

Council

Date: Thursday 14th March 2024

Time: 6.30 pm

Venue: Council Chamber - Guildhall, Bath

To: All Members of the Council

Dear Member

You are invited to attend a meeting of the **Council** on **Thursday 14th March 2024** in the **Council Chamber - Guildhall, Bath**.

The agenda is set out overleaf.

Yours sincerely



Jo Morrison
Democratic Services Manager
for Chief Executive

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.

The Council now has a maximum time limit for this, so any requests to speak cannot be guaranteed if the list is full.

Further details of the scheme can be found at:

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

5. **Emergency Evacuation Procedure**

When the continuous alarm sounds, you must evacuate the building by one of the designated exits and proceed to the named assembly point. The designated exits are signposted. Arrangements are in place for the safe evacuation of disabled people.

6. **Supplementary information for meetings**

Additional information and Protocols and procedures relating to meetings

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

Council - Thursday 14th March 2024

at 6.30 pm in the Council Chamber - Guildhall, Bath

A G E N D A

1. EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

The Chair will draw attention to the emergency evacuation procedure as set out under Note 5.

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 complete the green interest forms circulated to groups in their pre-meetings (which will be announced at the Council Meeting) 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 4.4 Appendix 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. MINUTES - 20TH FEBRUARY 2024 (Pages 5 - 10)

To be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair

5. ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE CHAIR OF THE COUNCIL OR FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

These are matters of information for Members of the Council. No decisions will be required arising from the announcements.

6. TO ANNOUNCE ANY URGENT BUSINESS AGREED BY THE CHAIR

If there is any urgent business arising since the formal agenda was published, the Chair will announce this and give reasons why it has been agreed for consideration at this meeting. In making this decision, the Chair will, where practicable, have consulted with the Leaders of the Political Groups. Any documentation on urgent business will be circulated at the meeting, if not made available previously.

7. QUESTIONS, STATEMENTS AND PETITIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

The Democratic Services Manager will announce any submissions received. The Council will be invited to decide what action it wishes to take, if any, on the matters raised in these submissions. As the questions received and the answers given will be circulated in written form there is no requirement for them to be read out at the meeting. The questions and answers will be published with the draft minutes.

8. MEMBERS ALLOWANCES REVIEW (Pages 11 - 16)

The Council is required to undertake an independent review of its Member Allowances scheme every 4 years. The last review reported its findings in 2021 so this report is about establishing the next review.

9. ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CHARITABLE TRUST BOARD (Pages 17 - 20)

The purpose of this report is to update the Council on the work of the Charitable Trust Board in 2022/23.

10. MOTION FROM LIBERAL DEMOCRAT GROUP - CARE EXPERIENCED PEOPLE (Pages 21 - 22)

11. MOTION FROM LABOUR GROUP - DEBATE NOT HATE (Pages 23 - 24)

12. QUESTIONS, STATEMENTS AND PETITIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

The Democratic Services Manager will announce any submissions received. The Council will be invited to decide what action it wishes to take, if any, on the matters raised in these submissions. As the questions received and the answers given will be circulated in written form there is no requirement for them to be read out at the meeting. The questions and answers will be published with the draft minutes.

The Committee Administrator for this meeting is Jo Morrison who can be contacted on 01225 394358.

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BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET COUNCIL

MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING

Tuesday, 20th February, 2024

Present:- **Councillors** Michael Auton, Alex Beaumont, David Biddleston, Colin Blackburn, Alison Born, 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, Grant Johnson, Samantha Kelly, George Leach, John Leach, Hal MacFie, Ruth Malloy, Matt McCabe, Paul May, Sarah Moore, Ann Morgan, Robin Moss, Michelle O'Doherty, Bharat Pankhania, Manda Rigby, Dine Romero, Paul Roper, Sam Ross, Onkar Saini, Toby Simon, George Tomlin, Malcolm Treby, Karen Walker, Sarah Warren, Tim Warren CBE, Andy Wait and Joanna Wright

Apologies for absence: **Councillors** Tim Ball, Anna Box, Deborah Collins, Paul Crossley, Lesley Mansell, June Player, Shaun Stephenson-McGall, Alison Streatfeild-James and David Wood

67 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

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

68 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Monitoring Officer issued a general dispensation for all Councillors who pay Council Tax or were School Governors and therefore had an interest in these items, to enable them to take part in the debate and vote on agenda item 8 - Budget & Council Tax 2023/24.

