. Medical Information	The Local Authority will be responsible for obtaining all required medical information in respect of children who are being considered for adoption and ensuring all health assessments are completed within agreed timeframes		
9. Should Be Placed For Adoption (SHOBPA) Decision	The Agency Decision Maker in each LA will be responsible for the 'Should be placed for adoption' decision. The LA will undertake a regular review of this decision and associated plans and keep the family finder in the RAA informed of changes.	The RAA will support the SHOBPA decision making process as requested. The RAA Panel Advisor will provide adoption advice and information to the LA ADM to assist them in the SHOBPA decision The RAA will need to give specific consideration to medical information in the identification of a possible match.	The RAA will have a quality assurance role in this process.
10. Family Finding Process	The LA will work with the RAA to prepare a profile of the child as early as possible to ensure early identification of suitable placement matches. Wherever possible children will be placed with Early Permanence Carers – the LA will identify these children and work with the RAA to identify carers.	The RAA will track all children identified for a permanence placement in consultation with the LA. The RAA will advise, guide and challenge the LA to make the best available placement choice for each child with options for Early Permanence placements considered in all cases.	

SERVICE AREA	RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY	RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE RAA	NOTES
	The LA will be responsible for seeking permission from the court to profile the child prior to granting of the placement order, where appropriate	Aim to identify a choice of potential adoptive matches for a child prior to the conclusion of Care Proceedings.	
11. Communication during the family finding process	It will be the responsibility of the LA to keep the CPR updated and to inform the family finder of any changes in the child's development or circumstances (e.g. change of placement).	<p>Via regular tracking meetings with the LA's the Family Finding team will identify children for whom early profiling is appropriate in consultation with the LA.</p> <p>The RAA will keep the LA regularly updated about progress on family finding.</p>	
12. Children who wait longer / Priority Children	<p>The LA is responsible for identifying at the earliest opportunity where a child is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aged four or over • From a BME heritage • Part of a sibling group of two or more • Has a disability or medical condition • Has been waiting longer than usual for a potential placement • The LA will gather the relevant information, assess and forward to the RAA as soon as possible. 	<p>The RAA will either provide or commission a service for priority children which may involve some or all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased publicity – DVD, Photos etc • Press and Digital Media advertising • Profile the child at specific events • Attempt to recruit carers specifically for the child • Provide additional training and preparation for potential carers • Advise on or assist with additional preparation work with the child. 	Some of these issues need addressing with each LA on a case by case basis.
13. Preparation of the child	<p>The LA will be responsible for preparing the child for an adoptive placement.</p> <p>The LA will be responsible for the preparation of the child's Life story Book. This should start early in the child's looked after timeline and should be continuously added to by foster carers and others working with the</p>	<p>The RAA will support the LA in the preparation of the child, particular in respect of the future placement.</p> <p>The RAA will develop or commission specific expertise in the preparation of children who are harder to place and who are being</p>	

SERVICE AREA	RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY	RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE RAA	NOTES
	<p>child to ensure that all information is recorded and available to the child in future.</p> <p>The LA will be responsible for producing the Later Life Letter</p>	<p>prepared using a more 'bespoke' family finding model. The RAA will provide advice and guidance on Life Story Books and Later Life Letters to LA social workers.</p>	
14. Linking and Matching	<p>The LA will meet the costs of introductions between children and carers.</p> <p>The LA will make the final decision regarding a suitable match and to place a child.</p>	<p>The RAA will take lead responsibility for all aspects of the linking and matching process, but will always involve the LA in the decision-making process.</p> <p>The RAA will chair shortlisting, linking and formal matching meetings as part of the process.</p>	
15. CPR, DPR, APR, Matching panel	<p>The LA is responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The CPR • Delegation of Parental Responsibility report • The Adoption Support Plan <p>The Contact Plan</p>	<p>The RAA will be responsible for completing the Adoption Placement Report, apart from the section on the child.</p> <p>The RAA will organise the Matching Panel.</p>	
16. Matching decisions	<p>The Agency Decision Maker in each LA will continue to be responsible for the matching decision for children in their individual area</p>		<p>Panel and ADM decision processes will need to be closely co-ordinated to meet timescales and ensure all relevant information is available.</p>
17. Inter-Agency Fees	<p>Local Authorities will continue to manage income and expenditure for placements external to/from Adoption West Members.</p>	<p>Adoption West will advise on matching and monitor placements between agencies with a view assisting LAs regarding inter agency fee income and expenditure.</p>	<p>Maintaining current arrangements will enable Adoption West to study and adapt to changes in the inter agency market and agree future funding</p>

SERVICE AREA	RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY	RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE RAA	NOTES
			based on further analysis
18. Adoption Allowances	Adoption allowances will be agreed and paid for by each LA. LAs will work towards a standardisation of adoption allowances policies regionally.		

1.1 ADOPTER RECRUITMENT

SERVICE AREA	RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY	RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE RAA	NOTES
1. Recruitment of adopters	<p>The LA will signpost any enquiries from potential adopters to the RAA.</p> <p>The LA will ensure that information relevant to potential adopters is included in its own marketing materials and on its website, clearly signposting potential adopters to the website of the RAA.</p>	<p>The RAA will be responsible for recruiting adopters appropriate to the needs of children waiting in each LA.</p> <p>Marketing information will reflect the fact that the RAA is delivering the service on behalf of partnering LAs.</p>	
2. Enquiries		<p>The RAA will provide a centralised enquiry process for the region to meet all statutory requirements.</p> <p>The RAA will provide written information to potential adopters and will hold a programme of information events.</p> <p>The RAA may signpost adopters to other agencies where they are not appropriate to the needs of the children which the RAA has waiting.</p>	
3. Stage One	The LAs will provide all information required for statutory checks of potential adopters resident in the LA.	The RAA will undertake all Stage one functions in the application to adopt process	
4. Stage Two		The RAA will undertake all Stage Two in the	

SERVICE AREA	RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY	RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE RAA	NOTES
		application to adopt process functions	
5. PAR		The RAA will complete the Prospective Adopters Report (PAR)	
6. Approvals		The RAA will recruit a Central list of panel members and service the Adoption Panel. The RAA Agency Decision Maker will be responsible for all approvals	
7. Post approval support and training		The RAA will provide post approval support and training to approved adopters	

1.1 POST ADOPTION SUPPORT SERVICE

SERVICE AREA	RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY	RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE RAA	NOTES
1. Universal provision	Adopted children and families are entitled to a whole range of universal services within their LA, Including early help, diversion from care services, out of hours support. Keep RAA informed of changes to process and procedures.	Liaise regularly with LA about services available and how to access them.	Both to agree mechanism for establishing thresholds, managing disputes & disagreements – specifically in relation to adoption support.
2. Adoption support plans	Create Adoption Support Plan, review and update for the period up to adoption order in consultation with RAA social workers. The LA will consider funding requests for post adoption support services which are not included in the core offer. Ensure consistency and agreed process for considering requests for adoption support allowances, match funding for ASF and	The RAA is responsible for the continued review of adoption support services and for informing LAs of the strategic developments required and impact of increased demand on service provision. The RAA will learn from and apply good practice regionally and nationally to deliver	The scope of services is limited by the investment received from local authorities to fund adoption support services. Increased year on year demand for adoption support needs to be

SERVICE AREA	RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY	RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE RAA	NOTES
	shared funding thresholds (e.g. Therapeutic support).	<p>best value.</p> <p>The RAA will undertake adoption support fund assessments and applications.</p> <p>Where required, review and update post adoption order.</p> <p>Support and advice</p>	regularly reviewed by the RAA and LAs.
3. Referrals and safeguarding	<p>The LA will signpost all referrals for support from adoptive families to the RAA.</p> <p>Where a safeguarding referral is made to the LA the LA will conduct any appropriate section 47 enquiry and will allocate an LA Social Worker where thresholds are met, whilst simultaneously notifying the RAA of any referral involving an adopted child.</p>	The RAA will notify the Local Authority in which a child is resident of any safeguarding concerns in accordance with the South West Safeguarding Procedures.	<p>A referral pathway will be agreed.</p> <p>This will often involve CAMHS and other health services.</p>
4. Child in need	Process for responding to RAA identification of potential CIN	Inform LA if potential for child to reach threshold for CIN	
5. Early Help	Liaise and inform RAA of early help provision and any changes to provision	Inform LA of specific needs of adopted CYP / families and the nature of provision required	
6. Out-of-hours services	All adopters will have access to the LA's Emergency Duty Team out of core hours.	The RAA will negotiate out of hours support for specific families where necessary subject to agreed LA funding.	
7. Indirect / Letterbox contact	The LA will be responsible for developing the adoption contact plan and will work with the RAA to prepare the plan	The RAA will oversee Letterbox contact between adopted children and birth families.	
8. Supervised & Sibling Direct	Responsibility for direct contact requirements are to be decided based on analysis of current	Responsibility for direct contact requirements are to be decided based on analysis of current	Proposals relating to the management of direct

