

BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET COUNCIL

MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING

Thursday 14th March 2024

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

Apologies for absence: **Councillors** Anna Box, Paul Crossley, Grant Johnson, George Leach and Ann Morgan

76 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

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

77 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

78 MINUTES - 20TH FEBRUARY 2024

On a motion from Councillor Paul May, seconded by Councillor Robin Moss, it was

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of 20th February 2024 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

79 ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE CHAIR OF THE COUNCIL

The Chair reminded Members about the microphone system and silencing mobiles. She then made the following statement;

“We would like to express deep sympathy for all those affected by the conflict in Palestine and Israel. To those in the Bath and North East Somerset area who have been affected by this conflict, we offer our support during this difficult time.

We hope for an immediate ceasefire and a peaceful resolution to this conflict. We hope for the immediate release of all hostages and for aid to be delivered.

We believe that Muslims, Jews and people of all faiths and none, should feel safe and supported throughout the world and we therefore condemn the increase in

antisemitic and Islamophobic violence and abuse in the UK. In particular, we condemn the use of all dehumanising language and call on our communities to treat each other with respect and refrain from inflammatory terms to describe either the Palestinian or Israeli populations.”

80 TO ANNOUNCE ANY URGENT BUSINESS AGREED BY THE CHAIR

There were no items of urgent business.

81 QUESTIONS, STATEMENTS AND PETITIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

Statements were made by the following members of the public;

Jake Hotchkins spoke to Members about his experience of being a care experienced person, in support of the motion later on the agenda. He called on Members to demonstrate they were taking their corporate parenting responsibilities seriously by adopting care experience as a protected characteristic. A full copy of the statement is available attached to the minutes and added to the Minute book.

Terry Galloway also spoke in support of the care experience motion on the agenda. He explained he was leading the campaign nationally to make care experience a protected characteristic in UK legislation. Councillor Joanna Wright asked how such a move would have impacted Terry as a young man, to which he replied that this was about system design and the process of making decisions. The hope is that the system will change around people, so they won't have to actually declare and won't have the barriers that they often face. A full copy of the statement is available attached to the minutes and added to the Minute book.

John Morgan made a statement on behalf of his neighbour, Alexandra Watkins, against the proposed ETRO to block Winifred's Lane and Lansdown Crescent, in the context of the wider Liveable Neighbourhood programme, and urging Councillors to reconsider this proposal. Councillor Joanna Wright asked if John considered this would be beneficial to health or not, to which he replied that it didn't affect him at all. A full copy of the statement is available attached to the minutes and added to the Minute book.

Chad Allen made a statement calling on the Council to cut back or remove ivy from various locations as natural habitat was being destroyed.

Luke John Emmett made a statement calling for more support for the cultural industries and expressing disappointment that culture was not more embedded in the Heritage Services Business plan. Councillor Robin Moss asked if Luke knew when the last time was that the Council had a strategy for, or gave out grants for, commissioned work to artists or makers. Luke replied that the end of the Cultural Strategy coincided with the closure of the Arts department in 2017, and there hasn't been any cohesive support since then. Ad-hoc initiatives happen and are appreciated but an over-arching strategy is needed. Councillor Saskia Heijltjes asked how much the culture industries contribute to the local economy. Luke replied it was a huge amount; citing the statistic that for every £1 invested in the arts, it brings back between £2 - £7 into the local economy. He added that the arts budget of £423,000 which had been cut, although not a large amount, then leveraged

income from the Arts Council and other funders. A full copy of the statement is available attached to the minutes and added to the Minute book.

Bob Goodman made a statement about the legalities of listed building consent and detailing various perceived infractions of process. He called for a fully independent inquiry to be held in public. Councillor Colin Blackburn asked if Bob was aware of any other examples of the Council carrying out work without consent, to which he replied that there were, and cited one property he knew of where over £300k was spent without consent. Councillor Tim Warren asked if or when elected members were aware of this taking place, to which Bob replied that he did have confirmation that the previous Administration had not been made aware of this. Councillor Joanna Wright asked for clarity on the significance of the lath and plaster ceiling being replaced with plasterboard, to which Bob explained that the replacement has to be 'like for like' and that when consent was finally given, this was the stipulation. A full copy of the statement is available attached to the minutes and added to the Minute book.

Emma Owens made a statement about the situation in Gaza, challenging Councillors to consider the right course of action to take. Councillor Joanna Wright asked if B&NES Councillors had any legal duty to prevent genocide, following the International Court of Justice's (ICJ) ruling that genocide may be being committed. Emma responded that, since the Genocide Convention 1948 was incorporated into UK law, the nation does have obligations to prevent genocide and punish such crimes. A full copy of the statement is available attached to the minutes and added to the Minute book.