In addition, specific dispensations were granted for the following Councillors;

Grant Johnson
Sarah Warren

Who have a family member in receipt of Council SEND support or social care support.

Also, Councillors:

George Leach
Michael Auton
Dine Romero
Steve Hedges
Chris Dando
Tim Warren

Who have a family member or employer contracted to provide services or are a precepting authority or a member of a Town or Parish Council receiving a grant from B&NES Council.

The following non-pecuniary (other) declarations of interest were also made;

- Councillor Hodge as Chair of The Friends of B&NES Society of Young Musicians;
- Councillor Jackson regarding the purchase and refurbishment of Trinity Methodist Church;
- Councillor Hale – granddaughter employed at Charlton House;
- Councillor May as a non-executive director of Sirona .

69 MINUTES - 30TH NOVEMBER 2023

On a motion from Councillor Guy, seconded by Councillor Jackson, it was

RESOLVED that the minutes of 30th November 2023 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

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

The Chair made the following announcements;

- 1) She reminded Councillors about the microphone use;
- 2) She explained that Annex 12 of the Budget report had been circulated separately;
- 3) She reminded Councillors that all votes on the budget (item 8) are required to be a recorded vote;
- 4) She invited Councillors to stand for a minute's silence following the recent death of former B&NES Councillor John Whittock. John served from 2007 - 2011, representing Midsomer Norton North and was also Clerk for Peasedown St John Parish Council.

71 TO ANNOUNCE ANY URGENT BUSINESS AGREED BY THE CHAIR

There were no items of urgent business.

72 QUESTIONS, STATEMENTS AND PETITIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

There were none.

73 BUDGET AND COUNCIL TAX 2024/25 AND FINANCIAL OUTLOOK

The Council considered a report which presented the revenue and capital budgets together with proposals for increases in Council Tax and the Adult Social Care Precept for 2024/25.

On a motion from Councillor Mark Elliott, seconded by Councillor Kevin Guy, it was

RESOLVED

1. The Council approves-

- The General Fund net revenue budget for 2024/25 of **£135.85m** and the individual service cash limits for 2024/25 as outlined in Annex 1.
- The savings and income plans outlined in Annex 2(i), funding requirements 2(ii), in conjunction with the Equalities Impact Assessment Report in Annex 3.
- An increase in Council Tax of 2.99% in 2024/25 (an increase of £49.45 per Band D property or 95p per week).
- An increase of 2% to Council Tax for the Adult Social Care Precept in recognition of the current demands and financial pressures on this service. This is equivalent to an increase of £33.07 on a Band D property (64p per week).
- 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 £12.3m - £13.6m.
- To note the Children's Services management plan set out in section 5.2.7 of the report.
- The Efficiency Strategy attached at Annex 4.
- The Capital Programme for 2024/25 of £71.91m including new and emerging capital bids outlined in Annex 5(i), planned sources of funding in 5.8.3, and notes the programme for 2025/26 to 2028/29 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.
- The delegation of implementation, subject to consultation where appropriate, of the capital programmes set out in Annex 5(i) to Annex 5(iv) to the relevant Director in consultation with the appropriate Cabinet Portfolio Holder.
- The schedule of asset disposals as set out in section 5.8.2 and delegates the final disposal decision to the Head of Commercial and/or Corporate Estate in consultation with the S151 Officer and appropriate Cabinet Portfolio Holder.