SERVICE AREA	RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY	RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE RAA	NOTES
Contact	arrangements and RAA resourcing	arrangements and RAA resourcing	contact will be presented to the Board of Directors within the first 3 months of operations
9. Adoption allowances	Adoption allowances will be paid for by each LA after undertaking the appropriate assessment.	Provide assessment of need to support the request.	Action plan to be developed for determining interim and longer term arrangement
10. Adoption Support Fund		The RAA will be responsible for undertaking all assessments and funding applications to the Adoption Support Fund.	
11. Access to Children's records and files	LA to facilitate Manage and administer adoption files. Managing and maintaining adoption archive in line with regulations for all files they are responsible for.	RAA to provide / commission Birth Records Counselling	
12. Therapeutic support to birth parent	Identify and make referrals Agree a consistent approach among LAs	RAA to provide / commission	Legal requirement
13. Birth parents support to prevent recurring proceedings	LA responsible	None	Under child's journey
14. Access to Adopter's records	LA for historic cases (cases closed as at date of transfer) To provide for historic cases on request from RAA Managing and maintaining adoption archive in line with regulations for all files they are responsible for (up to the point of transfer).	RAA for cases which it has managed and those still open at the point of transfer that have been passed to the RAA. Managing and maintaining adoption archive in	

SERVICE AREA	RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY	RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE RAA	NOTES
		line with regulations for all files they are responsible for (post-transfer).	
15. Intermediary Service to adopted adults and their relatives	Support RAA by providing the required information.	RAA for cases which it has managed	Relatives seeking information and contact with the adopted person

1.1 SERVICE USER ENGAGEMENT

SERVICE AREA	RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY	RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE RAA	NOTES
1. Adopters	Support with marketing and promotion through existing local channels and advice as appropriate.	The RAA will engage with adopters individually and in groups with the aim of improving the services available.	
2. Adoptees	Support with marketing and promotion through existing local channels and advice as appropriate.	The RAA will engage with adoptees individually and in groups with the aim of improving the services available.	

1.1 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT & INSPECTION

SERVICE AREA	RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY	RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE RAA	NOTES
1. Data provision	Each LA will need to provide key data to the RAA on performance, as defined in the service delivery contract. Each LA to provide the RAA with data to enable the RAA to plan future recruitment and service provision and to set targets that will meet the needs of children with a plan for permanence.		
2. Data analysis		The RAA will produce a regular regional performance report to LAs in a standard	

SERVICE AREA	RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY	RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE RAA	NOTES
		format including data for each LA. The schedule and format will be agreed by Board members.	
3. OFSTED	<p>OFSTED will continue to inspect adoption services of Local Authorities that are part of an RAA under the current regulatory framework. LAs will involve the RAA in planning, preparation and inspection activity as required.</p> <p>LAs to support the RAA in preparation for and during an inspection under the Social Care Common Inspection Framework (SCCIF) for VAAs.</p>	<p>OFSTED will inspect the RAA under the Social Care Common Inspection Framework (SCCIF) for VAAs.</p> <p>The RAA will support the LA to prepare and respond to inspection requirements.</p>	

1.2 MISCELLANEOUS SERVICES

SERVICE AREA	RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY	RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE RAA	NOTES
1. Service to step parents who wish to adopt	Where step parent assessments currently sit outside of the Adoption Service and staff transferring LAs retain responsibility for work underway and waiting lists.	RAA to provide step parent adoption services from commencement date	
2. Intercountry adoptions		RAA to provide/Commission	

TABLE 2 - SUMMARY OF PROPOSED SERVICE PROVISION, IMPROVEMENTS AND EVALUATION

2.1 Front door, Recruitment & Assessment
Service provision and improvements
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The RAA recruitment strategy will be prepared and reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that recruitment of adopters is targeted on the children for whom the L/As are making adoption plans. Extensive use of social media and on-line marketing, alongside more traditional advertising and promotional activity to ensure that there is wide coverage of the need for adoptive parents for a wide range of children. Assessments of prospective adopters to be undertaken in a timely way to ensure that there is a sufficient pool of approved adopters to

facilitate speedy matching, and that priority is given to those wishing to adopt children with additional needs or sibling groups.

- Regular preparation training for prospective adopters to be provided or commissioned from a VAA to ensure that no delays occur in commencing/completing assessments. Use of in-house expertise to enhance training – DDP, Theraplay and Birth Relative support practitioners.
- Targeted recruitment activity focusing on Priority Children has been the core business of VAAs for many years and there is an opportunity to harness VAA expertise to achieve early placements for children.
-
- Training could be commissioned from a VAA - either particular modules or complete training programmes to supplement those being provided by RAA staff, including formal adopter preparation programme provision.

Performance evaluation and monitoring

- LA tracking systems, Permanence Co-ordination and IROs
- Monitoring of source of all enquiries, and ensuring resources are targeted on the most successful approaches.
- RAA case management system to track timescales on all assessments, with management oversight by Team Manager. Target Panel dates to be identified at the outset of all assessments, with flexibility to 'fast-track' assessments for children currently waiting. Additional capacity to be built into Adoption Panel agendas to enable assessments to be considered promptly when they are completed.
- Monitoring by Team Manager with additional training arranged as required. Training programmes to be regular evaluated by trainers, using service user feedback to ensure the content is relevant and appropriate.

2.2 Child's journey and permanence planning

Service provision and improvements

- Better and more methodical early identification of children with likely adoption plans and early involvement of workers from Adoption West
- help to shape and target recruitment activity within Adoption West for individual children, and more generally by identifying trends in ages, family composition, level and type of need.
- allow for early identification of children for whom an Early Permanent (fostering to adopt) placement might be an option, to enable them to move to their permanent family at the earliest possible opportunity.
- ensure that the right level of direct work is undertaken with each child, dependent on their age and level of understanding, to help them to understand why they are in care, what needs to happen for decisions to be made about their future care, including a simplified explanation of the court process. The child's wishes and feelings about their current and future care can be ascertained as part of this process. Work on families can also be undertaken, to help the child to understand about different kinds of families- birth families, foster families and adoptive families. Also work to understand that families come in different shapes and sizes with a mum and a dad, two mums or two dads, or one mum or one dad. This can link back to the composition of the birth family, foster family or potential adoptive family. The direct work with the child is currently undertaken by the local authority child care social worker, who faces the competing and conflicting demands of tight court timetables and gathering evidence as to whether or not the birth family can safely care for the child, and undertaking the more planned and paced direct work essential to help prepare the child for a potential move to adoption. As a result, the direct work with the child is not always undertaken well, or in

some cases at all, until the Placement Order is granted. This will be many months after a child first enters care, and when a child's anxieties and insecurities will be high. The better the child understands what is happening, the better prepared that he or she is for a move to their permanent family, and the greater chance of a successful transition and placement.

- enable work to be undertaken with foster carers and supervising social workers to ensure they are involved in and understand the family finding and matching process and time table, and the way transitions are managed. This will help them to support and manage the child's anxieties at this time.
- free up the local authority social worker to fully focus on the court work leading to the granting of a Placement Order.
- ensure that birth relatives have access to an independent worker from Adoption West from the point that adoption is the plan for their child, to provide them with support and to ensure that the fullest possible information about the birth family is gathered. This will help inform the Child Permanence Report, will help with family finding for the child and with the child's life story book. It will also potentially help to set the scene for future letterbox arrangements if the birth relatives are linked with Adoption West workers at this stage.

Supporting local authority childcare social workers

- Ensure more timely matching with support of focused family finding activity undertaken by specialist workers supporting LA social workers balancing the competing demands of child protection and court work as well as adoption work.
- Reduce delay in short listing potential families, arranging visits, completing paperwork for Adoption Panel for matching, and planning introductions. This is currently undertaken jointly with a local authority social worker, who is limited in availability by child protection work, court dates and deadlines.

Voluntary Adoption Agency involvement

- VAAs will continue to play an important part in providing families for children for whom Adoption West are responsible. VAA involvement on the Management Board will ensure that they have knowledge of and input to discussions about trends in the characteristics of children being referred to Adoption West to inform their recruitment strategy. They may be commissioned to recruit either a certain number of or type of placements each year for Adoption West.
- The level of support and type of adoption support services needed for any particular match is an important part of the matching and placement process. VAAs may also be in a position to offer specific practical or therapeutic support services for individual children and families post placement.

Performance evaluation and monitoring

- Tracking systems will be set up by Adoption West to monitor the journey of each child identified by the Permanence Coordinator as likely to have an adoption plan for permanence. These will monitor the progress of the child through the court and matching process through to placement and Adoption Order, and will be updated and monitored regularly in Adoption West team meetings and through supervision.
- These systems will enable Adoption West to provide the child's originating agency with data on an individual child's progress. Data will also be collected on disruptions prior to Adoption Order and children for whom an adoption placement is not achieved. Comparisons with performance

prior to Adoption West going live is already available to measure performance against.