Marie Duffy addressed Councillors about the situation in Gaza and the impact on B&NES residents, some of whom have family there. She called on the Council to do more and highlighted many other Councils who have agreed a motion calling for a ceasefire. A full copy of the statement is available attached to the minutes and added to the Minute book.

Alice Georgiou called on Councillors to use their public platform to show solidarity to call for a ceasefire. She stated that a poll in October 2023 had shown that 76% of the British public supported a ceasefire and it was likely to be a higher percentage now. B&NES Councillors needed to represent their constituents by calling for a ceasefire.

Jane Samson addressed Councillors by passing on a number of statements about the personal impact the Gaza conflict was having on B&NES residents. This was compounded by a perception that, by not taking a peace motion at Council, their Council did not care. A full copy of the statement is available attached to the minutes and added to the Minute book.

Sophie Higgins spoke on behalf of Johyna Ballout, a Palestinian student who was unable to be present. The statement described the history of occupation and the need to fight for Palestinian rights. Assigning blame was not divisive but necessary and taking a neutral stance was cowardly. Councillor Saskia Heijltjes asked Sophie to explain how the situation affected British people and specifically B&NES residents, to which they replied that young people have been told that empire and colonisation

are a thing of the past, but they now see that it seems to be acceptable and supported.

Mohammed Alrozzi in his statement asked why, after 160 days of relentless bombardment and the ICJ ruling, the Council had not demanded a ceasefire. This silence leads to residents feeling defeated and alienated from the decision making processes and erodes trust. He added that the Council had a responsibility to reflect the conscience of the community and urged Councillors to speak up and call for a ceasefire in Gaza. Councillor Kevin Guy asked if Mohammed was aware that the Chair had made a statement at the start of the meeting from all Group Leaders calling for a ceasefire, to which he replied that he had not been aware. Councillor Sam Ross asked if the lack of consensus had personally impacted on him as a Palestinian and a resident of B&NES. Mohammed replied that he had mixed feelings, one of which was that his wellbeing and life do not matter.

The Chair thanked everyone for their statements, which would be considered by the relevant Cabinet Members.

82 MEMBERS ALLOWANCES REVIEW

The Council considered a report inviting their approval to re-establish the independent panel to consider the next review of their allowances scheme, which must take place every 4 years.

The Green group suggested an item for inclusion in the review; - more clarity about councillor parking permits. They will submit this request to the Monitoring Officer for inclusion in scope.

On a motion from Councillor Dave Wood, seconded by Councillor Robin Moss, it was unanimously

RESOLVED to

1. Agree the re-appointment of the Independent Remuneration Panel for B&NES;
2. Agree that the Independent Remuneration Panel be asked to conduct the next full review of the Member Allowances scheme in late summer/Autumn of 2024, with a view to any agreed changes to the scheme being implemented from April 2025;
3. Note the issues carried over from the last review (in paragraph 3.5 of the report);
4. Submit any suggestions for Panel consideration to the Monitoring Officer, before its first meeting in April 2024.

83 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CHARITABLE TRUST BOARD

The Council received the annual report which updates Members on the work of the Charitable Trust Board in 2022/23.

On a motion from Councillor Tim Ball, seconded by Councillor Joanna Wright, it was unanimously

RESOLVED to note the Annual Report of the Charitable Trust Board for 2022/23.

84 MOTION FROM LIBERAL DEMOCRAT GROUP - CARE EXPERIENCED PEOPLE

On a motion from Councillor Paul May, seconded by Councillor Liz Hardman, it was unanimously

RESOLVED

Council notes that:

5. Care experienced people face significant barriers that impact them throughout their lives.
6. Despite the resilience of many care experienced people, society too often does not take their needs into account.
7. Care experienced people often face discrimination and stigma across housing, health, education, relationships, employment and in the criminal justice system.
8. As corporate parents, we have a collective responsibility for providing the best possible care and safeguarding for the children who are looked after by us as an authority.
9. All corporate parents should commit to hearing the voices of looked after children and young people and to considering their needs in any aspect of Council work.
10. This issue has been discussed at the Corporate Parenting meeting of 17 January 2024, at which all Councillors present supported the idea of treating care experience as a protected characteristic, and with care experienced people locally.
11. Councillors should be champions of the children in our care and challenge the negative attitudes and prejudice that exists in all aspects of society.
12. The Public Sector Equality Duty requires public bodies, such as Councils, to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimisation of people with protected characteristics.
13. 75 other Local Authorities (cross party) have already adopted the motion to protect Care Experience.
14. The Independent Review of Children's Social Care (2022) recognised that Care Experience should be considered a Protected Characteristic. The

national advisor for Care Leavers, Mark Riddle (DfE) supported this recommendation in May 2023.

