

## **BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET**

### **CABINET**

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

Thursday, 11th July, 2024

#### **Present:**

Councillor Kevin Guy (Ch)	Leader of the Council, LD Group Leader, Member Advocate for Armed Forces and Veterans
Councillor Tim Ball	Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Services
Councillor Alison Born	Cabinet Member for Adult Services
Councillor Mark Elliott	Cabinet Member for Resources
Councillor Paul May	Cabinet Member for Children's Services
Councillor Matt McCabe	Cabinet Member for Built Environment, Housing and Sustainable Development
Councillor Manda Rigby	Cabinet Member for Highways
Councillor Paul Roper	Cabinet Member for Economic and Cultural Sustainable Development
Councillor Sarah Warren	Deputy Council Leader (statutory) and Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency and Sustainable Travel

#### **15 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

#### **16 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE**

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

#### **17 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Dave Wood.

#### **18 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### **19 TO ANNOUNCE ANY URGENT BUSINESS AGREED BY THE CHAIR**

There was no urgent business.

#### **20 QUESTIONS FROM PUBLIC AND COUNCILLORS**

There were 11 questions from Councillors and 18 questions from members of the public.

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

## **21 STATEMENTS OR PETITIONS FROM PUBLIC OR COUNCILLORS**

Members of the public and Councillors made statements as follows:

- Chad Allen – Hedera Helix (English Ivy) and the need for trees and wildlife in B&NES. Mr Allen raised issues regarding the need to maintain and clear bridleways and footpaths. He also requested that water fountains be provided in graveyards to help wildlife and provide water for hedges. He stressed the need to maintain trees and retain natural habitats to ensure the capture of CO2.
- Richard Samuel – Future Funding of services in B&NES (a copy of the statement is attached as an appendix to these minutes).
- Ceris Humphreys – Debate not Hate Campaign (a copy of the statement is attached as an appendix to these minutes).
- Stefan Steinhoff – Sydney Road Liveable Neighbourhood (a copy of the statement is attached as an appendix to these minutes).
- Cllr Dave Harding – Bishop Sutton Football Field and Surrounds (a copy of the statement is attached as an appendix to these minutes).

## **22 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS CABINET MEETING - 6TH JUNE 2024**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> June 2024 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

## **23 CONSIDERATION OF SINGLE MEMBER ITEMS REQUISITIONED TO CABINET**

No single member items were requisitioned to Cabinet.

## **24 MATTERS REFERRED BY POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY BODIES**

No matters were referred by Policy Development and Scrutiny Panels.

## **25 SINGLE MEMBER CABINET DECISIONS TAKEN SINCE PREVIOUS CABINET MEETING**

The Cabinet agreed to note the report.

## 26 TRANSPORT ACTION PLAN MAP

Cllr Manda Rigby, Cabinet Member for Highways, introduced the report, moved the officer recommendation, and made the following points:

- Looking at all the individual transport schemes in isolation can make it difficult to see the overall picture and to understand how the plan is working in context. This is why the Council is working towards having a Transport Action Plan.
- Over the next three years the Council will be investing an unprecedented amount in transport interventions across the whole of B&NES to deliver more travel choices for our residents and visitors. The Council will be delivering nearly 200 policies and schemes to take us forward in meeting our strategic aims and deliver on our council objectives. The Transport Action Plan provides greater transparency on proposed interventions and enables residents to have a greater say on our plans to achieve net zero goals, provide more travel choices, and improve accessibility to jobs and services.
- We have been working on an interactive map which will bring together all the proposed interventions making it easier for residents and visitors to see what is proposed in their area. It will be the main tool for people to view all the transport proposals in the area and be signposted to further information to include consultation dates, scheme details, funding status and construction timelines.
- In its first iteration the map will include areas we have under Council control, but it will expand to include WECA schemes and third parties such as Wessex Water or Network Rail who also have to do work on our highways. It will be fully reflective of our hierarchy of users which reflects the recent highway code revision which emphasises that pedestrians and wheelers are at the top, cyclists second, public transport next and private cars last in terms of allocating scarce road resources to different types of users.
- The map will be kept up to date as schemes progress and will provide the relevant contact details for each scheme. We expect the map to be available on the council's website from 2nd September 2024 and will work with our strategic partners to provide new information on interventions as and when they arise. It will be a definitive source of what is happening where and when in our road network.

Cllr Sarah Warren seconded the motion and stated that this is an important example of how the Council is trying to improve openness and accessibility.

**RESOLVED** (unanimously):

To approve the Transport Action Plan interactive digital map for publication in Summer 2024.

## 27 YOUTH JUSTICE PLAN 2024 TO 2026

Cllr Paul May, Cabinet Member for Children's Services, introduced the report, moved the updated officer recommendation, and made the following statement:

“I’m pleased to propose that the Cabinet endorse the Youth Justice Plan for 2024 to 2026 and it will be a recommendation through to the full Council that will make the final decision.

The overall goal of the Plan, and the Youth Justice Service, is to help make Bath and North East Somerset a safer place and support local children to live crime-free lives.

Our annual Plan is developed through the Bath and North East Somerset Youth Justice Service – a statutory, wide partnership with Avon and Somerset Police, the Probation Service, NHS Bath, Swindon, and Wiltshire (BSW) Integrated Care Board (ICB), Oxford Health, housing, Curo, housing, colleges and the Youth Bench plus other members. It is a wide partnership.

This year’s plan comes in an important year for the Youth Justice Service. Our long-standing and very much valued head of service has retired, and an external inspection is scheduled for later this year, so it’s vital we have a robust plan in place.

There are four strategic priorities for 2024 to 2026, as affirmed by the Youth Justice Service Partnership Board.

Firstly, working to reduce disproportionality – this means working to reduce the over-represented groups in B&NES who are in the Youth Justice service, such as children with Special Educational Needs and from minority ethnic backgrounds. We have clear targets for our future efforts to tackle overrepresentation.

Secondly, strengthening participation for children and families within the service and continuing to develop a more collaborative approach. This includes initiatives such as focus groups, new ways of gathering feedback, and more support.

The third strategic priority is embedding ‘Child First’ Principles to addressing offending behaviour. This will include offering individually tailored assessments, plans and interventions that are trauma-informed and recognise the child’s needs.

Finally, and importantly, we aim to reduce serious violence. The issue of knife crime is still high on the agenda and high in residents’ concerns. This has been a focus over the past year, with continuing weapons awareness work with children, education in schools, Street Doctors first aid and safety training as well as targeted prevention services. Four knife crime awareness events for parents and carers have taken place and further events are planned.

Reducing serious violence and making Bath and North East Somerset a safer place will continue to be an important priority. We are looking forward to the report from the Children, Adults, Health and Wellbeing Panel task and finish group later this year.

I also want to highlight that we have low numbers of children in the formal justice system – a real plus for this area. The Youth Justice Team does incredible work ensuring that children and young people avoid custodial sentences and steer away from offending again. Bath and North East Somerset has a low number of first time ‘entrants’ compared to the average in the South West and across England and Wales. In addition, reoffending rates are falling and are lower than our comparators, which is very encouraging.

In addition to the strategic priorities already mentioned, the Service will continue to ensure that children and their families are prepared for court and children are treated fairly, ensuring reports prepared for court reflect the impacts on the victims. And will ensure the workforce delivering the plan have the right training and support to make a difference to the children they work with.”

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

“The service provided by the Youth Justice team is truly multi-agency in nature, which enables it to provide supportive, holistic, child-centred interventions that help the young people and their families engaged with the service to make the changes they need to reduce the likelihood of further offending.

By intervening earlier, there is far greater chance of changing patterns of behaviour which is reflected in the outcomes achieved.

This is a model of intervention that has been eroded as budgets have been cut in recent years, but it is something that we should seek to replicate in other services wherever possible.”

Cllr Tim Ball stressed the importance of keeping children out of the Youth Justice System and thanked the Youth Justice Team for the valuable work that they undertake.

**RESOLVED** (unanimously):

To recommend that full Council approves the Youth Justice Plan 2024-26.