- The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) allocations and amendments outlined in Annex 5(v).
 - The Capital & Investment Strategy attached at Annex 6.
 - The MRP Policy attached at Annex 7.
 - The Capital Prudential Indicators outlined in 5.8.7.
 - The Annual Pay Policy Statement at Annex 8.
 - The Community Contribution Fund extension outlined section 5.5.
 - The Council Tax Support Scheme for 2024/25 shown in the following link: <https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2024-01/Bath%20%26%20NE%20Somerset%20S13A%20202425%20FINAL.pdf> and referred to in 5.3.5
 - The Fees and Charges schedule for 2024/25 at Annex 11 and support its publication following approval of the budget, with delegation to amend individual costs within the schedule in line with market needs, to the Director of Place Management, in consultation with the appropriate Cabinet Portfolio Holder.
2. That the Council approves the technical resolutions that are derived from the budget report, and all the figures in that report, including the precepts for towns, parishes and other precepting bodies as set out in Annex 12.
 3. That the Council note the S151 Officer's report on the robustness of the proposed budget and the adequacy of the Council's reserves outlined in 5.7.
 4. That the Council note the budget consultation responses in Annex 10.

[Notes;

1. *An amendment was moved by Councillor Robin Moss and seconded by Councillor Liz Hardman. This was lost on a named vote;*

Councillors in favour (6): - Councillors David Biddleston, Chris Dando, Liz Hardman, Eleanor Jackson, Grant Johnson and Robin Moss

Councillors against (41) - Councillors Michael Auton, Alex Beaumont, Colin Blackburn, Alison Born, Jess David, Mark Elliott, Sarah Evans, Fiona Gourley, Kevin Guy, Alan Hale, Ian Halsall, Dave Harding, Gavin Heathcote, Steve Hedges, Oli Henman, Joel Hirst, Lucy Hodge, Duncan Hounsell, Shaun Hughes, Samantha Kelly, George Leach, John Leach, Hal MacFie, Ruth Malloy, Paul May, Matt McCabe, Sarah Moore, Ann Morgan, Michelle O'Doherty, Bharat Pankhania; Manda Rigby, Dine Romero, Paul Roper, Onkar Saini, Toby Simon, George Tomlin, Malcolm Treby, Andy Wait, Karen Walker, Sarah Warren and Tim Warren.

Councillors abstaining (3) – Councillors Saskia Heijltjes, Sam Ross and Joanna Wright

2. An amendment was moved by Councillor Joanna Wright and seconded by Councillor Saskia Heijltjes. This was lost on a named vote;

Councillors in favour (3): - Councillors Saskia Heijltjes, Sam Ross and Joanna Wright

Councillors against (40) - Councillors Michael Auton, Alex Beaumont, Colin Blackburn, Alison Born, Jess David, Mark Elliott, Sarah Evans, Fiona Gourley, Kevin Guy, Ian Halsall, Dave Harding, Gavin Heathcote, Steve Hedges, Oli Henman, Joel Hirst, Lucy Hodge, Duncan Hounsell, Shaun Hughes, Samantha Kelly, George Leach, John Leach, Hal MacFie, Ruth Malloy, Paul May, Matt McCabe, Sarah Moore, Ann Morgan, Michelle O'Doherty, Bharat Pankhania; Manda Rigby, Dine Romero, Paul Roper, Onkar Saini, Toby Simon, George Tomlin, Malcolm Treby, Andy Wait, Karen Walker, Sarah Warren and Tim Warren.

Councillors abstaining (7) – Councillors David Biddleston, Chris Dando, Alan Hale, Liz Hardman, Eleanor Jackson, Grant Johnson and Robin Moss

3. The above successful resolution was carried on a named vote;

Councillors in favour (39): - Councillors Michael Auton, Alex Beaumont, David Biddleston, Alison Born, Chris Dando, Jess David, Mark Elliott, Fiona Gourley, Kevin Guy, Ian Halsall, Dave Harding, Liz Hardman, Steve Hedges, Oli Henman, Joel Hirst, Lucy Hodge, Duncan Hounsell, Eleanor Jackson, Grant Johnson, Samantha Kelly, George Leach, John Leach, Hal MacFie, Ruth Malloy, Paul May, Matt McCabe, Sarah Moore, Ann Morgan, Robin Moss, Michelle O'Doherty, Bharat Pankhania; Dine Romero, Paul Roper, Onkar Saini, Toby Simon, George Tomlin, Malcolm Treby, Andy Wait and Sarah Warren.