- Data across all aspects of adoption work is also collected and collated quarterly by the Adoption Leadership Board, with headline national trends identified alongside the availability of local data. It is anticipated that this will continue once Regional Adoption Agencies are set up. This will enable comparisons with national performance and trends.
- Reporting mechanisms back from Adoption West into each local authority for oversight and scrutiny by elected members at least every 6 months will also be set up, incorporating all of the data available.

2.3 Matching and Placement

Service provision and improvements

- Early identification of children through tracking by the family finding service and Agency Adviser role to start the family finding at the earliest possible point, also creating opportunities to identify children for whom an Early Permanent (concurrency & fostering for adoption) placement might be appropriate.
- Wider choice of prospective adopters from the RAA through more targeted recruitment
- Improved timescales for short listing and visiting potential families, improved standard of CPRs, and other reports for prospective adopters, Adoption Panel and ADM, as the RAA worker will have the expertise and be dedicated to the adoption process.
- Improved support plans due to the early involvement of the RAA
- VAA involvement on the Management Board
- Potential commissioning of assessments for harder to place children from VAAs or spot purchase

Performance evaluation and monitoring

- RAA tracking systems
- Internal management scrutiny and oversight within the RAA
- IRO involvement in statutory reviews, QA and monitoring for each child
- Reporting mechanisms back into the LA about individual children, and overview and scrutiny by elected members
- Quarterly data submitted to the ALB

2.4 Adoption Support

Service provision and improvements

Assessment for adoption support

- Specialist transitions work
- Comprehensive support to placements
- Comprehensive information about adoption support services made available through varied formats, including detailed information online
- Better promotion of adoption support services
- Duty service focused on timely response to advice and information requests

Building on established working relationships with other agencies (e.g. LAs, CAMHS, Out of Hours) in particular in relation to Child Sexual Exploitation, missing children and safeguarding

- Maintaining contact for adoptive families (If desired) following the making the adoption order
- Strengthening of adopter led support groups and peer to peer support, including feasibility of 'buddy' services for adopters
- Provision of Independent Social Work services subject to agency capacity.

Adoption support planning, delivery and review

- Accessing specialist services (including social workers, psychologists, educationalist and specialist trained adoption support practitioners)
- Provide a fair and consistent support provision across the region
- Locally delivered specialist services, creating efficiencies in service delivery
- Provision of a menu of services to other agencies including therapy services, training (e.g. to schools) to enable the service to grow and develop
- Timely response to requests for support and monitoring levels of need and outcomes of provision of service

Specialist areas of Adoption Support

- Economies of scale are expected to enable the provision of regular and additional training and support groups for all relevant parties involved in adoption
- Working with voluntary agency partners to develop a centre of excellence for the provision of specialist services and training where feasible and cost effective
- Development of core training menu to adopters
- Providing a more accessible service across the region building on current good practice delivered by the VAA to two of the LAs
- Dedicated function to provide indirect contact service

For all stages

- Building on good practice
- Offer training opportunities to students undertaking professional training
- Investment in staff to provide career satisfaction and stability of team membership
- ICT systems that enable the appropriate sharing of information to prevent duplication and delay and to ensure the most appropriate services are offered.

VAA involvement

- VAA involvement in the provision of specific adoption support services
- Integration and sharing of skills between RAA and VAA staff and promotion of opportunities for joint working

Performance evaluation and monitoring

- Reviews of Adoption Support Plans
- Operational performance measures including monitoring of waiting times for services where applicable and disruption rates
- Commissioning contract KPIs
- Regulatory inspections
- Service user feedback
- Increased demand for services
- Supervision and evaluation of 'associate' providers and commissioned services
- Developing outcome measurement, monitoring (specifically regarding provision of therapy)

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Bath & North East Somerset Council		
MEETING/ DECISION MAKER:	Cabinet	
MEETING/ DECISION DATE:	31 st March 2022	EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN REFERENCE:
		E 3346
TITLE:	Heritage Services Business Plan 2022 - 2027	
WARD:	All	
AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM		
List of attachments to this report: Heritage Services Business Plan 2022 - 2027		

1 THE ISSUE

- 1.1 The report introduces the Heritage Services Business plan for approval. The Plan sets out the strategy to rebuild visitor numbers and financial performance on a sustainable basis, whilst maintaining the high standards of visitor experience conservation and presentation that underpin commercial success.

The outlook for the visitor economy remains unclear; the assumptions upon which the Plan is built have greater degrees of uncertainty in the outer years.

The Plan proposes a budget for 2022/23 that consists of £17.4M of external income and £10.2M of expenditure. With internal re-charges and income this results in a profit of £5.56m.

- 1.2 The Service will seek to create a new Fashion Museum following the exit from the Assembly Rooms in 2023.

As has been demonstrated with the Roman Bath's Foundation, through the success of the fundraising for the Archway Project, establishing a fundraising development trust to support major capital projects is a proven strategy to successful fundraising.

As such, it is recommended that the Council establish a 'Fashion Museum Foundation', a fundraising development trust who would seek to raise funds for the new museum project.

2 RECOMMENDATION

The Cabinet is asked to;

2.1 Approve the Heritage Services Business Plan

2.2 Approve, in principle, the creation of a charity to support the new Fashion Museum and Collections Study Centre Project

3 THE REPORT

3.1 The Business Plan is included as an appendix to this report

3.2 Charity creation: This project will seek to secure funding from grant giving bodies, trusts and foundations. However, Local Authorities are often prohibited from accessing these funding streams. Further to this, Corporate and private funders can also have misgivings about contributing directly to a Local Authority.

A charity would also be able to claim gift aid on some donations optimising the charitable giving on offer.

It should be noted that it is likely that any charity will not be a 'Connected Entity' to the council for accounting purposes. Following the model of the successful Roman Baths Foundation, the council will have only minority representation on the board of any charity. This will ensure that the financial risks of the charity are not accounted for as a liability on the Council's accounts. However, this will also mean that BANES will not be able to exercise control over the charity – it will be a separate legal entity. It is the opinion of Heritage Services that the benefits of having a charity out-weigh any risk associated with this and the experience of the Roman Bath's Foundation gives us confidence that this lack of direct control would not be a hindrance to securing funds and delivering the Fashion Museum project successfully.

4 STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS

4.1 N/A

5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCE, PROPERTY, PEOPLE)

5.1 The Plan 22/23 plan is deliverable within current resource limits. The outer years of the plan will be reviewed over 22/23 to assess any foreseeable resource implication.

6 RISK MANAGEMENT

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

7 EQUALITIES

7.1 Whilst the service conforms to best practice as set by the council and statutory legislation there are specific actions and approaches that could be taken in the context of its conservation, presentation and engagement activities. These in turn will impact on the audiences the service reaches and the staff it employs.

These will be crystallised over 22/23 with a clear action plan established to move forward in this area.

8 CLIMATE CHANGE

8.1 The Service is taking a number of measures to address the climate and nature emergency. Existing plans already in place include:

- Energy capture: investigate replacing defunct energy capture equipment at the Roman Baths installed in 1993 with new state-of-the-art kit, to reduce running costs at the Pump Room / Roman Baths complex and supply energy to the new World Heritage Centre and Clore Learning Centre.
- Victoria Art Gallery: bring forward proposals to repair the Gallery roof incorporating photo-voltaic glass panels.
- Print to digital: this process has already started with considerable new marketing emphasis switching away from conventional channels to social media. Some printed marketing material is inevitable in the short to medium term for the Service's attractions to remain competitive and, where it is used, the Service ensures that only materials from sustainable sources are used. Investigate how the transition from print to digital can be accelerated on a sustainable basis.
- Retail deliveries: the Service will retain its temporary retail warehouse in its non-city-centre location to eliminate multiple merchandise supplier delivery journeys into central Bath.
- Electric van: in tandem with the item above, the Service has leased an electric van to make consolidated retail merchandise deliveries from the warehouse to the Service's museums.

The journey to net zero will begin in earnest in 22/23. The service will undertake to create a strategy looking forward to 2030 that will set out what actions need to be taken to reach net zero within its own carbon boundary. Further to this, the service will also work with stakeholders to initiate a sustainable tourism strategy for BANES.

9 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

9.1 In relation to creating an independent charity the service considered not creating a charity but felt that this was not the preferred approach due to the restrictions this would place on the funds available to support the Fashion Museum project.

10 CONSULTATION

10.1 The Business Plan and recommendation to create a charity have been reviewed and approved at both Senior Leadership Team and Informal Cabinet.

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Heritage Services Business Plan 2022–2027

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Further details are available for Cabinet Members in confidential appendices upon request.

1. Summary.

This is the annual revision of the Heritage Services Business Plan_('The Plan'). It was initially adopted by Cabinet in February 2015 and reviewed annually in the same forum. It is the second revision of the Plan since COVID impacted Heritage Services' operations.