## **28 SOMER VALLEY ENTERPRISE ZONE - COMPULSORY PURCHASE ORDER**

Cllr Paul Roper, Cabinet Member for Economic and Cultural Sustainable Development, introduced the item, moved the officer recommendation and made the following statement:

“The Somer Valley Enterprise Zone (SVEZ) is a key component for the delivery of our Economic Strategy for our authority. This is an ambitious and complex project. What we are doing is delivering an exemplar, net zero, green business park creating around 1,300 jobs of the type that we aspire to. That is good quality, secure, well paid, fulfilling and local employment. We are convinced that this will provide a much needed and significant economic boost to the local area and the authority as a whole.

I would like to remind cabinet of one of the key points I made back in February this year when we adopted the Local Development Order to enable the delivery of this scheme. The communities of Midsomer Norton, Paulton and Radstock used to be almost completely self-sufficient in terms of local employment, but the loss of key employers over the last few decades has completely reversed that, with most employment opportunities now being outside the area. And the land that was once used for employment now contains housing and this compounds the problem of insufficient local employment opportunities.

To try and reverse the damage caused by the decline of local employment, the land in question was allocated as a potential site for industrial development in 2007, but

the market failed to deliver it. So, this administration has set about the enabling and delivery of the scheme. That is no small undertaking, and I am proud of the ambition that this authority has in this regard.

To deliver this scheme requires the acquisition of at least 47 separate parcels of land from 40 landowners. It is hoped that most, if not all, the land purchases can be carried out on the basis of willing buyer and seller, and negotiations continue to try and secure land on this basis.

What we cannot allow to happen is for the scheme to fail because any one of the multiple land interests cannot be acquired on a voluntary basis. It is therefore deemed necessary to have the powers to compel and these powers are enshrined in a Compulsory Purchase Order. In short, this will enable delivery of the scheme. On 1st Feb this year cabinet approved an in-principle decision to pursue a Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) process and this paper before us this evening enables officers to progress to the detailed phase of the CPO process.

I am acutely aware of the sensitivities of this and the implications it has on the landowners affected. I am aware of the continued resistance by some to the creation of this employment site. What we do believe however, is that the benefits to the local communities associated with the creation of the SVEZ do justify the use of this land. Indeed, for the CPO to be successful, we must pass certain prescribed tests for viability. We are of the view that our aspirations for the use of this land will meet the requirements for a valid CPO.

To reiterate, this decision is not one taken lightly, and we will only use these powers as a last resort. It is our preferred route to reach a negotiated settlement with all interested parties.

I would like to underline the fact that the landowners will be compensated at fair value. The principle of compulsory purchase compensation is generally to place the owner of an interest (land or other affected interest) in no better or worse position than prior to the compulsory purchase. Compensation is assessed and paid in accordance with the statutory compensation code which applies to the compulsory acquisition of land, property and other interests.

In addition, landowners may also claim reasonable costs incurred in the transaction, including surveyors or agents' fees for negotiating compensation and legal costs properly incurred in the purchase by the acquiring authority."

Cllr Paul May seconded the motion and made the following statement:

"The community of Midsomer Norton has seen a combination of two major pressures.

First, because so much of the area of Bath and North East Somerset is green belt, Midsomer Norton, Paulton and Radstock have seen high levels of new housing.

Secondly, many of the traditional major employers in the area have disappeared.

This has caused a real community need for more employment, including to provide young people with local job opportunities and training.

The pressure created by local people having to travel to work is awkward for them and is contrary to the need to reduce car travel.

This local authority does not ever lightly use CPO powers, but this is a case of the sub regional need vs the local concerns. We do not take local concerns lightly, and I have seen how hard the council officers have worked to improve the designs in response – as much as they can. We have worked towards local agreement, but if that cannot be achieved then we must consider this proposal for the future benefit of the wider community.

I am therefore pleased to support these proposals which are complicated but necessary to move the overall scheme forward.”

**RESOLVED** (unanimously):

- (1) To approve the area to be the subject of a compulsory purchase order (CPO) or supplemental CPO shown edged red on the plan at Appendix 1 (the CPO Map), which identifies the outline area of the land, interests, and new rights to be acquired for the SVEZ Scheme (the CPO Land) by voluntary acquisition or compulsory purchase.
- (2) To authorise the making of a CPO or supplemental CPO pursuant to s226(1)(a) and 226(3) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and s13 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 for the acquisition of land, interests, and new rights within all or part of the area identified as the CPO Land, for the purposes of facilitating the development of the SVEZ Scheme.
- (3) To authorise all necessary steps to be taken to secure the making, confirmation and implementation of a CPO(s) including the publication and service of all notices, requisitions for information, statement of reasons and the preparation and presentation of the Council's case at any public inquiry required to secure confirmation of the CPO(s) by the Secretary of State.
- (4) To note and give due regard in determining whether or not to authorise the promotion of the CPO(s), the public sector equality duty contained in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 (PSED) and the requirements of the Human Rights Act 1998, as detailed further in section 11 and Appendix 2 of the report.
- (5) Subject to confirmation of the CPO(s), to delegate authority to the Executive Director of Sustainable Communities to acquire all the land and rights over the CPO Land, including service of a general vesting declaration, notice to treat and/or notice of entry, subject to any compensation to be paid being within the SVEZ Scheme budget as set out in section 8 of the report.
- (6) To delegate authority to the Executive Director of Sustainable Communities to make any necessary amendments to the CPO(s) including, if required, to reduce the extent of the CPO Land to align with works and land requirements and (once the boundary is finalised)

update the CPO Map to reflect on a plot-by-plot basis the extent of acquisition and rights required.

- (7) To delegate to the Executive Director of Sustainable Communities for payments of over £500,000), in consultation with the S151 Officer authority to:
  - (i) Authorise agreements to be entered into with landowners to secure the withdrawal of objections to the COP(s) and to authorise the Executive Director of Sustainable Communities to take all necessary steps to acquire by agreement land and/or rights forming part of the CPO Land, subject to any consideration payable being within the SVEZ Scheme budget as set out in section 8 of the report;
  - (ii) to negotiate and settle all necessary compensation and professional fees (including interim payments) either as agreed with landowners or as determined by the Lands Chamber of the Upper Tribunal in relation to the acquisition of land and/or rights forming part of the CPO Land in accordance with the Land Compensation Act 1961, the Compulsory Purchase Act 1965 and the Land Compensation Act 1973 provisions in force at the relevant time and the body of case law relevant to the assessment of compensation, where any compensation to be paid is within the SVEZ Scheme budget as set out in section 8 of the report.
- (8) To authorise the instruction of the SVEZ Scheme Project Team's legal advisers, Burges Salmon LLP, to prepare and serve such documentation as may be required for the CPO(s).
- (9) To note the ongoing progress which has been made towards the acquisition of land required to develop the SVEZ Scheme and the previous decisions outlined in the report.

## **29 REVENUE AND CAPITAL OUTTURN 2023-24**

Cllr Mark Elliott, Cabinet Member for Resources, introduced the item, moved the officer recommendation and made the following statement:

"This report presents the council's final figures for the financial year which ended in April.

When we talk about "the budget" we really mean two budgets - the Revenue budget for ongoing costs and income, and the Capital Budget for one-off income and spending on assets.

Starting with the Revenue Budget, I'm delighted to say that we finished the year essentially in balance, which really is a fantastic achievement. In order to recognise how much of an achievement this is, it's worth reminding ourselves of a little history. This report covers the financial year which started in April 2023. We were only 6



months on from the disastrous Truss-Kwarteng train crash. Inflation was still very high, borrowing costs were still rising rapidly, and the impact of inflation on the council's contract spending was severe. By October 2023 it was clear that, without urgent action, the council would be severely over budget at year end - the projection at that point was for a £6.5m negative position. At that point we implemented corporate interventions such as recruitment and vacancy controls and controls on all non-essential spend, and we asked Directors to develop mitigation plans for individual departments. By the end of December, through those actions, the projected position had improved, but we were still looking at a £1.7m negative position by the April year end. So, pulling it back to being basically on target by the end of the financial year is no mean feat, and all the council officers need congratulating on their joint efforts to achieve this. It's a position many councils will be very envious of.

However, we cannot be complacent - the reality is, as you can see in the report, that whilst the budget came in balanced overall, the variances between departments were quite large. Most obviously, social care costs - particularly in Children's Services - face eye-watering rates of increase. These pressures still seem to be ongoing. We also need to be vigilant about the overspend in Waste and Fleet management where staffing costs were significantly higher than budgeted, and again there is continued pressure in that department.