Council therefore:

15. Recognises that care experienced people are a group who are likely to face discrimination.
16. Recognises that Councils have a duty to put the needs of disadvantaged people at the heart of decision-making and include them in decisions which affect them.
17. Include a category of “care experienced” in all equality impact assessments, thereby ensuring that future decisions, services and policies made and adopted by the Council will be assessed to determine the impact of changes alongside those who formally share a protected characteristic.
18. Requests that in the delivery of the Public Sector Equality Duty the Council includes care experience in the publication and review of Equality Objectives and the annual publication of information relating to people who share a protected characteristic in services and employment.
19. Resolves that this Council will treat care experience as if it were a protected characteristic and that this shall be in addition to any other protected characteristic which may be relevant to an individual.
20. Formally calls upon other bodies to treat care experience as a protected characteristic until such time as it may be introduced by legislation.
21. Ensure Council departments continue to proactively seek out and listen to the voices of care experienced people when developing new policies and practices.

85 MOTION FROM LABOUR GROUP - DEBATE NOT HATE

On a motion from Councillor Lesley Mansell, seconded by Councillor Dine Romero, it was unanimously

RESOLVED that

Council:

1. Believes the intimidation and abuse of councillors and local government officers, in person or otherwise, undermines democracy, by preventing elected members from representing the communities they serve, deterring individuals from standing for election, and undermining public life in democratic processes.
2. Notes that increasing levels of toxicity in public and political discourse is having a detrimental impact on local democracy and that prevention, support

and responses to abuse and intimidation of local politicians must improve to ensure councillors, officers and their families feel safe and that councillors are able to continue representing their residents.

Council therefore:

1. Takes a zero-tolerance approach to abuse of councillors and officers.
2. Challenges the normalisation of abuse against councillors and officers.
3. Upholds exemplary standards of public and political debate in all it does.
4. Commits to providing councillor and officer training in online safety.
5. Commits to ensuring the Council has a clear reporting mechanism to allow monitoring and recording of incidents of harassment and abuse of councillors and officers.
6. Commits to regularly reviewing support available to councillors and officers in relation to abuse and intimidation and safety.
7. Agrees to work with the local police to ensure there is a clear and joined-up mechanism for reporting threats and other concerns about the safety of councillors, officers and their families, and discuss the need to take a preventative approach that accounts for the specific risks that councillors face, as they do with other high-risk individuals, like MPs.
8. Commits to publicising its position, processes and sanctions internally and externally to further these aims.
9. Further agrees to sign up to the LGA's Debate Not Hate campaign which aims to raise public awareness of the role of councillors in local communities, encourage healthy debate and improve the response to and support those in public life facing abuse and intimidation.
10. Requests the group Leaders jointly write to BNES' local MPs to ask them to support the campaign and to the Government to ask them to work with the LGA to develop and implement a plan to address abuse and intimidation of people working and holding office in local government.

86 QUESTIONS, STATEMENTS AND PETITIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

The Chair made reference to the Q&A document which had been circulated. In accordance with CPR rule 3.1.22, Councillor Kevin Guy added comments to his written answer, mentioning the generators and ambulance that had been sent out. They were currently fundraising for a school bus to bring children in to school from the suburbs, plus there are links with musicians and schools. He thanked everyone involved.

Councillor Joanna Wright made a statement about the proposed peace motion which had not been accepted onto the agenda. She set out reasons why she considered

that it was directly relevant to B&NES and called on local leaders to reconsider and bring this item back to a future meeting.

The meeting ended at 8.18 pm

Chair

Date Confirmed and Signed

Prepared by Democratic Services

COUNCIL MEETING 14TH MARCH 2024

STATEMENTS FROM PUBLIC & COUNCILLORS

Public (item 7)

- | | |
|----------------------|---|
| 1. Jake Hotchkins | Care Leavers motion |
| 2. Terry Galloway | Care Leavers motion |
| 3. John Morgan | Liveable Neighbourhoods |
| 4. Chad Allen | English Ivy and the Liveable Neighbourhood programme |
| 5. Luke John Emmett | Support for the cultural sector |
| 6. Bob Goodman | The Council's listed buildings |
| 7. Emma Owens | The impact of the Israel/Gaza war on the people of the city of Bath |
| 8. Marie Duffy | The impact of the Israel/Gaza war on the people of the city of Bath |
| 9. Alice Georgiou | The impact of the Israel/Gaza conflict on the people of BANES |
| 10. Jane Samson | The mental health impact of the situation in Gaza on the residents of B&NES |
| 11. Sophie Higgins | The situation in Palestine and it's impact on the residents of Bath |
| 12. Mohammed Alrozzi | Palestinian resident in the city and the impact of the ongoing situation in Palestine on his experience and overall wellbeing |