Heritage Services expects to deliver a financial surplus in 2022/23 of £5.5m.

The Plan sets out the recovery of visitor numbers and financial performance; it should be noted that performance is not expected to recover to pre-pandemic levels until year 2024/25. There is also risk to the trajectory of recovery, due to the uncertainty around the willingness of visitors to travel internationally; this affects both inbound visitors confidence to book travel to the UK and domestic visitors who may seek to travel abroad for holidays.

The Service will further develop its response to the climate and ecological emergency by ensuring that sustainability is embedded in the recovery from COVID-19, as well as undertaking detailed feasibility work to inform longer-term changes to its operation.

Integral to both financial recovery and the journey to net zero is establishing an approach to sustainable tourism that seeks to marry both outcomes. This will require the service to look outwards and work with partners both regionally and nationally to achieve the challenging financial and environmental targets required.

The Service will seek to find a suitable site in which to relocate the Fashion Museum, and bring forward proposals for a Fashion Museum Collections Centre. It will repair the Victoria Art Gallery roof to protect the collection displayed there.

The Service will continue to invest to protect and conserve the Council's heritage assets, improve the visitor experience, enhance commercial performance and develop its staff to deliver the Plan's outcomes.

2. Business philosophy.

The Heritage Services' Aims are to:

- Enhance the quality of life for residents of Bath & North East Somerset;
- Maximise public enjoyment of the Council's world class heritage assets;
- Enable people to learn from the activities and achievements of past and present societies;
- Respond to the climate and ecological emergency and achieve net zero by 2030 in line with the Council's objective;
- Contribute to the region's economic prosperity through our Business Plan.

The Service cannot maximise income to the exclusion of other considerations. Its business philosophy is to maintain the sustainability of three interdependent areas of activity:

- **Conservation** – preserving our unique heritage
- **Customer care** – improving the visitor experience
- **Commercial development** – remaining competitive and maximising income earning opportunities

The three areas of activity are interdependent: the better the state of our heritage's Conservation, the better the experience for the Customer. Better Customer experience leads to enhanced reputation encouraging more visitors, which in turn increases the Commercial return. Healthy returns enable more resource to be reinvested into Conservation, Customer service and Commercial development.

The more one focuses on or neglects one of these priorities, the less sustainable the Service becomes.

3. Performance Review.

3.1 2021/22 performance

All aspects of the Heritage Services performance remain heavily influenced by the pandemic. At the start of the financial year all three visitor sites were closed, along with the Bath Record Office.

The majority of Heritage Services staff were reassigned to work elsewhere in the Council, with the significant portion of these staff working at the Bath Pavillion vaccination centre. Other colleagues made valuable contributions volunteering at the BANES PPE hub and some were furloughed with the concurrent benefits to the Service's revenue position. A core cohort of staff remained to ensure that the buildings, monument and collections in our care remained safe and secure.

The Service reopened the Roman Baths on the 17th May 2021 and the Fashion Museum and Victoria Art Gallery on the 18th May 2021. Figures 1a-c show the performance of the Roman Baths, Fashion Museum and Victoria Art Gallery relative to budget and pre-pandemic level of footfall.

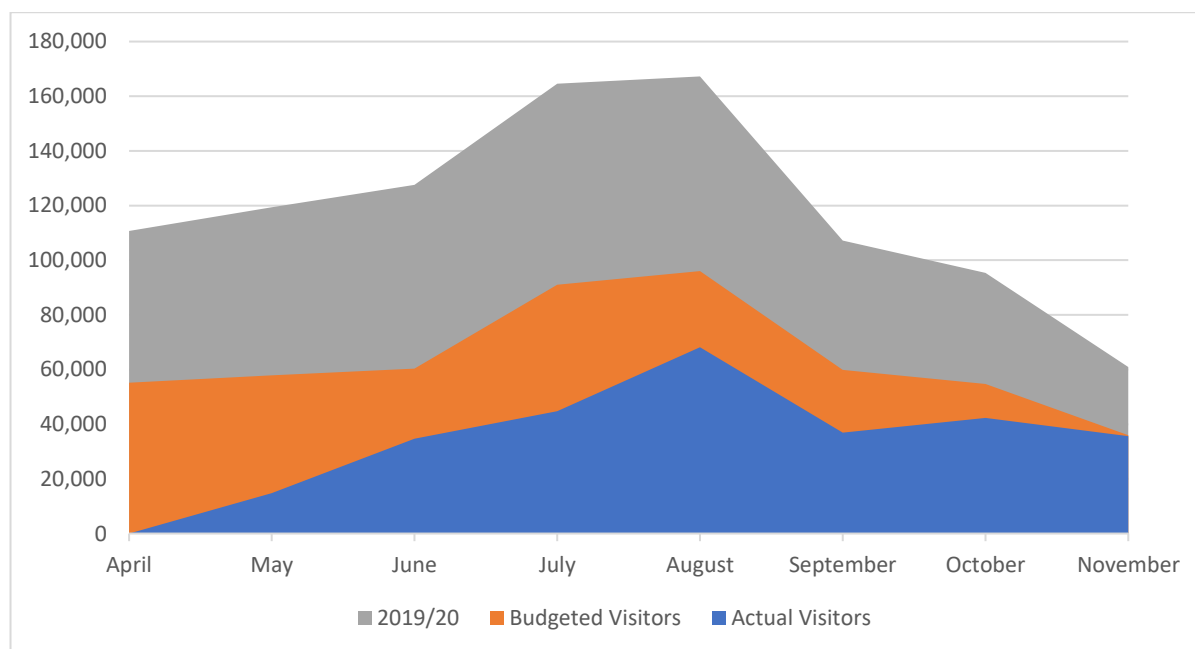


Figure 1a. Roman Baths: Visitors compared to budget and pre-pandemic

When the budget for the Roman Baths was set in the Autumn 2020, the January – May closure was not envisaged, nor was the ongoing requirement to restrict capacity at the level which has been necessary. When the Baths reopened in May 2021, capacity was capped at

200 people / hour. As restrictions have relaxed this has been cautiously increased. Each increase has been trialled and visitor feedback monitored before any further changes made. Capacity is currently 280 people / hour. Within the confines of this capacity, demand has been good and the gap between actual and pre-pandemic performance has closed. November visitors were 59% of the 2019 visitor figure.

Secondary spend from visitors has also been strong, spend per visitor in retail has never been higher and Pump Room sales and sales from the pop-up bar over the summer were also very strong. Despite the lower visitor numbers this strong spend per visitor has helped to mitigate this.

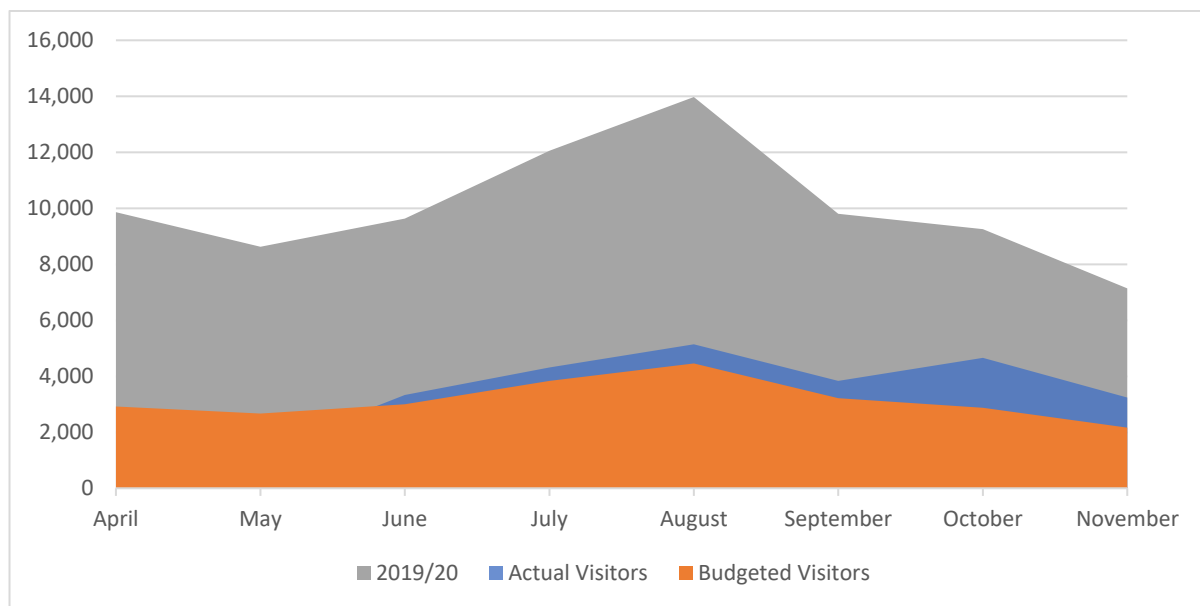


Figure 1b. Fashion Museum: Visitors compared to budget and pre-pandemic

Visitor numbers at the Fashion Museum have been encouraging since reopening, exceeding budget each month from June. The gap to pre-pandemic performance is also closing, with November at 45% of 2019. It's likely that announcements around the Fashion Museum's future has stimulated some of this demand, with people visiting whilst they are able to.