That said, we should celebrate the successes - Heritage Services continues to go great guns, with visitor numbers significantly higher than projected. And with visitor numbers high our Parking income is also up. I know everyone is aware how important our Heritage Assets and our Tourism Industry is, but I want to emphasise how fortunate we are to have these as council owned assets, meaning that the income that comes in via tourism doesn't just get focused on Bath, but is then redistributed across the authority area, as it is used to help mitigate things like the huge increase in social care costs. Having highly capable, commercially aware officers running these departments so successfully is one of the reasons why, despite the huge pressures in social care and elsewhere, we're able to balance the books whilst still having the fourth lowest council tax in the south west. Turning to the Capital Budget, we spent just under £19m less than we had budgeted for in the year. £63.5m against a budget of £82.2m. Whilst spending £18.7m less than planned sounds great, what this really represents is mostly projects slipping into this financial year, so whilst it does save the council some money on financing costs, it's not necessarily a good thing. Ideally, we'd be budgeting for what we are able to spend, rather than over-estimating in the budget and then under-spending. Spending 77% of the capital budget is an improvement on the previous four years and I'd like to see that trend continue.

There is a genuine underspend of about £1.3m included in in the £18.7 figure, so that is good news. And I'd also like to highlight that our Capital Financing Requirement is over £121m higher than our borrowing - that's the gap between what, on paper, we could have needed to borrow in order to finance our capital programme, and what we actually borrowed, and that's because of the great work done by our Treasury Management function.

I'd like to reiterate that this really is a "good news" story - "Council Balances Budget" is unlikely to get many headlines, but given the very, very difficult financial landscape we have all experienced over the last couple of years, it really is something to celebrate."

Cllr Kevin Guy seconded the motion and thanked the Finance Team and Cllr Elliott for the work they have undertaken to address the financial pressures faced by the Council.

Cllr Paul May noted that the Children's Services budget was under pressure and highlighted the importance of openness when dealing with public money.

**RESOLVED** (unanimously):

- (1) To note the revenue budget outturn on budget position for 2023/24, after allowing for carry forwards and transfers to reserves.
- (2) To approve the revenue carry forward proposals listed in the tables in paragraph 3.7 of the report.
- (3) To agree that all other over budgets are written-off as an exception to the Budget Management Rules for 2023/24.
- (4) To approve the transfer of £0.13m from corporate earmarked reserves.
- (5) To note the revenue virements for 2023/24 reported for information in Appendix 2(i) of the report.
- (6) To note the reserve positions and the use of flexible capital receipts shown in paragraph 3.21 of the report.
- (7) To note the outturn position of the 2023/24 capital programme in paragraph 3.34, and the funding outlined in paragraph 3.36 of the report.
- (8) To approve the capital rephasing and write-off of net underspends as listed in Appendix 3 of the report. This reflects the outturn spend position on projects against final budgets as detailed in Appendix 4(ii) of the report.

### **30 REVENUE & CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING, CASH LIMITS AND VIREMENTS – APRIL TO JUNE 2024**

Cllr Mark Elliott, Cabinet Member for Resources, introduced the item, moved the officer recommendation and made the following statement:

“This report is looking at progress since April against this year's budget. It's an early indication based on the first two month's data, which will allow us to spot risks early and, I hope, allow us to act on them early so that we're not having to take more dramatic action later in the year.

The main headline is that the pressure on Children's Services which we experienced throughout last year isn't showing much sign of abating. Of the £3.95m forecast overspend we're currently projecting, nearly £2.5m is in Children's Services. Obviously, areas like this where we have a statutory, and moral, duty to provide care, and there is demand-led pressure, are the most difficult to mitigate. But we have work already underway internally to try to address this, and we think some progress can be made. The other significant area of pressure is the operational cost of the council's estate, and we have work ongoing in this area to make sure we're making

best use our assets, to dispose of assets we no longer need, and to bring back into use assets where that's appropriate. A good example of this is the decision we made at the last Cabinet meeting to place the specialist SEND and Alternative Provision schools on the Culverhay site.

So, for those areas where there is significant pressure, I've scheduled regular meetings with the responsible senior officers and cabinet members over the coming weeks so we can make sure everyone is focused on bringing those budgets back in line where possible, and making sure we understand exactly what the pressures are if it really isn't possible to bring the budgets back on track.

With regard to the Capital Budget, we're currently projecting we will spend £64.8m of the budgeted £76.6m, and if we can keep that on track, we'll be at around 85% which will meet the objective of improving upon the 77% we managed last year.

So, overall, the story is one of continuing pressure, but we've seen it early, and that gives us the best chance of being able to introduce mitigating measures before things get out of hand."

Cllr Tim Ball seconded the motion.

**RESOLVED** (unanimously):

- (1) To note the 2024/25 revenue budget position (as at the end of June 2024).
- (2) To note the revenue virements listed for information in Appendix 3(i) of the report.
- (3) To note the capital year-end forecast detailed in paragraph 3.22 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.

## **31 TREASURY MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE REPORT TO 31ST MARCH 2024**

Cllr Mark Elliott, Cabinet Member for Resources, introduced the item, moved the officer recommendation and made the following statement:

"The Treasury Management report for the last financial year sets out the council's performance with regard to its investments and borrowing. As usual, our treasury management performance is very good. We're within the approved limits set out in our Treasury Management Strategy, which are set out in appendix 1 of the report. Persistent high inflation meant that the Bank of England kept rates at relatively high levels compared to recent times, and our average return on our investments over the period was 4.85%. Borrowing increased by £36m compared with the start of the year, but with most of that borrowing being taken towards the end of the year, in line with our strategy to minimise borrowing costs and, and as noted in the earlier outturn report, we had an overall underspend of £3.4m on Capital Financing Costs.

I'm grateful for the diligent work done by our Treasury Management team - it's not a glamorous part of the council's activity but it really does underpin everything else we do."

Cllr Tim Ball seconded the motion.

**RESOLVED** (unanimously):

- (1) To note the Treasury Management Report to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024, prepared in accordance with the CIPFA Treasury Code of Practice.
- (2) To note the Treasury Management Indicators to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024.

## **32 REVISIONS TO STRATEGIC PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

Cllr Manda Rigby, Cabinet Member for Highways, introduced the item, moved the officer recommendation and made the following points:

- The expansion of the performance indicators is important to the residents of B&NES in terms of transparency, demonstrating delivery and ensuring the use of public funds is driven by data and evidence.
- The Council collects, monitors and reports on data regardless of what it says. We are open with the public and willing to show how we are working to get back on track where necessary.
- Officers have worked hard to expand the range of indicators we monitor and report on so that they better reflect the manifesto for delivery and to align the priorities to those issues that are important to residents.
- Preventative measures are now included in the data.

Cllr Matt McCabe seconded the motion and noted the work that has been undertaken to produce the Corporate Strategy and stated that it is right to revise the indicators to obtain a clear picture of our performance.

**RESOLVED** (unanimously):

To agree revisions to the Strategic Performance Indicators as set out in the report.

The meeting ended at 7.30 pm

Chair \_\_\_\_\_

Date Confirmed and Signed \_\_\_\_\_

**Prepared by Democratic Services**

## CABINET MEETING – 11<sup>th</sup> July 2024

### STATEMENTS FROM PUBLIC AND COUNCILLORS

1. Chad Allen – Hedera Helix (English Ivy) and the need for trees and wildlife in B&NES
2. Richard Samuel – Local Government Funding
3. Ceris Humphreys – Debate Not Hate Campaign
4. Stefan Steinhoff – Sydney Road Liveable Neighbourhood
5. Cllr Dave Harding – Bishop Sutton Football Fields and Surrounds

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS - COUNCILLORS

<b>M</b>	<b>01</b>	<b>Question from:</b>	Cllr Joanna Wright
<p>At June 2024 Cabinet, the following question was asked, and your response is as follows:</p> <p><i>At the March 2024 Climate Emergency and Sustainability Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel, the Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency and Sustainable Travel said the Council had no plan for an active travel route from the centre of town to Claverton Down. If there is no plan in place how will the Council be able to apply for funding to create this important link?</i></p> <p><i>Response from Cllr Sarah Warren:</i>  <i>We have recently been developing our Active Travel Masterplan which sets out our ambitions for an active travel network serving key destinations across B&amp;NES, which we will be consulting on later this summer. Routes within the masterplan will be considered for development as future funding becomes available.</i></p> <p>As the Council has failed three Active Travel fund bids to date and without a circulation plan for Bath, how will the “proposed ambitious masterplan” with appropriate infrastructure be developed to ensure success?</p>			
		<b>Answer from:</b>	Cllr Sarah Warren
<p><i>Work continues to develop a Circulation Plan for Bath, but in the meantime, it would be quite wrong to cease efforts to secure funding for improved cycling infrastructure across B&amp;NES. Therefore, consultation on the Active Travel Masterplan began on 10th July. The supporting documentation contains the rationale by which it has been compiled and will be available on the consultation webpage.</i></p> <p><i>(This response was provided within five working days of the meeting).</i></p>			