Councillors against (10): - Councillors Colin Blackburn Sarah Evans, Alan Hale, Gavin Heathcote, Saskia Heijltjes, Shaun Hughes, Sam Ross, Karen Walker, Tim Warren, and Joanna Wright.]

74 TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT 2024/25

The Council considered a report regarding the Council's Treasury Management Strategy Statement. The Authority is required to approve a treasury management strategy before the start of each financial year.

On a motion from Councillor Mark Elliott, seconded by Councillor Matt McCabe, it was unanimously

RESOLVED to

1. Approve the actions proposed within the Treasury Management Strategy Statement (**Appendix 1**); and
2. Note the Treasury Management Indicators detailed in **Appendix 1**.

75 QUESTIONS, STATEMENTS AND PETITIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

There were none.

The meeting ended at 8.35 pm

Chair

Date Confirmed and Signed

Prepared by Democratic Services

Bath & North East Somerset Council		
MEETING:	Council	
MEETING DATE:	14 March 2024	
TITLE:	Members' Allowances Review	
WARD:	All	
AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM		
List of attachments to this report: IRP Member Biographies		

1 THE ISSUE

1.1 The Council is required to undertake an independent review of its Member Allowances scheme every 4 years. The last review reported its findings in 2021 so this report is about establishing the next review.

2 RECOMMENDATION

The Council is asked to;

2.1 Agree the re-appointment of the Independent Remuneration Panel for B&NES;

2.2 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;

2.3 Note the issues carried over from the last review (in paragraph 3.5);

2.4 Submit any suggestions for Panel consideration to the Monitoring Officer, before its first meeting in April 2024.

3 THE REPORT

3.1 The last review took place in 2020/21 and the current scheme was approved on 4th May 2021;

<https://democracy.bathnes.gov.uk/documents/g5958/Public%20minutes%2004th-May-2021%2018.30%20Council.pdf?T=11> (item 10)

- 3.2 The Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) now operate as a 4-person Panel and have a well-established track record of working effectively together for a number of nearby Councils. Having a 4-person Panel rather than a 3-person one brings more experience to the table and assists with convening meetings taking into account their busy calendars. Their biographies are included at Appendix 1.
- 3.3 The Panel have been consulted for their availability and, subject to Council approval, would be available to undertake a review in the Autumn of 2024, with an initial scoping meeting arranged for April.
- 3.4 The initial scoping meeting will review any outstanding items from the last review which are still relevant, pick up any issues that have arisen since then, and agree the questions for the Member Survey, which will be sent out before the summer holidays.
- 3.5 Issues logged from last time that may need inclusion in scope this time;
 - Intention to review SRA bandings
 - Fostering Panel allowance (*pick up in banding review*)
 - Review Council Chair's role since reduction of duties. [*Has this increased again post covid?*]
 - Dependant Carer's allowance – effectiveness of scheme and level of support
 - Role of the Chair of the PDS Chairs & Vice Chairs Group
 - Performance management role of Group Leaders.
- 3.6 An additional item is proposed to include within the scheme the approach to take if the staff pay increase (to which the member increase is linked) is a flat rate, not a percentage rate (as has been necessary for the last couple of years).
- 3.7 In addition to the survey, there will be other opportunities for Members to input into the review process (through member interviews), but any informal suggestions for items to be included in the scope can be submitted before then to the Monitoring Officer.
- 3.8 Ultimately, it is for Council to decide whether to amend its scheme in accordance with any recommendations from the Panel, and when any such amendments should be introduced.

4 STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS

- 4.1 The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 requires local authorities to establish an independent panel with the function of providing the Local Authority with recommendations on its remuneration scheme and the amounts to be paid.