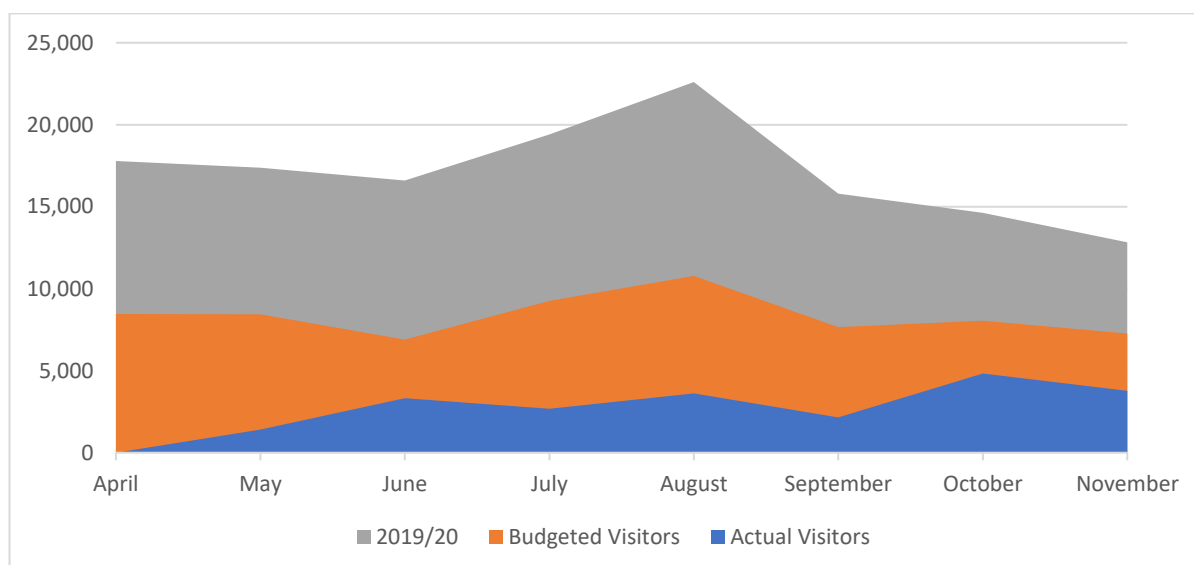


Figure 1c. Victoria Art Gallery: Visitors compared to budget and pre-pandemic

At the Victoria Art Gallery the visitor numbers have fluctuated with the changing exhibition programme; visitors are currently at 29% of pre-pandemic numbers.

It should be noted that the the combined Saver Ticket, with the Roman Baths hasn't been available during 2021.

The lockdown and ongoing capacity restrictions have had a significant impact on earned income, which is forecast to be £4M below the budgeted levels. At the time of writing, in 2021/22 the Service forecasts to return a surplus of £3.9 Million p.a. to the Council. It should be noted that this includes Government support through the sales, fees and charges (SFC) which ran until June 2021.

SFC support, increased yield per/visitor and cost saving measures delivered by the Service have restricted the drop in net profit to £1.6 million, as shown in Figure 2 below.

Heritage Services budget 21/22			
	Budget (£000)	Forecast (£000)	Decrease (£000)
Net profit	5,447	3,894	1,554

Figure 2: Heritage Services' financial performance in 2021/22.

3.2 Roman Baths Financial Benchmarking.

The Roman Baths and Pump Room have continued to benchmark financial and visitor experience performance through the Association of Leading Visitor Attractions (ALVA). The Fashion Museum and Victoria art Gallery are not eligible to be included in this as there visitor numbers are too low.

Financial benchmarking results are for the 2020/21 financial year. The Roman Baths were more acutely affected than many sites for three key reasons:

- The Roman Baths is an indoor site which limited opening days. Sites which had an outdoor offer were able to remain open during some of the Roman Baths' enforced closure periods.
- Many of the benchmarking cohort have a membership model which provided income from members during the periods that they were closed.
- A significant number of Heritage Services' staff were redeployed rather than furloughed during the pandemic. This supported the delivery of essential Council services, but also reduced the savings achieved through furlough. Other organisations within the cohort furloughed more extensively and therefore saved more money.

Profitability.

In the key measures for profitability the Roman Baths remains above the ALVA benchmark, however it has slipped from 4th to 3rd quartile. SFC income isn't included in the benchmarking figures; whilst it was a vital source of revenue to Bath and North East Somerset Council, it was a scheme which was only accessible to local authorities and therefore not comparable to the cohort.

Admissions income.

Whilst overall income fell, due to lower visitor numbers, the Roman Baths remained in the top quartile for measures relating to income per paying visitor

Retail.

The Roman Baths remained in the top quartile for income per square metre. However, measures relating to income per visitors, average transaction value and the overall profitability of the retail offer are below the ALVA benchmark.

Marketing.

The marketing cost per paying visitors remained in the lowest quartile, indicating the cost-effectiveness of our marketing function and also reflecting the savings made in this area of

the budget. This spend will be carefully monitored going forward, to ensure that our comparatively low spend does not lead to a slower recovery from COVID-19. Section 6 below outlines the plans for marketing.

3.3 Roman Baths Visitor Experience Benchmarking

This section shows the results of ‘quality of visit’ benchmarking of the Roman Baths against other ALVA members. It summarises the aggregated findings of exit surveys conducted in Autumn 2020, Spring 2021 and Summer 2021.

Overall visitor experience:

	Enjoyment (mean out of 10)	Value-for-Money (mean out of 10)	Net promoter score (likelihood to recommend)
All Attractions	8.9 (+0.1)	8.7 (+0.2)	+ 65 (+6)
Museums & Galleries	9.0 (+0.2)	9.0 (+0.3)	+ 67 (+8)
Heritage Attractions	8.8 (no change)	8.5 (+0.1)	+ 60 (+4)
Roman Baths	9.0 (+0.1)	8.4 (+0.1)	+ 70 (no change)
Highest score	9.5	9.6	+ 93
Lowest score	7.9	7.3	+ 18

Figure 3: overall quality of the Roman Baths visitor experience, benchmarked against other ALVA attractions Autumn 2020 - Summer 2021, movement from prior year shown in brackets.

The Roman Baths sits in ALVA’s Heritage Attractions grouping. The results show that the Value-for-Money ratings for the Roman Baths are below the mean scores for All Attractions and Heritage Attractions. However, the scores in Value-for-Money and Visitor Enjoyment did improve.

It is pleasing to see a third consecutive year with improvements in the value for money score, considering that a summer super-peak price was introduced and this was extended into the Autumn due to demand levels.

Experience Intensity ratings.

The overall “experience intensity” is a composite benchmark made up of a range of measures. The Roman Baths’ experience intensity score is 86.3 against an ALVA benchmark of 86.1 and Heritage measure of 86.0. The experience ratings of all major visitor attractions included in the ALVA Benchmarking Survey are high, so this is a challenging benchmark. It is testament to the work of our teams that the Roman Baths and Pump Room perform ahead of this measure.

3.4 Conclusion

What we can take from the financial performance in 21/22 and the ALVA benchmarking is that despite the restrictions and impacts of the pandemic, Heritage Services has managed

to improve in key measures. The increased yield per visitor and retail spend p/head provides a potential way-forward for the service when looking at how we can contribute to a sustainable tourism offer in the region. We may be able to limit visitor numbers to lower than pre-pandemic levels but still achieve the required surplus projections. This will be modelled more extensively over 22/23 and integrated into our overall approach to sustainable tourism which will also look to encourage visitors to remain in the region for longer.

4. Business targets 2022-2027.

The Plan aims to grow annual profit over the next five financial years, so that by 2025/26 profit returned to the Authority will be £12.2 Million p.a.

The table at Figure 6 below demonstrates planned performance in each year based on the updated financial model that underpins the Plan. This Plan is produced against a backdrop of uncertainty and there are a significant number of assumptions in the outer years of the plan, which will be refined as the trajectory of COVID recovery, impacts of Brexit, cost of the net zero goal and other local changes become clearer.