<b>M</b>	<b>02</b>	<b>Question from:</b>	Cllr Joanna Wright
<p>At the June 2024 Cabinet, the following question was asked, and your response given is as follows:</p> <p><i>Lambridge Ward councillors have repeatedly asked for support for 3 homes of residents who have nowhere to park due to changes to the highway created by the Walcot Residents Parking Zone (RPZ). Why won't a council Highways Officer attend an onsite meeting to view the ongoing issue?</i></p> <p><i>Response from Cllr Manda Rigby:</i>  <i>With respect to this specific issue, it will be addressed during a forthcoming review of Residents Parking Zones which is due to begin during the summer with an option appraisal phase to identify potential amendments. Following agreement of any changes, a consultation and delivery phase will continue into 2025. Officers are always happy to arrange site meetings, where it is an appropriate use of their time, to understand and consider a way forward to address an issue or problem. The solution to this issue is understood and so a site meeting would not be appropriate at this time.</i></p> <p>To date, neither residents nor Lambridge ward councillors have been informed of the solution we have repeatedly requested. When will this solution be provided and implemented?</p>			
<b>Answer from:</b>			Cllr Manda Rigby
<p><i>Officers will shortly be starting a review of the Residents' Parking Zones that were implemented last year. Councillors in these wards and those adjacent to them will be contacted within the next two weeks and advised how they can contribute to this review.</i></p>			
<b>M</b>	<b>03</b>	<b>Question from:</b>	Cllr Joanna Wright
<p>At the June 2024 Cabinet, the following question was asked, and your response given is as follows:</p> <p><i>At the March 2024 Climate Emergency and Sustainability Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel, the Cabinet Member for Transport said that a review of paper parking permits for Councillors was not something that the community was asking for, so the Council does not see the</i></p>			

*issue of councillors using paper permits (not quantified through a parking system) as a priority. As all other transactions taken by councillors on Council business need to be identified and interests lodged, can you please explain how much officer time would be taken by removing paper parking permits and putting the councillors using paper parking permits on the council's digital parking system MiPermit?*

*Answer from: Cllr Kevin Guy:*

*The council issues a range of digital permits through MiPermit to help residents; businesses; visitors; and council staff, including councillors, manage their parking conveniently via electronic devices. The council recognises the importance of providing accessible alternatives where these are appropriate and for those that need them, such as paper permits and continuing to support cash payments for parking when other locations are moving exclusively to app and card-based payments only.*

Please can you explain why the councillors who have paper parking permits need this "accessible alternative"?

**Answer from:**

Cllr Kevin Guy

*For data protection reasons, it would not be appropriate to comment specifically on individual cases.*

**M**

**04**

**Question from:**

Cllr Sam Ross

At the June 2024 Cabinet, the following question was asked, and your response given is as follows:

*Bath Spa University is currently only served by one bus, the U5. According to the March 2024 minutes of the Climate Emergency and Sustainability Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel, £40k from the Clean Air Zone revenue is reserved towards funding bus services to the University of Bath. Why does Bath Spa not get a subsidised bus service?*

*Answer from Cllr Sarah Warren:*

*Initially, this funding was provisionally allocated for a supported bus service as a contingency measure to mitigate potential operational cost increases. However, it was erroneously associated with the university, and the funding has not been called upon.*

If this funding has not been called on, what is it being used for?



<b>Answer from:</b>		Cllr Sarah Warren
<i>The funding will support further development of the Movement Strategy; previously named the Circulation Plan.</i>		
<b>M</b>	<b>05</b>	<b>Question from:</b> Cllr Sam Ross
<p>At March 2024 Cabinet, the following question was asked, and your response given is as follows:</p> <p><i>An amendment has been put forward for a school street in this and last year's budget. We were given an assurance that a school street was being developed for 2023/24. This did not happen. Again, an amendment was put forward this month for a school street as there were none in the 2024/25 budget. At the council meeting on the 20th February, Cllr Elliott declared that B&amp;NES was going to implement a school street and that meetings were in place deciding this and the funds for it. I repeat there are no school streets listed in the budget papers. The importance of the right measures for children to get to school safely are necessary, because B&amp;NES needs to ensure the correct business case to get CRSTS funding, but more than that because all our children deserve safe routes to school. Presently, there are no school streets in B&amp;NES, and none programmed into the 2024/25 budget. A "soft school street" is not a "school street". Where is the documentation evidencing what Cllr Elliott has stated at the council meeting on 20th Feb, is this information publicly available? Accordingly, what school is to have a school street in B&amp;NES as stated by Cllr Elliott at Full Council?</i></p> <p><i>Answer from Cllr Sarah Warren:</i>  <i>Cleaner, greener, school travel is a key element of the Journey to Net Zero and we are committed to delivering a range of schemes which will support children to travel to school by active modes of transport. As mentioned by Cllr Elliott in the Budget and Council Tax meeting on the 20th February, £250,000 of funding from the Clean Air Zone (CAZ) reserve has been allocated to develop a School Streets programme. The spending allocations from the CAZ reserve are reported on an annual basis with the next report due to be published this summer. We are currently undertaking a prioritisation exercise to inform which school will be selected for an initial trial scheme in financial year 2024/25. We then anticipate expanding the programme further if future funding becomes available. We will provide further updates on the School Streets programme as they become available.</i></p> <p>In the Cabinet Report, 9 Sept 2021, Bath Clean Air Plan, it states:  <i>"it is proposed that any surplus revenue generated by the enforcement of the scheme will be held in a Revenue Reinvestment Reserve. Allocation of this revenue will be managed by an internal Steering Group and there is opportunity for reinvestment to directly or indirectly</i></p>		

*facilitate the achievement of Bath and North East Somerset Council's transport policies. These policies include schemes to reduce the use of private vehicles, which will further contribute to a reduction in carbon dioxide generated by transport and travel."*

School Streets have the potential to increase the air quality near schools drastically, with a modest financial investment. So, why is only £250k from the Clean Air Zone net revenue committed to School Streets?

**Answer from:**

Cllr Sarah Warren

*The Council is committed to implementing measures that will contribute to clean air throughout the district and aims to do this in part through providing residents with a genuine choice of transport modes. With this in mind the CAZ revenue funding has been allocated to projects including: the delivery of the western section of Scholars Way, WECA match funding for sustainable transport, funding for the Local Active Travel Safety Programme (formally Highways Improvement Capital Programme), development of transport strategies and delivery action plans, bike hangars, as well as other measures to monitor and improve local air quality, such as supporting some of the annual operating costs of a pollutant capture device at Haycombe Crematorium.*

**M**

**06**

**Question from:**

Cllr Sam Ross

In response to your repeated statements about school streets, you mention that the council is consulting with schools. However, since schools are responsible for children but lack legal powers, and B&NES as the Highway Authority has full control over the highways around schools, what measures is B&NES implementing to secure funding for school streets as the Highway Authority?