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS - PUBLIC

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P	01	Question from:	Amanda Digney
What was the outcome of the Pavement Licence and Table and Chairs Permit conditions consultation and what was the measure of how this policy would improve pedestrian access and safety at events?			
Answer from:			Cllr Tim Ball
The recent consultation was in relation to the Council giving 28 days' notice to specific businesses, requiring them to remove their street furniture during the major events. This was to avoid overcrowding and reduce restrictions on ease of movement in busy areas, and to ensure the city remains accessible. This is expected to affect a limited number of businesses a few times a year. In summary 55 people responded to the consultation; 7 respondents agreed with using the condition; 11 Strongly agreed; 4 neither agreed nor disagreed; 6 disagreed & 27 strongly disagreed. The report will be considered by Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Services, and if implemented, the impact of this decision will be monitored by Licensing Officers during large events.			
P	02	Question from:	Amanda Digney
What is the reasoning behind the decision of Bath and North East Somerset Council to add the stipulation; "that all furniture and other permitted items must be either placed on wheels and/or light enough to be removed by members of your staff from the permitted areas, outside of the permitted days and hours" to applications for tables and chairs permits and licenses, when this is in neither the government guidance issued to councils on the subject nor section 7a of the Highways Act 1980?			
Answer from:			Cllr Tim Ball
The council wants to support a café culture, including outdoor tables and chairs. To support this, we are helping businesses wherever we can through issuing pavement licences on the highway for residents and visitors to enjoy, there have been 309 pavement licences granted across the district since 2020. We need to be mindful, however, of impacts on local businesses as well as the need to access the highway			

and maintain accessibility for all users. We are therefore drawing up new guidance to support pavement licence applications, to ensure they are appropriate to local needs and conditions. This will be used to inform the extent, timings and layout of pavement licence areas, including where under special circumstances items can be left on-street overnight, as well as how these will be configured and stored. All items of outdoor furniture will need to be readily moveable without specialist equipment at all times.

It is anticipated this guidance will come into place in draft in April on a trial basis. This will be considered by the Licensing Committee and if agreed will be enforced, following engagement with businesses, later in the year.

P	03	Question from:	Amanda Digney
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How has Bath and North East Somerset council measured the implications (of the stipulation referred to in question 2 above), on hospitality venues that have historically been actively encouraged by BANES to invest in higher quality street furniture that, by its nature, is neither light weight nor suitable to be put on wheels?

Answer from:		Cllr Tim Ball
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The Council supports investment in high quality street furniture as part of pavement licence areas, and this must be stipulated at the time a pavement licence application is made. However, the furniture should also be moveable without the need for specialist equipment so that it can be packed up readily e.g. overnight and/or moved if access is required as the areas form part of the highway and need to be regularly cleaned and inspected.

P	04	Question from:	Charlie Digney
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Does Bath and North east Somerset council have a coherent long term strategy on outside dining and drinking in cafes, bars, pubs and restaurants, and if so what is it?

Answer from:		Cllr Tim Ball
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The council wants to support a café culture, including outdoor tables and chairs. To support this, we are helping businesses wherever we can through issuing pavement licences on the highway for residents and visitors to enjoy, there have been 309 pavement licences granted across the district since 2020. The strategy for public spaces for the city is included in the Public Realm and Movement Strategy, this sets

out the strategy for a vibrant city centre on public spaces the 'Creating a Canvas for Public Life' section.

P05

Question from:

Charlie Digney

How does Bath and North East Somerset Council quantify the importance of the hospitality sector to the city and how does it measure the importance of outside seating to the hospitality sector?

Answer from:

Cllr Tim Ball

The B&NES Economic Strategy recognises the importance of the hospitality section in our district, there is no specific or quantifiable measure of the importance of outside seating in the strategy.

P06

Question from:

Charlie Digney

Given the hospitality sector was supported by the Government with 350 billion during the pandemic, why is the council putting hospitality in Bath under threat by threatening the outside spaces they rely on, despite national policy being to encourage this as shown in the policy paper below?

'While structural issues and the unprecedented circumstances posed by the pandemic have left the sector facing many challenges, they have also highlighted its adaptability and capacity for innovation. Hospitality businesses have proven to be incredibly resilient and have adapted their operations in a range of different ways – from providing takeaway meals and Home Food Kits to embracing new technology and maximising the use of outdoor space. This adaptability offers a blueprint for the future and gives hope that the businesses that have survived during the pandemic, and those that follow, will emerge stronger than before.'

Policy paper, Minister for Business and Trade, 'Hospitality strategy, reopening, recovery and resilience' 2021

Answer from:

Cllr Tim Ball

This is not our intention. The council wants to support a café culture, and we do also need to be mindful, of impacts on other local

businesses as well as the need to access the highway and maintain accessibility for all users. We are therefore drawing up new guidance to support pavement licence applications, to ensure they are appropriate to local needs and conditions. This will be used to inform the extent, timings and layout of pavement licence areas, including where under special circumstances items can be left on-street overnight, as well as how these will be configured and stored. All items of outdoor furniture will need to be readily moveable without specialist equipment at all times. It is anticipated this guidance will come into place in draft in April on a trial basis. This will be considered by the Licensing Committee and if agreed will be enforced, following engagement with businesses, later in the year.