	2020/210 (actual)	2022/22 (forecast)	2022/23 (proposed)	2023/24 (proposed)	2024/25 (proposed)	2025/26 (proposed)	2026/27 (proposed)
External turnover (£000)	15,509	14,621	17,429	19,691	22,508	24,684	25,880
Net Profit (£000)	6,141	3,894	5,561	6,395	9,580	11,389	12,208
Profit target (£000)	9,682	5,447	5,561				
Surplus against target (£000)	(3,541)	(1,554)	0				
<i>Profit as a % of income</i>	39.6%	26.6%	31.9%	32.5%	42.6%	46.1%	47.2%
Roman Baths visitors (000s)	144	435	735	882	1,019	1,126	1,184
Fashion Museum visitors (000s)	0	53	38	0	0	0	0
Victoria Art Gallery visitors (000s)	0	29	69	132	132	132	132
Roman Baths income per visitor (£)*	19.26	22.18	21.62	21.43	21.32	21.19	21.13
External turnover (£000)	15,509	14,621	17,429	19,691	22,508	24,684	25,880
* (admission income plus retail sales & other sales) and restaurant commission)							

Figure 4: Heritage Services' key financial and visitor targets.

The Plan projects growth in visitor numbers and visitor-driven income from the current performance outlined in section 3.1. It also absorbs the anticipated pay award to be agreed by the Council for each year of the plan. Through the lifetime of the Plan, pay is expected to be the biggest cost pressure facing the Service.

The Plan projects an ongoing recovery with no further closure requirement and no COVID related restriction to capacity from the start of 2022/23.

The Plan also assumes that the Fashion Museum will close during Q3 2022/23 and that a new Fashion Museum will not open within the life of this Plan. Nevertheless, it is hoped that a suitable location will have been identified and that fit-out work would be under way.

The key risks in relation to these assumptions are discussed in section 7.

5. Business Strategy 2022-2027.

The service has two primary objectives over the lifespan of the plan:

- Return to pre-pandemic levels of profitability
- Initiate the move of the Fashion Museum and its delivery at a new location

These are contextualised by the need to achieve net zero by 2030.

The role that the service has more widely across BANES and the region in general also needs to be re-assessed. How Heritage Services will engage with, shape and support the wider cultural offer available to residents and tourists needs to be considered.

In order to deliver on these objectives and contexts the service will look to undertake a more fundamental review of its vision, mission and activities which will shape the 23/24 iteration of the business plan.

Over 22/23 the Service will continue to implement the broad strategy outlined in previous iterations of the Plan. This will involve:

- Exit surveys to measure visitor satisfaction at all three sites and further research to understand visitor motivations.
- Development of a Sustainable Tourism strategy to underpin our recovery from COVID.
- Growing support from residents, visitors and the wider public through increased digital engagement and fundraising activities.
- Testing and extending our digital revenue generation, including an online shop.
- Delivering for local residents, through a relaunched Discovery Card scheme.
- Grow commercial non-visitor revenue, particularly through the expansion of the wedding offer.
- Sustaining staffing and investment to support ongoing price increases and improve visitor satisfaction.

The detailed proposals over the life-span of The Plan include the following measures:

5.1 Roman Baths

- Maximising revenue through admission income and retail.
- Open and operate the Clore Learning Centre.
- Develop products with partners which encourage overnight stays in the district to deliver maximum economic benefits from visitors.
- Launch the Mandarin children's audioguide as international tourism recovers.

- Ensuring that experience is at the heart of our product offering, using products like late opening, tai chi on the terrace and the Prosecco Bar to ensure appeal is as broad as possible.
- Review and improve the interpretive experience to offer more diverse narratives and keep pace with modern interpretive techniques.

5.2 Fashion Museum

- Expected closure of the Museum in its current location in Q3 2022/23, with associated reductions in admissions, retail, catering and room hire revenue.
- Create a fundraising strategy to support the future of the museum and collection.
- Establish a charity to support the fundraising requirements around the future of the collection and museum.
- Temporary storage of the collection whilst permanent collection centre is developed.
- Increase awareness of the collection whilst a new permanent location for the collection and museum is secured.
- Continue to provide loans to other organisations to enable audiences to engage with the collection away from the museum.
- Deliver a new Collection Study Centre and be underway with delivery of the new Fashion Museum.

5.3 Victoria Art Gallery

- Continue to engage loyal repeat visitors and extend this audience through the high quality programme of temporary exhibitions.
- Fix the failing roof to stop water ingress and safeguard the collection.
- A business case for a scheme to develop an improved education facility with discrete space for learning and community engagement activity will be developed during 2022.

5.4 Bath Record Office

- Complete the Wellcome Trust funded *Building a Healthier City* project and deliver associated public engagement activities to engage diverse audiences in the collections.
- Progress with digital preservation strategies including capacity, systems and collecting.
- Apply for grant funding to continue with high-level cataloguing and conservation projects.

- Make a business case for the establishment of a paper conservation service which provides both internal professional support and undertakes external work to provide income generation.
- Seek opportunities to improve public onsite access to the collections at the Guildhall.

5.5 Group visitors

Pre-pandemic, groups made up over 30% of all Roman Baths visitors. It is important to consider groups in three distinct categories:

- Education;
- Credit customers;
- Other group customers.

The Group Management Strategy, created in 2018, will be updated in 2022 to set out our approach to managing this segment of our audience through the year. This update will reflect that although a high number of coaches can contribute to congestion, they are one of the lowest polluting forms of transport. Our strategy will encourage and incentivise visits which include an overnight stay or a longer dwell time in the city.

5.6 Climate Emergency

Currently Heritage Services has no strategic approach to move to net Zero by 2030. Work will commence in 2022/23 to establish this strategy and understand the risks and mitigations to its impact on investment costs and return of surplus.

Key priorities for 2022/23 are to establish a baseline environmental impact assessment for the current Heritage Services operation and a methodology for attributing the carbon footprint of visitors to our sites, recognising that for international visitors their visit to Bath is rarely the sole reason for their visit to the UK. We will continue the discussions with other World Heritage Sites in the UK about how we can shape the discussion on sustainable tourism in our recovery from COVID, whilst protecting the Outstanding Universal Value of the sites we care for.

Alongside these long-term strategic objectives we'll also explore the options to introduce green-travel discounts and establishing partnerships with mass-transit providers. We will develop an environmental impact assessment as part of the criteria for agreeing touring exhibitions, and loans in/out, including the transport associated with them.

Work already in progress includes:

- A capital project to upgrade our heat exchange system at the Roman Baths. The scheme will use energy from the thermal spring water to provide heating for the new Clore Learning Centre and Roman Baths and Pump Room.
- Extending our lease at our retail warehouse on the outskirts of Bath. The non-central warehouse avoids city centre deliveries from supplier.
- We have ordered an electric van for use in transporting retail stock and goods to our sites. Expected delivery August 2022.
- Our “How to get here” section of the website has been updated to put car travel at the bottom of the list.
- Through a regular plant and equipment replacement programme we ensure that we are using energy-efficient equipment.
- We will neither seek nor accept funding from an individual or organisation if it is profiting as a result of environmental destruction.

5.7 Diversity, Equality and Inclusion

Currently Heritage Services has no strategy encompassing diversity, equality and inclusion. Whilst it is aligned with council policies in this area there is more that could be done to broaden the content, audiences and work-force specific to a Heritage, Museums and Archives service. Links can and should be made with other institutions in the city who are already exploring contested narratives at their sites and working with local communities to do so. Work will commence in 22/23 to bring together the existing good practice within the service, set aspirational but achievable targets and integrate these into the endeavours of all members of the service.

This also speaks to the ways in-which we engage with local people so they have a voice in what we do and how we ensure they get maximum value from the council’s heritage assets.

5.8 People

An integral part of the strategy going forward will be a focus on COVID recovery for service staff who have had a challenging two years – we will build an even stronger performance culture with welfare and staff engagement, wellbeing and development at its heart. Some actions we will explore include:

- Developing a comprehensive staff engagement and internal communication plan so that all staff are well informed and also able to contribute to the continuous improvement of the service

- Developing a wellbeing strategy specific to Heritage Services – taking the best of the work undertaken by the council and tailoring it to our specific circumstances
- Ensuring all staff have an up-to-date forward job plan, linked explicitly to our strategy, that is reviewed on a regular basis. These plans will also focus on developing staff for the benefit of the Service, our customers and their own personal and professional goals. We will also systematically embed our expectations and actions related to health and Safety, the climate crisis and diversity, equality and inclusion into these plans
- Undertaking a skills audit across the Service
- Auditing and improving our succession planning to mitigate the risk of key staff members leaving the business or falling sick
- Developing initiatives which encourage cross site working to break down silos and develop a single service culture

5.9 World Heritage Site Status

In 2021 Bath achieved a second UNESCO inscription making the city the only double-nominated site in the UK and one of only a handful in the entire world. This was in relation to the multi-site 'Great Spa Towns of Europe' inscription. This was the result of a 10 year effort funded by the council and with significant input from councillors and officers.

Going forward, Heritage Services will work to make the most of this achievement by optimising the recognition and association of the city with one of the World's most highly respected global brands for the benefit of all residents and businesses.

The Service will also continue to contribute to the overall World Heritage Site management – most notably by initiating the drafting of the revised World Heritage Site Management Plan which is due for renewal in 22/23.