**Answer from:**

Cllrs Sarah Warren

*It would be inappropriate to implement School Streets without consultation with schools, as these schemes can only be implemented effectively with support from the school community - as recently discussed at the Climate Emergency PDS meeting of 2nd May 2024, attended by Cllr Ross. As Cllr Ross is well aware, councils are nowadays required to submit competitive bids to government, to the West of England Combined Authority, or to other funding sources in order to fund initiatives of this sort, and funds usually have set criteria. We will, as ever, continue to seek the appropriate opportunities to submit bids to external funding sources to expand our School Streets programme, attempting as ever to match the bid to the criteria of the fund so as to maximise our chances of success.*

<b>M</b>	<b>07</b>	<b>Question from:</b>	Cllr Lesley Mansell
<p>Last November, Council unanimously passed a motion, calling on B&amp;NES to encourage measures to protect night workers, in line with the 'Get Me Home Safely' campaign initiated by members of Unite the union, who work those late and "unsocial" hours.</p> <p>This is to ensure safe home transport is widely available for night-time economy and shift workers in B&amp;NES who often struggle to find and pay for transport home after midnight.</p> <p>I have requested updates but had no reply. So could the Cabinet member please advise what measures have the administration and licencing committee taken since Council's unanimous vote almost eight months ago, to implement what councillors voted for, namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include the get me home safely principles in our licensing policy objectives?</li> <li>• Encourage employers to take all reasonable steps to ensure workers are able to get home safely from work at night?</li> <li>• Work with licensees, employers, the police and community safety partners to ensure our communities are safe places late at night?</li> <li>• Encourage licensees and employers to consider staff transport as an integral part of operating a safe and sustainable business, thereby valuing workers in these sectors?</li> </ul>			
<b>Answer from:</b>			Cllr Tim Ball
<p><i>Public safety and the prevention of crime and disorder are two of the licensing objectives. Whilst these principally relate to the actual premises, it is important to recognise the role that premises play in local communities.</i></p> <p><i>The Licensing Team ensure the that these objectives are met by: -</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>a. Planned 'Licensing Enforcement Group' visits with the Police, throughout the Bath and North East Somerset Council area.</i></li> <li><i>b. Independent Police patrols.</i></li> <li><i>c. Independent Police Licensing Officer visits</i></li> <li><i>d. Night Marshall patrols.</i></li> </ol>			

e. *Independent Bath and North East Somerset Council Licensing Officer patrols when deemed necessary and in response to complaints from members of the Public or reports of problems by the Police or Night Marshalls etc.*

*Officers have also made particular reference to the “Get me home Safely campaign” in the forthcoming revision of the Statement of Licensing Policy which will be released for consultation later this year.*

*Responsibility for public transport operations now lies with the West of England Combined Authority (WECA) following the council's transfer of services and resources in April 2020. For specific questions concerning how the campaign interfaces with public transport, WECA would be best placed to provide detailed information. However, within Bath and North East Somerset Council, we have been actively collaborating with WECA on a ‘Bus Passenger Charter’ as part of the region’s Bus Service Improvement Plan. This Charter, though not yet published, includes a commitment from WECA, in collaboration with local bus operators, to ensure a safe journey home and provide redress if the last scheduled bus service on a route is cancelled. Passengers will be entitled to claim the cost of reasonable alternative transport home upon presentation of a receipt.*

<b>M</b>	<b>08</b>	<b>Question from:</b> Cllr Liz Hardman
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At the 1 February Special Cabinet Meeting on the Somer Valley Enterprise Zone (SVEZ), Cllr Roper told me, “Negotiations [with landowners] first took place back in 2019; all the landowners have property agents and have been taking advice on the matter. Negotiations have gone relatively quiet at this point, so I don’t believe there has been very recent communication”.

Given this was the position in February, does the Cabinet member truly feel it is fair and reasonable to issue 15-day ultimatums to local businesses and residents asking them to consider Compulsory Purchase Order offers, at a fraction of the market value - replacement cost - for their land and livelihoods?

How has B&NES assessed landowner residents’ ability to mitigate livelihood lost because of the SVEZ CPOs, including the estimates made of the percentage of annual income these residents are likely to lose?

Is there any way the CPO process can be slowed down, to allow negotiation for more equitable price for this land, which includes prime agricultural land?

**Answer from:**

Cllr Paul Roper

*Following the decision made in February 2024, land referencing agents (Terraquest), working on behalf of the Council, have issued Requests for Information to those parties who may be impacted by a CPO for the SVEZ, including the infrastructure works to the road network, where parties may benefit from subsoil rights within the public highway. The Town and Country Planning Act (s.5A) prescribes that residents are offered 15 days to respond via questionnaire to confirm their landownership/interest details. No offers have been made to residents via these communications.*

*Separately, negotiations with representatives of landowners within the SVEZ boundary, and landowners whose land is required for the road infrastructure, are ongoing via the Council's appointed agents.*

*When making offers to landowners, Compulsory Purchase legislation required public bodies to adopt the Compensation Code when assessing the market value of land, plus reasonable costs of professional advice relating to negotiations and other potential loss payments, depending on the situations of individual landowners. The Council, as a public body, is required to follow the statutory process associated with a CPO to ensure that public money is used appropriately and ensuring that landowners are no worse off.*

*As a CPO progresses, the public body (Council) and landowners continue to have the opportunity to negotiate until a future CPO Inquiry.*

*(This response was provided within five working days of the meeting).*

Supplementary Question

When an answer is provided to this question would Cllr Roper agree to meet with me to discuss this? Since the Cabinet meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2024 to discuss the Somer Valley Enterprise Zone proposals, I have been seeking clarification regarding a CPO being used to require the land for development. I read in the Cabinet report (paragraph 9.12) that the making of a CPO should be a last resort and should be preceded by attempts to buy the land by agreement. I look forward to hearing about this.

Response

*I would be very happy to meet with Cllr Hardman to discuss the issues. Essentially, the CPO is going to be put in place as a last resort. It is*

*a complex process, and we have to put it in place, but it will only be used if absolutely necessary.*

**M**

**09**

**Question from:**

Cllr Saskia Heijltjes

At the June 2024 Cabinet, the following question was asked, and your response given is as follows:

The Mount Road raised zebra crossing has recently been installed in Southdown. It is not clear when this scheme was allocated into the Transport Improvement Programme (TIP) (now called the 2024/25 Local Highway Improvements Programme). The budget papers in February 2024 did not show this scheme. Please can you explain how the Mount Road raised Zebra crossing was paid for, which budget stream was used to take it forward and how much it cost?

Response from Cllr Manda Rigby

The Mount Road raised zebra crossing was funded from the 2023/24 Transport Improvement Programme, the total scheme cost, including staff time, is forecast to be £90,000.00.

However, in a recent FOI request (see

[https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/request/mount\\_road\\_liveable\\_neighbourhood\\_2#incoming-2630977](https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/request/mount_road_liveable_neighbourhood_2#incoming-2630977)), it is stated to cost £76K.

Please can you explain the difference in the amounts quoted?

**Answer from:**

Cllr Manda Rigby

*The FOI request for an overall cost was estimated from the original works order prior to the final account being agreed with Volker Highways. The increase in cost from £76k to £90k is due mainly to additional carriageway resurfacing and associated traffic management required.*

M	10	Question from: Cllr Saskia Heijltjes
<p>Could you please provide comprehensive data on pavement resurfacing schedules? Additionally, how frequently are these inspections conducted in B&amp;NES?</p>		
Answer from:		Cllr Manda Rigby
<p><i>The 2024/25 pavement resurfacing budget has increased from £650,000 in 2023/24 to £1.3m £2024/25, the pavement resurfacing works that will be delivered as part of the 2024/25 programme are:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>High St Weston</i></li> <li>• <i>Bathwick Hill, Bathwick</i></li> <li>• <i>Milsom Street Phas1, Bath City Centre</i></li> <li>• <i>Sydney Building, Bathwick</i></li> <li>• <i>Queen Square</i></li> <li>• <i>Englishcombe Way – Bloomfield</i></li> <li>• <i>Southlands Drive, Timsbury</i></li> <li>• <i>Church Road, Peasedown St John</i></li> <li>• <i>Longfellow Avenue, Bear Flat</i></li> <li>• <i>St Saviours Road, Larkhall</i></li> <li>• <i>Henrietta Gardens, Bathwick</i></li> <li>• <i>Claverton Down Road, Claverton</i></li> <li>• <i>Triangle Villas – Oldfield Park</i></li> <li>• <i>Landseer Road, Twerton</i></li> <li>• <i>Oldfield Road, Oldfield Park</i></li> </ul>		

- *Southlands, Weston*
- *Gooseberry Lane, Keynsham*
- *Bathampton Lane, Bathampton*
- *Frome Road, Radstock*
- *South Road, Midsomer Norton*
- *St Nicholas Road, Whitchurch*
- *DurnHill, Compton Martin*
- *The Street, Stowey*
- *Chew Lane, Chew Magan*

*All footways are routinely inspected twice a year, plus individual inspections are undertaken when issues are identified.*