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Jake Hotchkins statement

Care-experienced young people from Bath and North-East Somerset have noticed how many other councils have adopted care-experience as a protected characteristic. It must create a great feeling for their children in care and care leavers. We want our council - our corporate parent - to do the same.

Recognising care-experience as a protected characteristic can empower care-experienced people to live the life they want to live, without judgement or stigma; to build lasting, meaningful relationships; and create a sense of belonging and inclusivity.

Discrimination against care-experienced people is called 'careism'. This is something felt nationally and locally, and the time to change this is now. We know firsthand how much of society struggle to understand us. Even all the negative statistics about 'poor' outcomes hang over care-experienced young people, and may hold us back, and create a negative image.

We want to feel like our council is moving away from misunderstanding care-experience and fighting against a culture of deficit, and stigma. This would be unacceptable for any other disadvantaged, underrepresented, or vulnerable group.

We think that adopting care-experience as a protected characteristic could create a culture shift and a powerful statement of intent. And a sign of good parenting and good corporate parenting, which challenges oppressive language and jargon for example, which can be alienating. Such othering can mean care-experienced people can be left without a voice. If council agree to adopt care-experience as a protected characteristic, then this could be an important first step towards redressing discrimination.

We think that bringing forward the motion and then agreeing to adopt care-experience like a protected characteristic is an excellent way of demonstrating how seriously you take your corporate parenting responsibilities. Redressing some of the equality imbalances is important because equality is everyone's business.

If care-experience is adopted as a protected characteristic more services in areas we live in could recognise us, hear us, and believe in us. We do

not want to feel alone. We want to feel belonging. We could benefit from more opportunities if this motion is passed.

This motion is all about change – too often we do not see enough change that serves care-experienced people for the better. We could blame others for failings in the system that has led to inequalities – or we can in our own small way take responsibility and do things differently - the BANES way.

Please be better corporate parents for us and consider adopting care-experience like a protected characteristic.

Thank you.

Madam Chair and Councillors,

My name is Terry Galloway and I'm leading the campaign nationally to make care experience a protected characteristic in UK legislation.

I was at a funeral one time. Just so you know, I grew up in care myself and by the time I left care I lived in over 100 places. It wasn't great, but I did in the end make a life for myself.

I run several businesses right now, but I was at a funeral with my sister where somebody obviously sadly passed away and she was really ill and by that time she lost her children to the care system, which is what quite often happens.

My brother also lost his children to the care system. And we are now talking after this funeral and she's really ill, she's depressed and she is thin and she is saying to me, Terry I don't want to be next.

Unfortunately for care experienced people we are 70% more likely than any other group to die prematurely, 50% of the young people in prison are from care, 25% of the homeless population are from care.

I am having this conversation with my sister and all I can do to try and give her some hope is basically say let's use our trauma, let's use what we have been through to change the care system so that those coming after us don't have to go through the same thing.

Unfortunately, she was next and several months later her boyfriend killed her and that was the end of her. So that's why I am kind of here on my own.

But what I want you guys to reflect on is when you see a headline, when you see a tragedy and you know, Please ask yourself and think behind that headline: is there a care experience person.

Because the likelihood is that there is, this is an issue for the whole of society. Obviously, you guys have corporate parenting responsibilities, you guys have the statutory responsibility, but this is for everybody, this is for the whole of society and that's why it needs to come into legislation.

So, for me, if you guys can pass this motion tonight and you can pass it unanimously and not have it as a political, political thing, and really join together. You know you will be the 82nd council across the United

Kingdom, that's over 26 million people are now living in an area that treats its care experienced people as if it was protected characteristic.

What you have got to remember as well. Is that every care experienced person costs the state £1.2 million and once we all take responsibility, that cost is going to reduce, and we are going to have a better society for all. Thank you.

Councillors, I'm speaking on behalf of my fellow resident, Alexandra Watkins, about the proposed ETRO to block Winifreds Lane and Lansdown Crescent.

I'm John Morgan.

In a nutshell, this is a prime example of what has made some LTNs so unnecessarily controversial elsewhere in the UK.

The roads to the east of Cavendish ie Park Street, St James Square etcetera are, in all but name, already LTNs.

The Cavendish Road/Winifreds Lane/Sion Road alignment is, in LTN speak, an arterial road.

This peak period route is one of only four south/north routes, the others being Lansdown Lane to the west and Lansdown Road and the A46 to the east.

I attended the co-design workshop in July 22. The only intervention proposed for Winifreds was one traffic calming hump!