6. Marketing plan.

6.1 Key Objectives

The key objectives for the Marketing Team in 2022/23 are to deliver marketing campaigns that will aid recovery from the global COVID-19 pandemic, achieving the targets set out within this Business Plan. The team will focus on the domestic market while also working with key partners to drive visitors from returning international markets (initially focusing on Europe and the US, as these are predicted to return the soonest), and keeping in touch with long term priority markets (such as China). Alongside this we will also:

- Redesign our suite of eight websites and rebuild on the Drupal 9 platform by November 2022.
- Develop and build a robust digital marketing / engagement strategy, which will allow us to engage with new audiences and form more meaningful engagements with pre-existing audiences.
- Promote the official opening of the Clore Learning Centre and new learning offer at the Roman Baths, and the opening of the new World Heritage Centre; this is currently scheduled for Spring 2022.
- Work with colleagues in the Fashion Museum to develop a robust engagement plan for when the museum closes in Autumn 2022 and set expectations re. the closure with current stakeholders. We will also support fundraising activities connected with the Fashion Museum Relocation Project.
- Support the Film Office and Bath Record Office, promoting their offer and activities.
- Promote the relaunch of the Discovery Card across all areas of Bath and North East Somerset;

6.2 Roman Baths Campaigns

We will run the following key campaigns at the Roman Baths in 2022:

- **Spring Family Campaign:** This campaign will focus on a family audience and will run from Easter holidays to the May half term, in order to take in the additional Jubilee Bank Holiday.
- **Easter Lates:** A predominantly digital campaign promoting the late-night opening over the Easter Bank Holiday weekend. This will be targeted towards younger adults aged 25 – 35.

- **Summer Lates:** As with the Easter Late campaign, this will target adults aged 25 – 35. This will be a national campaign and will include London, Cardiff, Bristol, Swindon and Southampton.
- **October Half Term:** Similar to the Spring campaign, this will target families looking for fun days out with the kids, highlighting the family-friendly offer at the site.
- **Christmas:** Though we do not run a full campaign around Christmas, we will target visitors to the Bath Christmas Market within the city; this will be done through partnerships with other attractions within the city, posters and banners within the city and digital marketing.
- **February Half Term:** this will be a digital campaign (in order to ensure maximum agility) focusing on a local and regional family audience.

6.3 Fashion Museum

- **The ‘You Choose’ exhibition campaign** will run from April onwards, with the main marketing push (including out of home advertising, digital promotion etc.) scheduled for the summer to take advantage of visitors spending their summer holidays in Bath. The campaign will also give us the opportunity to connect with audiences the service has found it harder to reach and engage them with the collection ahead of the move to a new location.
- Throughout this campaign we will take opportunities to prepare audiences for the move away from the Assembly Rooms and engagement with the new Museum and Collections Study Centre Project.

6.4 Victoria Art Gallery

- **Mary Fedden in the South West** (*9 July – 16 October 2022*): Targeting Arts Engaged audiences in the South West, this campaign will use of mix of out of home and digital media, and we will also explore partnership opportunities with local organisations such as the RWA in Bristol, with whom Fedden has a connection.
- **Peter Brown** (*22 October 2022 – 15 January 2023*): A digital only campaign will target local and regional audiences from October 2022 to January 2023.
- These two exhibitions have been selected as having the widest appeal, and so will have full campaigns. However, we will also support other exhibitions through local print and digital advertising, as well as the permanent exhibition and family activities.

6.5 Discovery Cards

- In Spring 2022, we will launch a campaign to promote the Discovery Card scheme, looking to expand the uptake of the offer in the B&NES area, especially amongst audiences that we currently see low uptake from.

6.6 Bath Record Office and Film Office

- Bath in Time – We will promote the launch of the new Bath in Time website in February 2022 and promote the improved offer.
- We will launch new websites for the Bath Record Office and Bath Film Office.
- We will continue to support the Bath Record Office and Film Office throughout the year with PR activity and social media support.

6.7 Events and Private Hire Marketing

The strategy to achieving Bath's Historic Venues' objectives will be to continue targeting the wedding market as this has proved the lowest risk event type in current conditions and has generated income consistently throughout the pandemic.

- The Roman Baths and Bath brands are strong, and the Roman Baths and Pump Room venue has continued to be popular for weddings. Bath's Historic Venues can build on this and promote its excellent customer experience and quality brand to attract wedding couples from locations within 2 hours of Bath.
- The Victoria Art Gallery has capacity and potential for increased turnover. With the loss of the Assembly Rooms in 2022, marketing resource (time and budget) will be transferred to the gallery.
- Targeting corporates will be reintroduced, subject to sentiment and government restrictions, working in partnership with local hotels and Visit Bristol & Bath.

There will be continued focus on digital promotion, which produced excellent results in 2021, and resource dedicated to the development of an effective Digital Strategy.

7. Risk.

The risk inherent in the Service's business activities has been highlighted in stark fashion throughout the coronavirus pandemic. By extension, it has exposed the risk that the Council bears as the surplus generated by Heritage Services helps fund other key service delivery.

Within the Council's General Reserves via the Robustness of Estimates calculation, a risk of £2.5m was recognised in 2020/21. This was assessed as medium risk; the Plan recommends that this risk provision is maintained. It is not possible to know what level of operational restrictions will be required during 2022/23, but an enduring need to limit capacity would restrict revenue generation. The impacts of both Coronavirus and Brexit on international tourism is uncertain and could impact recovery rate and revenue.

The Plan assumes that there will be ongoing impacts as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic. It assumes that they will largely relate to the supply of visitors rather than ongoing restrictions to capacity and that during 2022/23 the operational restrictions to keep visitors, staff and residents safe will be relaxed. It is however cautious about the rate of recovery, particularly for international visitors.

The Plan assumes that there will be no new adverse impact caused by security, economic or environmental events, but it should be noted that terrorism continues to pose a risk. The proposed city centre counter-terrorism measures are designed to reduce the risk of such an event.

There are inherent risks to the closure and re-launch of the Fashion Museum. There is currently no secured funding to support this project beyond that granted for feasibility work on the Collections Study Centre. An inability to create and execute a robust fundraising strategy will elongate and potentially halt the move to deliver new homes for the collection and museum. This will increase revenue pressure on the service to support temporary storage of the collection and increase the reputational risk for both the service and council.

Beyond 22/23 potential risks will include increased investment pressure related to achieving net zero by 2030 in-line with council objectives, increased maintenance and life-cycle costs on ageing capital infrastructure.

Appendix 1: Financial summary.

Business Plan Summary												
	Prior Year Actuals		Current Year (2021/22)		2022/23 Financial Year				Plan Years			
	2019/20	2020/21	Budget	Forecast	Business Plan	Budget	Var' to 21/22 Plan		2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	%	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Admissions	(17,798)	(2,503)	(12,598)	(8,646)	(15,717)	(14,573)	1,144	7%	(17,055)	(19,598)	(21,552)	(22,633)
Retail Sales	(2,399)	(238)	(1,508)	(1,164)	(1,928)	(1,657)	271	14%	(1,776)	(2,060)	(2,251)	(2,348)
Room Hire	(594)	(44)	(299)	(423)	(305)	(525)	(220)	(72%)	(296)	(301)	(308)	(314)
Catering	(684)	(45)	(386)	(318)	(394)	(373)	21	5%	(350)	(360)	(371)	(382)
Other Income	(218)	(11)	(130)	(273)	(202)	(224)	(22)	(11%)	(206)	(180)	(195)	(196)
Grants/Contributions	(144)	(12,668)	(1,756)	(3,797)	(98)	(97)	1	1%	(29)	(29)	(29)	(29)
Total Income	(21,838)	(15,509)	(16,676)	(14,621)	(18,644)	(17,449)	1,195	6%	(19,711)	(22,528)	(24,705)	(25,902)
Employee Costs	4,959	4,524	4,970	4,826	5,233	5,293	60	1%	5,186	5,341	5,501	5,664
Premises Costs	1,371	1,261	1,369	1,367	1,527	1,411	(116)	(8%)	1,538	1,611	1,690	1,773
Transport Costs	34	19	31	26	31	28	(3)	(9%)	29	29	29	29
Supplies & Services	3,185	1,116	2,437	2,142	2,908	2,489	(418)	(14%)	2,735	2,916	3,046	3,126
Other Costs	1	1	1	1	1	1	(0)	(2%)	1	1	1	1
Maintenance	533	326	580	523	1,087	597	(490)	(45%)	1,404	668	685	696
Investment	553	396	379	379	835	474	(361)	(43%)	810	770	750	790
Total Expenditure	10,636	7,643	9,767	9,264	11,622	10,294	(1,328)	(11%)	11,703	11,335	11,702	12,080
Internal Income	(2,891)	(2,539)	(2,887)	(2,864)	(3,110)	(3,322)	(212)	(7%)	(3,404)	(3,480)	(3,555)	(3,632)
Recharge codes	4,481	4,265	4,349	4,326	4,589	4,915	325	7%	4,998	5,073	5,148	5,225
Internal Recharges	1,589	1,725	1,462	1,463	1,480	1,593	113	8%	1,593	1,593	1,593	1,593
(Surplus) / Deficit	(9,612)	(6,141)	(5,447)	(3,894)	(5,541)	(5,561)	(20)	(0%)	(6,415)	(9,600)	(11,410)	(12,229)

Figure 5: Heritage Services Business Plan financial summary.