5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCE, PROPERTY, PEOPLE)

- 5.1 Recommendations from the Panel may have budgetary implications and any such considerations will need to be assessed in consultation with the Section

151 Officer, Monitoring Officer (as budget holder for Members' allowances) and Cabinet Member.

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 CLIMATE CHANGE

7.1 The Council may consider inviting the Panel to consider any particular provisions relating to Member travel.

8 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

8.1 None.

9 CONSULTATION

9.1 This report has been cleared by the Monitoring Officer and S151 Officer.

Contact person	Michael Hewitt, Monitoring Officer and Head of Legal and Democratic Services
Background papers	<i>Link to last review findings and resolutions;</i> https://democracy.bathnes.gov.uk/documents/g5958/Public%20minutes%2004th-May-2021%2018.30%20Council.pdf?T=11 <i>(item 10)</i>
Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format	

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INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL – MEMBERS BIOGRAPHIES

Ronnie Alexander (Chair of the Panel)

Ronnie left the Civil Service in 2013 to pursue a variety of other interests including consultancy. He is currently an independent Member of Powys Teaching Health Board and a non-executive member on the Board of the Independent Monitoring Authority. Ronnie serves as Independent Chair of the Standards Committee for the South Wales Fire and Rescue Service and for Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council. He has a considerable record of engaging with the public, professionals and politicians at all levels, to influence policy. This follows a civil service career spanning over 20 years and an equivalent period working in local government.

Wendy Stephenson

Wendy was, from 2005 to 2017, Chief Executive of VOSCUR, the support and development organisation for Bristol's voluntary and community sector. In this role, Wendy gained a good knowledge of the workings of the local authority and the roles and responsibilities of councillors. Wendy has participated in other Council's assessment panels during the recruitment of senior officers and has worked with councillors and officers in a number of different policy areas.

Graham Russell

Graham was the Head of Democratic Services for Bath & North East Somerset Council from 1993 to early retirement in 2005. Prior to that was a long career in local government corporate departments. He developed his expertise in the subject of members' allowances and was commissioned by South West Councils to produce on-line guidance on the subject for IRP members, their support officers and councillors. He is currently a marriage celebrant and a volunteer at Saltford Community Association in various roles.

Keira Stobie

Keira has moved on from full-time classroom teaching but remains employed within the education sector and has become more involved with her voluntary interests which predominately focus on heritage, arts and working with people at either end of the age spectrum. Keira is motivated to use her experience to contribute actively to her community.

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Bath & North East Somerset Council	
MEETING:	Council
MEETING DATE:	14 March 2024
TITLE:	Annual Report of the Charitable Trust Board
WARD:	All
AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM	
List of attachments to this report: None	

1 THE ISSUE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Council on the work of the Charitable Trust Board in 2022/23.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 To note the Annual Report of the Charitable Trust Board for 2022/23.

3 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCE, PROPERTY, PEOPLE)

- 3.1 The purpose of the Charitable Trust Board is to facilitate the management of the charitable trusts for which the Council is the sole trustee; independently, in accordance with their governing documents and in the best interests of the charity. Currently the only charitable trust which the Board oversees is the Alice Park Trust. This is managed by a Sub-Committee consisting of voting members (elected members of the Council) and independent non-voting members.
- 3.2 The Charitable Trust Board is satisfied that the finances of the charity are being managed adequately with the support of the Council's finance team. The Alice Park Trust annual report and accounts for 2022/23 have been submitted to the Charity Commission.

4 THE REPORT

- 4.1 The Charitable Trust Board received the Annual Report of the Alice Park Trust and is satisfied that the Alice Park Trust is:

- Being managed in pursuit of its charitable purposes.
- Maintaining a balanced account.
- Acting within the requirements of its governing documents.
- Dealing with its regulatory and public accountability obligations.