But, 17 months later, with no more work apparent, we have this incendiary proposal dropped on our community. No baseline studies. No risks identified. No mitigating measures.

It seems that the Council is choosing to proceed with closures to create chaos and be non-compliant with its own LTN policies rather than select appropriate solutions.

Your experiment with more congestion and pollution could endanger the safety and health of school children and the medically vulnerable.

I represent the voices of hundreds if not thousands of locals - they are up in arms.

Residents who know the area well, yet residents your consultants have meticulously excluded.

Supposed beneficiaries such as Lansdown Crescent are in representational disarray. There is even opposition from Cavendish Road.

Diverted motorists will be forced along Sion Hill Place's blind corners and narrow pavements and past Kingswood's primary school and nursery exit.

OR, via Julian Road with its shops, doctors surgery and St Andrews primary school. And this just after the Council has successfully improved the street-scape, actually forming a more Liveable Neighbourhood. Soon to be reversed I fear!

To Morford Street with its socially deprived Ballance Street flats; again residents who were never consulted.

And finally to clogged and narrow Lansdown Road and one of the most dangerous junctions in Bath.

All this without any apparent consideration of the 31 Park & Ride, emergency services or pedestrians on Lansdown Road.

Cllr Rigby said, *'We are committed to delivering our Liveable Neighbourhood programme because we want streets where everyone is safe'*.

Councillors, in your heart of hearts will this experiment truly, '**make everyone safe**'?

I urge you to reconsider this misconceived experiment.

Thank you.

14 March 24

6.30pm Guidhall

Luke Emmett statement

Good evening councillors,

I am here to raise your support for our cultural industries.

I was pleased to see Culture mentioned in the abstract of the Heritage Services Business Plan. I attended Tuesday's scrutiny panel to hear it discussed and was encouraged to hear about the internal culture audit, which has begun, and plans that are in place to investigate B&NES' cultural infrastructure before summer.

I urge you to publish and disseminate the outcomes to the public, cultural workforce and organisations.

But I am disappointed that Culture is not more heavily embedded in the Heritage Plan.

If one of the Council's priorities is to embed culture within all key policies, why hasn't this happened with this plan? It only mentions "culture" four times and one of these occurrences was to state the full title of the DCMS. This is a missed opportunity – one I hope is not an indicator of your approach to culture from now on.

Moving forward, I would like to see you:

1. Include cultural industries at the centre of all discussions around culture in B&NES.
2. Appoint a dedicated cultural officer or councillor - a conduit for organisations to connect with the council and access local funding bodies.
3. Repair B&NES' damaged relationship with the Arts Council
4. Show written and evidenced commitment to Culture. This commitment will help cultural organisations secure more funding by giving confidence to funding bodies. (In the 2015 Cultural Strategy Review, there was an ambition to set up a Cultural and Creative Investment Board with representatives from the Arts Council England, B&NES, Heritage Lottery Fund, Local Enterprise Partnerships, and members of the cultural community. Would it be possible to revive this idea?)

5. Create a revised, ambitious, cohesive, and fit-for-purpose Cultural Strategy for B&NES in partnership with local stakeholders.
6. Work with local stakeholders to engage with WECA and access cultural funding and help tie in with the WECA Cultural Compact.
7. The lead officer told Tuesday's Corporate scrutiny panel that Heritage Services are looking for investment from high net worth individuals. Can you use this same approach to provide some arts funding in B&NES?

Finally, I dare to dream of a future where this council once again has a dedicated cultural budget and shows a sustained and ongoing commitment to culture in B&NES.

This is possible when you leverage the resources you have available to you – namely a world-leading city, with an extremely passionate and dedicated cultural sector who are keen to help.

Thank you.

Bob Goodman statement

As a Fellow of the RICS I speak tonight about the legalities of Listed Building Consent. Weeks ago this Council prosecuted an individual for carrying out work to a Listed Building without Consent, yet I have found many areas where this Council are doing exactly the same.

The Council compulsorily purchased two Listed properties in Wellington Buildings in 2016 because the owners had let them fall into disrepair and the Council's own department undertook the repair work.

My first involvement was when a member of the public contacted me as a Cabinet Member to ask why concrete tiles were replacing clay tiles without Consent. I asked the question and apparently the contractor had "made a mistake". The pantiles were put back and I thought no more of it.

At that time, despite significant works being carried out, no Listed Building Consent had been applied for. last year, I surveyed an adjoining house and what I saw was extremely disturbing. I looked at the Consent and found many discrepancies. I wrote to the Chief Planning Officer about those areas, which included cement rendering to walls, cement pointing to walls, blocking up windows incorrect door details, gutters and downpipes in aluminium and not cast iron etc.

It was confirmed to me all my observations were correct and Consent had not been Approved.