<b>M</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>Question from:</b>	Cllr Saskia Heijltjes
The Centurion bus service (C221D) to Ralph Allen from Freshford, is no longer going through Freshford, but instead, school students have to walk to the A36 and cross it to get the bus. What provision will be provided for young people to cross the A36 safely?			
<b>Answer from:</b>			Cllr Manda Rigby
<p><i>National Highways, who are the highway authority for this part of the A36 rather than B&amp;NES, are currently progressing an option for an uncontrolled crossing with central refuge island, in the broad locality of Midford Lane/Church Lane. They have advised us that their working assumption is that it will be delivered at some point in Roads Period 3 (2025-30), subject to an appropriate cost-benefit assessment on completion of detail design/costing, regional prioritisation and the availability of funding.</i></p> <p><i>Currently the government's draft Road Investment Strategy for 2025-30 has not been published and they do not have details of the funding available or success criteria for this type of work going forward. On that basis, they cannot give any more certainty regarding a delivery timeframe. As matters progress, they will update us at our regular liaison meetings.</i></p>			



## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS - PUBLIC

<b>P</b>	<b>01</b>	<b>Question from:</b>	Edmund Cannon
<p>Please can you let us know who authorised the projection of the Ukraine Flag on Pulteney Bridge and did this cost the Council any money? If so, how much money did this cost?</p>			
<b>Answer from:</b>			Cllr Kevin Guy
<p><i>At my request, Bath &amp; North East Somerset Council arranged for Pulteney Bridge to be lit in the colours of Ukraine from 21st to 28<sup>th</sup> of February this year as part of the national campaign to raise awareness of the 24 months of war since the Russian invasion. I am proud that the council did this, particularly given our Friendship Agreement with Oleksendriya. However, there was no cost to the authority.</i></p>			
<b>P</b>	<b>02</b>	<b>Question from:</b>	Edmund Cannon
<p>In the B&amp;NES Council Pay and Reward Policy 2022/2023 Annex 8, it states in Section 34 that in addition to an employee's salary, the Council offers a comprehensive range of benefits designed to enhance the work life balance of our employees, the current benefits include various items including a "car benefit scheme".</p> <p>As the Council has declared a Climate Emergency and is committed to sustainable transport options should the Council be offering a "car benefit scheme" to its employees?</p>			
<b>Answer from:</b>			Cllr Sarah Warren

*The council's car benefit scheme is used by employees to enable them to lease electric and hybrid cars. Currently usage of the scheme is as follows:*

*Electric Cars: 45%  
Hybrid: 42%  
Petrol: 13%*

*In response to the Council declaring a climate emergency we capped the Co2 cap to 94g/km which still leaves our staff with over 773 different models and derivatives to choose from. 61% of these are electric cars and 39% are hybrid. The change now means when staff renew, they cannot select a petrol only option.*

*To encourage our staff with sustainable commuting options we also offer a Cycle2Work scheme via a salary sacrifice scheme as well discounted bus tickets via the Commuter Travel club.*

<b>P</b>	<b>03</b>	<b>Question from:</b> Edmund Cannon
<p>Some of the residential streets in Freshford are currently classified as C-roads. These include narrow, single-track roads with blind bends and stretches with no pavement.</p> <p>When has the Council last reviewed the classification of roads in Freshford, and when will it next do so?</p>		
<b>Answer from:</b>		Cllr Manda Rigby
<p><i>We have not reviewed the road classifications in Freshford and in general councils do not routinely review road classifications. Whilst the council has the ability to change these, there is a process involved which requires staff time and resources. There are few benefits, if any, to be gained from undertaking a review of or changing C-class roads to 'unclassified' and for this reason it would not be a good use of our resources to do this.</i></p>		
<b>P</b>	<b>04</b>	<b>Question from:</b> Chad Allen

Now that the ivy has been removed from Bath Pavilion and B&NES know that there has been some structural damage, are the Council now looking to re-evaluate their stance on the damage that ivy does to our eco-system, wildlife system and buildings?

**Answer from:**

Cllrs Tim Ball and Sarah Warren

*The Council considers that English Ivy provides a suitable habitat for many wildlife species and pollinators, although we have identified some damage to the Bath Pavilion which may have been in part caused by the presence of English Ivy, the Council still believes that the benefit of English Ivy outweighs any negative impacts to buildings”.*

**P 05**

**Question from:**

Chad Allen

Does the Council understand how much we need wildlife and trees for the capture of CO2?

**Answer from:**

Cllr Sarah Warren

- *Nature plays an important role in capturing carbon dioxide already released into the atmosphere. Trees and woodlands are one of the best forms of natural carbon sequestration, alongside wetlands and coastal habitats.*
- *Protecting and enhancing nature is one of our goals as a council, to tackle the climate and ecological emergencies.*
- *Our Ecological Emergency Action Plan sets out the steps we will take to help nature recover, and our commitment to double woodland cover is already leading to the creation of new forests in BANES, through our support of partners like Avon Needs Trees and Forest of Avon Trust.*
- *However, we know that even the most ambitious action for nature recovery will not be sufficient to tackle climate change. Reducing emissions is the most important action needed to achieve net zero.*
- *Taking action on nature is not just about capturing carbon; we need to tackle the ecological emergency by improving biodiversity and*

*creating more and better-quality habitats. This will also help to improve people's access and engagement with natural spaces, and thereby improve wellbeing and active travel options.*

- *Nature recovery is also important in adapting to the effects of climate change. For example, new woodlands and wetlands can help to reduce flood risk; and more trees and green spaces in cities and towns can reduce heat stress.*

<b>P</b>	<b>06</b>	<b>Question from:</b>	Chad Allen
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When the Council hires tree surgeons to do a job are they asked to maintain the trees and hedges that we have or simply destroy them?

<b>Answer from:</b>	Cllr Tim Ball
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*Regardless of whether the Council hires a tree surgeon or does the arboricultural work with its own teams, the first principle is to try and retain a tree or hedge and keep it maintained. Removal is a last resort and the decisions to fell or remove are predominantly based on the potential dangers to the public.*

<b>P</b>	<b>07</b>	<b>Question from:</b>	Barbara Gordon
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Residents have been complaining about the lack of working water features at the newly restored Sydney Park Play Area. What was the cost of installing the play water features and what will it cost to fix them?

<b>Answer from:</b>	Cllr Tim Ball
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*One of the water pumps was unfortunately damaged earlier in the year and replacement parts had to be ordered. The lead in time was between 6-8 weeks to arrive from Germany to the British supplier and then a further delay before arrival at the Parks depot. We now have the relevant parts and will be repairing the pump and aiming to reinstall it before the busy summer holidays. The pump cost £11,594 and the*

*replacement part has cost a further £1,854. The work to repair and reinstall the pumps will be carried out by Parks staff.*

<b>P</b>	<b>08</b>	<b>Question from:</b>	Barbara Gordon
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Please provide detailed information on the investments held within B&NES's Treasury Fund. Specifically: please could you provide a breakdown of investments in equity holdings, including any funds or individual stocks that involve companies in sectors such as arms manufacturing or fossil fuels.

<b>Answer from:</b>	Cllr Mark Elliott
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*The Council holds its treasury investments in a mixture of deposit accounts, Money Market Funds and Strategic Investment Funds, along with some fixed term investments in Local Authorities and UK Banks.*

- Deposit accounts are held with NatWest and Handelsbanken UK.*
- Money Market Funds are held with Goldman Sachs, Federated Hermes, Morgan Stanley, Invesco, abrdn investments, and CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund.*
- The three Strategic Investment Funds invested in are the CCLA Local Authorities Property Fund, FP Foresight UK Infrastructure Income Fund and VT Gravis Clean Energy Income Fund.*
- Fixed Term investments are currently held with Blackpool Council and Lloyds Bank.*

*The Council do not hold any individual stocks in companies apart from those held in its wholly owned subsidiary, Aequus Group Holdings Limited.*

<b>P</b>	<b>09</b>	<b>Question from:</b>	Barbara Gordon
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Please provide information on the Council's rented properties, both industrial and residential. Specifically, could you include the vetting process for tenants, disclosing the criteria used to vet prospective tenants, especially regarding any checks related to involvement in the arms trade or human rights violations?