Appendix 2: Roman Baths Awards 2008-2021

Roman Baths Awards 2008 – 2021

2021	The National Autistic Society (national) Autism-Friendly Award – WINNER Visit England Quality Food and Drink Award (national) Quality Food and Drink – WINNER
2020	Visit England Tourism Excellence Awards (national) Large Visitor Attraction of the Year – SILVER International Tourism - SILVER South West Tourism Excellence Awards International Welcome – GOLD Large Visitor Attraction of the Year – GOLD Access & Inclusion – GOLD
2019	Bristol, Bath & Somerset Tourism Excellence Awards Large Visitor Attraction of the Year – GOLD International / Inbound Visitor Experience – GOLD Business Tourism Venue – GOLD South West Tourism Excellence Awards International Visitor Experience – GOLD Large Visitor Attraction – GOLD Business Tourism Venue – SILVER
2018	Visit England Tourism Excellence Awards (national) Inclusive Tourism – GOLD Inbound Tourism – SILVER South West Tourism Excellence Awards Best International Visitor Experience – GOLD Access & Inclusivity – GOLD Business Tourism Venue – BRONZE The National Autistic Society (national) Autism-Friendly Award – WINNER 2018 CIE Tours Ireland (international) Best Heritage Site in UK – GOLD
2017	Bristol, Bath & Somerset Tourism Excellence Awards Best International Visitor Experience – GOLD Access & Inclusivity – GOLD Large Visitor Attraction of the Year – BRONZE Visit England Tourism Excellence Awards (national) Large Visitor Attraction of the Year – RUNNER UP UK Wedding Awards (national) Best Historic Venue – GOLD South West Tourism Excellence Awards Large Visitor Attraction of the Year – GOLD Best International Visitor Experience – SILVER

2016	Bristol, Bath & Somerset Tourism Excellence Awards Best International Visitor Experience – GOLD Large Visitor Attraction of the Year – GOLD Visit England Tourism Excellence Awards (national) Access for All – SILVER South West Tourism Excellence Awards Access & Inclusivity – GOLD Overall – WINNER OF WINNERS The National Autistic Society (national) Autism-Friendly Award – WINNER
2015	Visit England Tourism Excellence Awards (national) Large Visitor Attraction of the Year – HIGHLY COMMENDED CIE Tours Ireland (international) Award of Excellence – SILVER South West Tourism Excellence Awards Large Visitor Attraction of the Year – GOLD
2014	CIE Tours Ireland (international) Award of Excellence – SILVER
2013	Visit England Tourism Excellence Awards (national) Large Visitor Attraction of the Year – SILVER CIE Tours Ireland (international) Award of Excellence – SILVER South West Tourism Excellence Awards Large Visitor Attraction of the Year – GOLD
2012	European Museum of the Year Awards (international) FINALIST CIE Tours Ireland (international) Award of Excellence – SILVER South West Tourism Excellence Awards Access for All – HIGHLY COMMENDED
2011	The Art Fund Museum Prize (national) Museum of the Year – FINALIST Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors Awards (South West) Community Benefit award – WINNER Meeting & Incentive Travel Industry Awards (national) Access Excellence – BRONZE
2010	Museums & Heritage Awards for Excellence (national) Classic Award for continuous improvement – WINNER China Outbound Travel and Tourism Market (international) China Welcoming Tourists Marketing award – SILVER Able Radio (national) Online radio station for the special needs community – GOLD
2009	Learning Outside The Classroom (national) H.M. Government's quality badge Sandford Award for Heritage Education (national) Awarded by the Heritage Education Trust
2008	National Training Awards Best Medium-Sized South West Business – WINNER

Appendix 3: The business unit.

The Council established Heritage Services as an internal business unit in 2005. It approved bespoke financial arrangements to give the Service the same freedoms and agility enjoyed by its ALVA peers, to plan and to implement investment, pricing and marketing decisions and, in return, to deliver an agreed surplus for the Council.

Heritage Services is unique amongst UK local authorities in operating at no cost to the local taxpayer. The Service's operating model has attracted the interest of other local authorities, independent visitor attractions and foreign governments' agencies.

Within the Council, the Service is unique in self-funding all cost increases, including increases in wages, employer on-costs and other fixed costs such as business rates.

Through its rolling 5-year business plan, the Service maximises the commercial opportunities offered by the Council's world class heritage assets. Using planned re-investment of a proportion of its earned income, the Service conserves and develops these assets, maintains and extends the audiences who enjoy them and protects and enhances the income streams earned through them.

Performance, business planning and investment strategy are reviewed by the Heritage Services Advisory Board of external specialists in governance, museums and visitor attractions, who advise Cabinet Members and the Scrutiny Panel Chair on the soundness of the Service's business plan.

Appendix 4: Long-term performance (2011-2021).

Sustained investment in the quality of interpretation, the standard of presentation and in staff training has enhanced the quality of the Roman Baths' visitor experience. This approach has resulted in excellent visitor feedback, commercial success and regional and national awards; a summary of these awards can be found as an attachment to the Plan.

The graph in Figure 2 below shows that, prior to the COVID pandemic, Roman Baths' visitor numbers had grown steadily. The dip in 2012 was caused by the London Olympics and the faster growth in 2017 as a result of terror attacks elsewhere in the UK, which saw a noticeable increase in visitors to Bath.

In January 2020, just before COVID impacts started to be felt, the Roman Baths reached its highest rolling 12 month visitor figures. This figure fell by 88% over the following 15 months and the rolling 12 month figures have 'recovered' to 24% of the Jan 2020 figure.

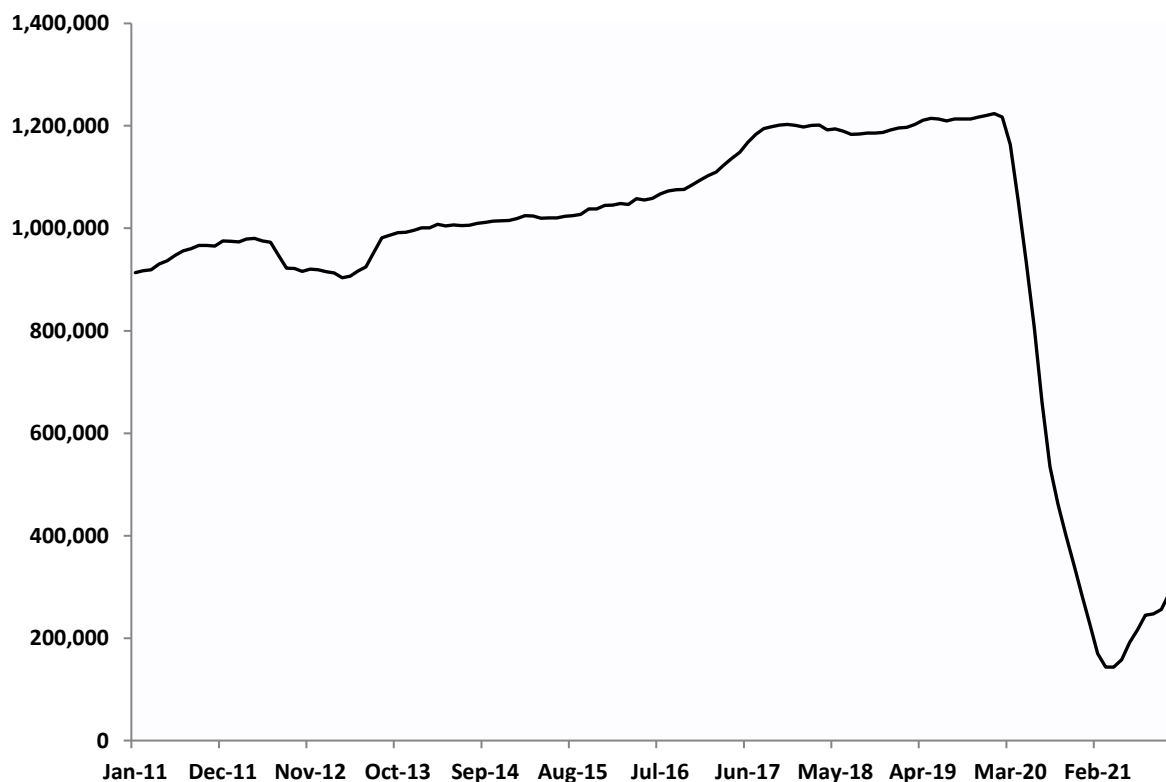


Figure 6. Roman Baths' rolling 12-month visitor total. The impact of COVID-19 is clearly shown

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