I also indicated, from photographs taken before and after that the ceilings of lathe and plaster were replaced with plasterboard and, indeed, this is the only part of the work I have exposed to the Council that they have made no comment on; why!

I have emails confirming all the work will be reinstated by the Council, unless Listed Building Consent can be obtained. In a recent Scrutiny Panel, an Officer said that the work being carried out will be ADL and that is quite bizarre bearing in mind when the Council's own department finished the works and they could not sell it, the buildings were transferred, by a long lease, to ADL.

I even asked the question, why did ADL's solicitors not investigate why Listed Building Consent had not been obtained and I was told that was not for the Council to comment on – it is ADL. The fact is ADL is a wholly owned company by the Council seems to be irrelevant.

I would estimate that the cost of work will be in excess of £200,000 and we as residents have to pay.

I met senior staff with Councillor Blackburn and was promised that there would be a fully independent inquiry, with no involvement by the Council. Several months later I was told that this would not happen because an investigation had happened in 2018.

I have not been sent those investigations and if that is correct, Officers at that time decided that it was appropriate not to carry out reinstatement works nor to suspend Officers who had carried out these criminal acts and basically not inform the Administration.

I fully expect English Heritage, Bath Preservation Trust and Local Architect/Surveyor will want answers.

There should be a fully independent inquiry held in public, so the facts of this deplorable episode are out in the public domain. Depending on the findings, action should be taken against all Council Officers who have tried to sweep this under the carpet.

These criminal acts are not going to go away. We have recently seen the Post Office debacle. Just like Mr Bates v the Post Office, I am not going away.

Emma Owens statement

The question I would like to ask you in this room is this: Is supporting Israel's right to commit Genocide still the safest thing for Bath politicians to do?

We assume that the persecuted and besieged population of Gaza are the only ones facing an existential risk in this crisis. They are a population mainly of unarmed children after all. What kind of backlash could we possibly face here in Bath as long as our politicians play it safe, block debate and support the far more threatening nuclear armed Israel? It is only Palestinians dying after all, it isn't our babies, our children or our grandchildren.

It might feel immoral, to stand by as people are killed on an industrial scale, are starved or are forcibly displaced.... But it is the line of least resistance until, as US Ambassador Linda Thomas Greenfield in the UN stated, "we reach a final solution" to the Palestinian problem.

We have got used to it being safe for our politicians to ignore the moral quagmire embodied in the state of Israel. We can all agree that we don't like military occupation and that Apartheid is a cruel and racist system. We don't agree with populations having different legal systems or with children being imprisoned and tortured without trial. We don't like settlements or settlers for that matter. We can also all agree that Netanyahu is an obstacle and his governmental colleagues are less than ideal. They should not be using genocidal rhetoric or starving and murdering so many children. Nevertheless, our politicians stand with Israel because to do something else feels too dangerous and too controversial.

Things can change quickly. We are told we are the pre-war generation. We too can be occupied. How can we argue that our occupier has no right to starve us in Bath, to cut off our water, to kill our children, to demolish our homes, schools and hospitals. On what basis? Which international laws do we live by and therefore hold others to?

What do you think the future holds as the cold winds of a crashing global economy start to blow? What if the election and huge public anger changes our politics? What happens if our moral authority has drained away? Will there be a reckoning for those on the wrong side of history as this tinderbox of war starts to flame out of our control? Will justice be restored and the guilty punished? The truth is, we do not know.

In closing: Future populations, your children and your grandchildren will want to know, where were you? what did you do when the Palestinian people were being so cruelly exterminated? If you are wise, you will prepare your answer now.

COUNCIL STATEMENT

Potholes are a huge problem for Bath residents but for some it's not their only concern.

Right here in Bath, there are residents with families in Gaza who would see that as a minor inconvenience. They have huge craters where their homes & streets used to be & have no other option than to navigate their way through those ruined streets, dodging IDF snipers to get food & water. In the refugee camp in Rafa, basic humanitarian aid is being blocked by Israeli settlers who are rejoicing, singing & even holding BBQs just metres away from where children are dying of starvation.

Imagine then, what it's like to be a Bath resident with family in Gaza and *still* have to carry on working, living or studying despite the enormous grief and worry that you have to shoulder.

When arriving at the decision to reject the motion, did the Monitoring Officer or Chair think about the 14000 babies and children who have been slaughtered? Did the faces of the 30000 orphans in the refugee camps, covered in dirt from being dug out of the rubble, or the haunted faces of the starving children not enter their thoughts? To dismiss the peace motions put forward as 'out of order' and 'not relevant' is shameful.

The statement issued by Bath Council regarding the ceasefire fell way short of what other councils have done. They won't be remembered for sitting on their hands. There are no actions linked to it. Bath Council has refused to act as other councils have done in calling for a ceasefire which is astonishing. There is live streaming of mass slaughter filmed by the victims themselves that can be watched on every tv, laptop & iPhone all over the world. The shocking evidence of the humanitarian crisis & war crimes committed by Israel as well the ICJ's guilty verdict has global coverage & can't be ignored.