**Answer from:**

Cllrs Mark Elliott and Matt McCabe

**B&NES Homes**

*Pre-occupancy checks are dependent upon the type of accommodation being occupied and the purpose of occupation. Checks are typically whether the household is owed a temporary housing duty by the Council, or for permanent housing, that they meet the published Homesearch Policy criteria. In addition, the Council will undertake a risk assessment and, dependent on accommodation type, an ability to pay assessment.*

**Commercial property checks**

*The Council undertakes due diligence relating to credit worthiness on all prospective tenants prior to accepting them as future occupiers of Council property. Where the prospective tenant is new to the Council a full credit check is undertaken by OneWest who offer audit, risk and governance assurance. Prospective tenants are informally assessed for sector fit and alignment to the principle of enabling existing Bath businesses to grow and well as the fit for inward investment occupiers; particularly in response to the climate emergency. Where the Council appoints letting agents, they will also vet interest from the market in terms of requirements to comply with money laundering regulations.*

*(This response was provided within five working days of the meeting).*

**P**

**10**

**Question from:**

Grace Wiltshire

Residents across Bath repeatedly complain about coaches parked on Bathwick Street, causing severe congestion on the strategic road network. What actions will the Cabinet Member for Transport take to address this ongoing issue?

**Answer from:**

Cllr Manda Rigby

*The council provides a number of suitable locations where coaches can safely board and alight passengers or safely park within central Bath, and these are detailed on the council website at <https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/coach-parking-bath>.*

*Of course, it's a fact that many motorists, including professional drivers, will often selfishly ignore legal restrictions that are installed and advertised on the public highway. To address these behaviours and the impact it has on the safety of road users and the movement of vehicles on the network the council has enforcement powers set out within the Traffic Management Act (2004) (TMA) which decriminalised parking contraventions on our streets.*

*The Council employs a large team of Civil Enforcement Officers (CEOs), working 7 days a week, to undertake these enforcement duties. Whilst this team has in the recent past experienced challenges with recruiting to vacant posts, a challenge common among many operational roles following the COVID pandemic noting especially the emotive nature of this role, the council has been successful in exploring a range of opportunities to attract people to this role and now has 28 officers in post out of a full establishment of 30 posts.*

*Our CEOs have powers to address vehicles that are parked in contravention of valid restrictions and will take appropriate action when they observe this happening. This will begin with engagement to try and achieve compliance, as this is the most effective and appropriate outcome, with enforcement action when this cannot be achieved.*

*The council's Parking Services team welcome intelligence from local communities so that officers can proactively deployed to address local issues more effectively as they arise. However, officers are not able to remain in a single location for extended periods of time and due to pressures across the city and local area their deployment must be balanced to ensure that the areas covered are maximised to help maintain the movement of traffic on the network. Issues can be reported to the Parking team via email to [Parking@bathnes.gov.uk](mailto:Parking@bathnes.gov.uk).*

*Parking Services remain aware of the issues caused by coaches at Bathwick Street and other locations and continues to proactively monitor these locations during the peak summer period, noting that the recent closure of North Parade Bridge due to the repair works has resulted in an increase in these issues as access to the city centre, and coach drop off locations, has been reduced.*

*It's also worth noting the value of the Penalty Charge is prescribed within the TMA and this remains at £50 or £70 (depending on the contravention) as it was first set when the TMA was enacted almost 20 years ago. As this charge can be paid at a 50% discount within the first 14 days it's no longer the effective deterrent it once was to reduce selfish motorist behaviours. The council continues to work with other*

*local authorities and national bodies (including the Local Government Association and the British Parking Association) to seek a review of this charge by the Department for Transport and Ministers.*

<b>P</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>Question from:</b>	Grace Wiltshire
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All parents with children at a school at the Palladian Academy Trust have recently been informed that all unfunded SEND provisions will be stopped due to financial difficulties. Please can you give details of how many children this will be affecting?

<b>Answer from:</b>	Cllr Paul May
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*Palladian are a multi-academy trust and, as such are, not maintained by the Local Authority and report to the DFE Regions group. However, the Trust work closely with the Local Authority. This is a matter for the Palladian Trust.  
(This response was provided within five working days of the meeting).*

<b>P</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>Question from:</b>	Grace Wiltshire
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Please could you tell me how much the Friendship Agreement with Oleksandriya has cost the Council in Officer time?

<b>Answer from:</b>	Cllr Kevin Guy
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*12 hours.*

<b>P</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>Question from:</b>	Dominic Tristram
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B&NES owns a parcel of land between Gloucester Road and Deadmill Lane that was given to the Council through a land agreement, to be developed for allotments in Lambridge. This land has sat idle for many years now with no progress in making it accessible to residents, when



will the Council be ensuring the access to this site will be taking place?

**Answer from:**

Cllr Tim Ball

*The land at Deadmill Lane was given to the Council for use as an allotment as part of the S106 agreement relating to the development of Southbourne Gardens but the agreement did not involve a transfer of funds for the development of new allotments at Deadmill Lane and the £60,000 transferred to the Council was used to create new allotment provision at Fairfield Valley.*

*The principal obstacle to the development of the new allotment site at Deadmill Lane is the requirement to provide new pedestrian or vehicular access to facilitate vegetation clearance and ongoing maintenance. There is currently no budget for such a scheme.*

*The Council has a right of access for vehicles and pedestrians across the adjacent land which has been subject to a planning application and subsequent refusal for the development of 15 affordable dwellings. During the planning consultation period a request was made that the developer provide a vehicular and pedestrian access to the Councils land at Deadmill Lane, as a condition of planning permission. However, with the refusal of planning permission this work was not taken forward.*

*In the event that a future planning application relating to the adjacent land comes forward, representation for new access into the Council's land will be made.*

**P**

**14**

**Question from:**

Dominic Tristram

The Council recently reported on Voice Box 32 survey (see [https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/BANES\\_Voicebox32\\_Report.pdf](https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/BANES_Voicebox32_Report.pdf)) In question 4 "I feel I can inform decisions made by Bath and North East Somerset Council" those undertaking the survey feel significantly less able to inform decisions made by B&NES Council from 60% in 2022 to 44% in 2023.

What actions are being taken to enhance resident engagement and cooperation in decision-making?

**Answer from:**

Cllr Kevin Guy

*The council is constantly looking at new, better and more accessible ways of listening to and working with our local communities. For example, through a combination of online and face-to-face events attended by more than 600 people we received over 7,500 comments on our consultation on proposed options for future development needs across Bath and North East Somerset. That's three times more than any previous planning consultation and in total it's double the number of comments we have received for any of the previous planning policy consultations. We also received 389 responses to our budget consultation and 990 to our consultation on CIL projects, responses which were really helpful in shaping our decision-making.*

*During the Local Plan options consultation, we made extensive use of things like explainer videos and our aim is to use a wide variety of ways for people to hear about our consultations and to help them respond. In addition, we are currently working with communities to explore innovative "co-production" projects, where the council, service users and partners co-operate to identify improvements. For example, in reviewing our carers' strategy we have worked directly with carers to hear their voices and priorities. We'll be continuing to work closely with carers to shape our approach and I think this joint working leads to better outcomes for all.*

*Similarly, we are also developing the idea of "community conversations" with local communities, with a focus on tackling the climate and nature emergency. We are currently working with ALCA, Bathford, Batheaston and Bathampton Parish Councils as well as local groups such as Grow Batheaston and the New Batheaston Village Hall on our first community conversation and have recently agreed next steps on this in collaboration with them.*

*To give some idea of the scale and scope of our consultation work, in 2023 we undertook 30 consultations via our dedicated web page and so far this year have carried out 14, with more planned.*

<b>P</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>Question from:</b>	Dominic Tristram
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The Council recently reported on Voice Box 32 survey (see [https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/BANES\\_Voicebox32\\_Report.pdf](https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/BANES_Voicebox32_Report.pdf)) In question 5a "Which of these things, if any, do you think most need improving?" 402 respondents listed "road and pavement improvements".

What actions are you taking to improve pavements?