- 4.2 Expenditure incurred for Alice Park Trust in 2022/23 was £40,383; this was offset by income of £20,398.
- 4.3 The deficit of £19,985 has been subsidised from the Bath & North East Somerset Council Parks revenue budget, to ensure the Trust operates on a going concern basis. This is the same process that has been undertaken in previous years.
- 4.4 Net Assets of the Trust are valued at a cost of £189,610. Net assets include investments held, land at Alice Park, car park, cottage number one, tea chalet and storage shed, public conveniences, tennis courts, garden shelter and play equipment.
- 4.5 The accounts for 2022/23 have been prepared by the Council's Finance team and have been independently examined by One West. The Independent Examination has concluded, and the Independent Examination Report has been signed off.
- 4.6 The accounts for the Trust are prepared on a cash basis, in line with reporting requirements and guidelines issued by the Charity Commission.
- 4.7 An annual report for the Trust has also been prepared for submission to the Charity Commission.
- 4.8 The park was open for public access throughout the year, including use of the tennis courts and tea chalet, and has been suitably maintained. The cottage property was let, and the income used in the upkeep of the park.
- 4.9 All members of the Alice Park Trust Sub-Committee during the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023 are listed in the Annual Return.
- 4.10 The Alice Park Trust accounts for 2022/23 were submitted to the Charity Commission by the required deadline.

5 RATIONALE

- 5.1 Under its terms of reference, the Charitable Trust Board is required to submit an annual report to the Council.

6 EQUALITIES

- 6.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment has not been carried out as this report is for information only.

7 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 7.1 None

8 CLIMATE CHANGE

- 8.1 This is an internal matter, so climate change considerations are not relevant.

9 CONSULTATION

- 9.1 The Section 151 and Monitoring Officer have had opportunity to review and input into this report.

10 RISK MANAGEMENT

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

Contact person	Chris Major, Director of Place Management
Background papers	None
Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format	

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Bath and North East Somerset Council

Full Council meeting 14 March 2024

Liberal Democrat Motion on Care Experienced People

To be proposed by Councillor Paul May

Council notes that:

1. Care experienced people face significant barriers that impact them throughout their lives.
2. Despite the resilience of many care experienced people, society too often does not take their needs into account.
3. Care experienced people often face discrimination and stigma across housing, health, education, relationships, employment and in the criminal justice system.
4. 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.
5. 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.
6. 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.
7. Councillors should be champions of the children in our care and challenge the negative attitudes and prejudice that exists in all aspects of society.
8. The Public Sector Equality Duty requires public bodies, such as Councils, to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimisation of people with protected characteristics.
9. 75 other Local Authorities (cross party) have already adopted the motion to protect Care Experience.
10. The Independent Review of Childrens 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.

- *Unless where specifically set out in the statute, motions approved at Council do not bind the Executive (Cabinet) but may influence their future decisions.*
- *Councillors are reminded of their public sector equality duty which requires the Council to consider or think about how their policies or decisions may affect people who are protected under the Equality Act.*

Council therefore:

11. Recognises that care experienced people are a group who are likely to face discrimination.
12. 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.
13. Requests that future decisions, services and policies made and adopted by the Council should be assessed through Equality Impact Assessments to determine the impact of changes on people with care experience, alongside those who formally share a protected characteristic.
14. 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.
15. 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.
16. Formally calls upon other bodies to treat care experience as a protected characteristic until such time as it may be introduced by legislation.
17. Calls for Council departments to continue proactively seeking out and listening to the voices of care experienced people when developing new policies.

- *Unless where specifically set out in the statute, motions approved at Council do not bind the Executive (Cabinet) but may influence their future decisions.*
- *Councillors are reminded of their public sector equality duty which requires the Council to consider or think about how their policies or decisions may affect people who are protected under the Equality Act.*

Bath and North East Somerset Council Full Council - 14 March 2024
Labour Motion on 'Debate, Not Hate'
To be proposed by Cllr Lesley Mansell

Council:

1. Believes the intimidation and abuse of councillors, 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 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.
- *Unless where specifically set out in the statute, motions approved at Council do not bind the Executive (Cabinet) but may influence their future decisions.*
 - *Councillors are reminded of their public sector equality duty which requires the Council to consider or think about how their policies or decisions may affect people who are protected under the Equality Act.*

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.

- *Unless where specifically set out in the statute, motions approved at Council do not bind the Executive (Cabinet) but may influence their future decisions.*
- *Councillors are reminded of their public sector equality duty which requires the Council to consider or think about how their policies or decisions may affect people who are protected under the Equality Act.*