It was stated that the council is keenly aware of the impact on local individuals & communities & will listen to what they have to say, which is

not true. We have had fortnightly rallies & vigils where the Palestinian speakers have given personal accounts of family tragedies & spoken about how vulnerable they are feeling yet no one from BANES aside from our Green councillors have attended or even engaged with the residents affected.

You had the opportunity to use your voices and join the global call for a ceasefire and rejected it. By removing our democratic right to debate on the ceasefire you have effectively silenced the residents of Bath.

It is not and never has been a time for 'both siding' or repeating platitudes about peace talks. Netanyahu does not want peace, he only wants Palestine, & at any cost.

You could have raised your voice for Palestine but you chose not to.

Jane Samson statement

I can't sleep at night

I have a constant headache, my mental health is deteriorating.

My GP has prescribed anti-depressants.

I grind my teeth at night.

I feel like I am living a nightmare.

I go to bed thinking about it. I wake up thinking about it.

If I wake during the night it floods into my consciousness and I can't get back to sleep.

I am exhausted and ill.

I feel permanently on edge

I find it difficult to relate to my family and friends. It's like they exist behind a wall.

I don't know what to do. I feel helpless.

There is nothing I can do. But I can't do nothing. I can't move forward with my life. Everyday things don't mean anything any more.

When I look at my small grandchildren, playing happily, full of joy, I think about children having their limbs amputated without anaesthetic on bloody floors, or being picked out of rubble in little pieces and being put in a bin liner.

A vision of hell.

I have lost my faith...

My life will never be the same again.

This is what I hear everyday from many people I know and local people who I am getting to know who live in Bath and North East Somerset. Their numbers grow by the day, a rising tide of beleaguered people looking to their political leaders to act.

For Palestinians resident in BANES with family in Gaza it's of an entirely different order. I try but I can't begin to really comprehend what they have been going through since the start of the mass displacement and genocide. The second Nakba.

How do you function when you know that your parents are starving to death? When your three your old twin cousins have been blown up in their uncle's lap and the pieces can't be found? When you feel the terror, trauma and despair of your loved ones who have been abandoned by a heartless world? When you feel utter helplessness and hopelessness?

I have no idea. I can't comprehend the level of alienation that they feel and the cruel realization that the vast majority of politicians, whether on a national or local level, simply don't care, or do 'both-siding', or bury their heads in the sand or, unbelievably, side with the oppressor.

Where is your humanity?

Don't tell us that this is just an international issue that you have no power to influence. That it is not proper council business.

You cared about the Ukrainians. You flew to their aid and drew them to your bosom. You raised their flag and twinned with a Ukrainian town. You couldn't do enough too quickly.

Don't tell us it's not your business. It **is** your business! We are your constituents. We voted you in. We put you in power. Our mental health is suffering and we are terrified by the prospect of a 'so called' democracy that ignores the will of the people.

We are appalled that you do not care enough even to have a debate.

How dare you treat this genocide, this holocaust, as if it is an inconvenience? How dare you sweep it under the carpet? How dare you turn your backs?

Do you not understand international law? Do you not follow what is going on at the International Court of Justice? Do you not realize that those politicians who do not act to do everything in their power to stop this slaughter are complicit and culpable?

If you don't want to table a ceasefire motion because it's 'complicated', understand that it really is not. Go away and do your homework! Wake up! Get out of your comfort zone! Stop being so intellectually dishonest!

Shame on Bath and North East Somerset council.

Shame!

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COUNCIL MEETING 14TH MARCH 2024

**STATEMENTS FROM
COUNCILLORS**

Councillor (item 12)

1. Cllr Joanna Wright

The democratic process and listening to residents

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS - COUNCILLORS

M	01	Question from:	Councillor Chris Dando
Can I invite the Leader to update members on developments since the signing of the friendship agreement with the City of Oleksandriya?			
Answer from:			Cllr Kevin Guy
Since the friendship agreement was finalised with Oleksandriya's city council in August 2023 there has been a number of developments:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Leader has spoken regularly with Mayor Kuzmenko to explore partnership opportunities• The council has facilitated partnership discussions between Broadlands School – Keynsham and a secondary school from Oleksandriya to promote cultural exchange• The council linked the friends of Oleksandriya with Bath University's Director of Sport to help develop sporting ties• To mark the 2nd anniversary of the conflict a recital event was held at the Abbey followed by a reception at the Guildhall. In addition, to mark the council's ongoing support, the flags of Oleksandriya and Ukraine were flown over the Guildhall and Pultney Bridge was lit in the colours of the Ukrainian flag.			