<b>Answer from:</b>		Cllr Manda Rigby	
<p><i>One of the Council's priorities is to provide more travel choice, making it easier for people to walk and wheel. To support this priority the Council has increased the funding for pavement surfacing from £650,000 2023/24 to £1.3m in 2024/25. This is combined with an increased funding for the Local Active Travel Safety Programme from £1.2m in 2023/24 to £2.88m in 2024/25. As part of the programme, we have delivered pedestrian crossings on Mount Road, Lansdown Road and Weston Lane, further pedestrian improvements will be delivered across B&amp;NES throughout 2024/25, the full list can be viewed in the Councils 2024/25 Budget report, pages 134 to 136. See <a href="https://democracy.bathnes.gov.uk/documents/g6321/Public%20reports%20pack%2020th-Feb-2024%2018.30%20Council.pdf?T=10">https://democracy.bathnes.gov.uk/documents/g6321/Public%20reports%20pack%2020th-Feb-2024%2018.30%20Council.pdf?T=10</a></i></p>			
<b>P</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>Question from:</b>	Off the Record Youth Forum
What impact have BANES Council had on local people's mental health in the past six months?			
<b>Answer from:</b>		Cllr Alison Born	
<p><i>The Council continues to deliver mental health secondary services with Avon and Wiltshire Partnership Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust (AWP) in an integrated way.</i></p> <p><i>A Memorandum of Understanding between AWP and B&amp;NES Council is in place. In the last 6 months the work has begun on reviewing the contractual agreement between the Council and AWP on the delivery of local statutory mental health services. The agreement was due to end in April this year, but in line with several changes, including the return of services from HCRG to the Council and the CQC inspection, it was agreed that the completion of the review should be extended until October 2024. There will be a change of direction which will focus on values and vision for how we go forward together to deliver excellent mental health services for the people of B&amp;NES and an overall ambition of 'partnership' threading its way through that Memorandum of Understanding.</i></p> <p><i>Adult Social Care will continue to work on improving quality of practice in relation to delivery of statutory social care in integrated mental health teams including:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>holding AWP to account regarding delivery of social care in secondary mental health teams - this includes ensuring that individuals</i></li> </ul>			

*are receiving Care Act assessments in a timely way when referred into secondary mental health.*

- *formulation of Standard Operating Procedures for social care in integrated mental health teams.*
- *input by Principal Social Worker for mental health regarding the changes being brought about by the national community mental health framework including the replacement of the Care Programme Approach.*

*There is ongoing work in progress to co-design how services are delivered with people with lived experience and who are receiving a mental health service. The progression of this work is to determine with evidence whether it is a better experience for individuals and their carers receiving a service from an integrated team rather than a non-integrated as is the case in Swindon and Wiltshire.*

*The staff advocate for people with mental health needs regarding:*

- *issues with single gender wards, as in BANES men who require hospital admission cannot stay locally as there is no in-patient provision and they will be allocated a bed in other areas where AWP has a bed available. This is likely to be Swindon. There are many consequences of this including the challenges family face in relation to being able to visit and the challenges faced by the individual regarding their ability to access the community as part of step-down, rehabilitation and discharge planning. These issues have been escalated to senior AWP managers but there is no plan to reverse this decision which originally came about following a Care Quality Commission (CQC) visit.*
- *ensuring that organisational safeguarding concerns are escalated and managed.*

*There are statutory responsibilities for both the Council and the Integrated Care Board (ICB). The Council continue to work with the ICB on various aspects, which include safe services and ensuring that processes in place to split funding between health and social care are adhered to, to ensure there is a fair and consistent process for reviewing eligibility.*

*There is new case law - Worcester Case - The Council have started to implement the legal changes brought about by the Worcester Case regarding people re-detained under the Mental Health Act (MHA) who live outside of BANES area. In practice this has meant undertaking a piece of work to identify all individuals eligible for mental health services and to determine whether they have been re-sectioned (re-detained) under the MHA. If we identify an individual who has been re-detained then the arduous process begins of requesting the new council to accept social care responsibility for their funding. This has resulted in a financial saving for BANES where the service was able to*

*effect a positive outcome and, indeed, a better outcome for the individual as their social care provision is being overseen by the team where they live.*

*The Approved Mental Health Team (AMHP) continues to assess a record number of people under the MHA in our area, individuals who are either resident in B&NES or resident elsewhere but find themselves in our area. This includes a large number of individuals admitted to the RUH and to our Health Based Place of Safety Suite in Devizes.*

*Right Care Right Person (RCRP) - This is the initiative introduced by the police nationally and the management team of the Approved Mental Health Practitioner (AMHP) Lead to input into the working groups to ensure that people locally who are in crisis are supported both by the police and the mental health services.*

### **Children and Young People's Mental Health**

*The Council & ICB continue to work with Oxford Health NHS FT to support the further development of CAMHS provision across the footprint. Following the cyber-attack which affected Oxford Health, we have been working with teams to bring core reporting back online. Key areas of focus based on the data that we have:*

- *Increasing referral rates to Mental Health Support Teams (MHST) in schools. Based on referral data for 2023/24 referral rates to MHSTs are lower than anticipated in the majority of the 44 schools covered by an MHST. Of note are the low referral rates from primary schools in our most deprived wards. ICB leads have presented to the School Standards Board, with a clear offer to reach out to school teams to promote the offer and improve understanding of alignment with school counselling and pastoral teams.*
- *Link Worker development – through Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust we have appointed a lead provider to deliver a link worker service across B&NES. The ambition with this service is to work with and walk alongside CYP across the whole pathway – supporting connection to their communities (social prescribing), providing some group-based interventions and preparing children and young people for therapy if required. This is an important step forward to deliver improved outcomes through services already available across our communities.*
- *Children Looked After (CLA) – through the appointment of a CLA Lead in Oxford Health, we have reviewed current CAMHS provision for CLA. Of the 224 CLA (April 2024 position) reviewed in B&NES, 44 were open to CAMHS – of which 21 were open to community CAMHS, 23 open to Placement Support. Placement Support Therapists located within the In Reach CAMHS team offer consultation*

and direct work with foster carers for young people placed in B&NES and Wiltshire. This was recognised to be an exemplary service model, but with limited resource.

- *Mental Health Champions and Youth Workers in BSW Acute Settings - Ensuring the needs of children and young people with mental health needs who present in our acute and paediatric settings are met appropriately, holistically and collaboratively through the Paediatric Consultant MH Champion in each acute and via the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector (VCSE) commissioned Youth Worker Service in the RUH, GWH and SFT.*

*(This response was provided within five working days of the meeting).*

<b>P</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>Question from:</b>	Off the Record Youth Forum
<p>What effect has the clean air zone had on Bath city centre traffic, and how successful has it been?</p>			
<b>Answer from:</b>			Cllrs Sarah Warren
<p><i>The primary objective of the Clean Air Zone (CAZ) is to improve air quality and reduce harmful levels of nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) – it is not a congestion reduction measure. Since launch it has been successful in reducing NO<sub>2</sub> with all monitoring locations now measuring below the legal limit.</i></p> <p><i>Non-compliant vehicles now account for less than 1% of vehicle movements in the zone, a reduction from 6% in March 2021 when CAZ launched. CAZ performance and monitoring results are published online at: <a href="https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/policy-and-documents-library/baths-clean-air-zone-monitoring-reports">https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/policy-and-documents-library/baths-clean-air-zone-monitoring-reports</a> Annual report data for 2023 will be published in August.</i></p> <p><i>Long term NO<sub>2</sub> monitoring data for all monitoring locations across B&amp;NES can also be reviewed at: <a href="https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/nitrogen-dioxide-monitoring-data">https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/nitrogen-dioxide-monitoring-data</a></i></p>			
<b>P</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>Question from:</b>	Off the Record Youth Forum

What are your opinions about the national service initiative?

**Answer from:**

Cllr Kevin Guy

*I did not support the previous government's national service policy proposal.*

*Many young people in B&NES give up a lot of their time for charity and other volunteer work already, without the need for any compulsory schemes.*

*My personal view is that this proposal was a gimmick, intended to appeal to a particular audience, and not a serious policy proposal.*

*That said, any new funding from the new government to give more opportunities to local young people (for example to take part in activities, develop skills etc.) would be welcomed.*

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## CERIS HUMPHRIES STATEMENT TO CABINET – 11<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2024

I want to make it clear I'm speaking solely in a personal capacity. Also, that I do NOT live in one of the current Liveable Neighbourhood (LN) trial areas.

I would prefer to be making this statement at the Council meeting next week because I'm not talking about anybody in Cabinet. But there was no space so I'm here instead.

In the April Council meeting, Councillors unanimously resolved the Council should sign up to the LGA's Debate not Hate campaign. They noted increasing levels of toxicity in public and political discourse, and wanted to see prevention, support and responses to abuse and intimidation of local politicians improve to ensure councillors and officers feel safe and that councillors are able to continue representing their residents.

What the resolution left out was any consideration of the toxicity in treatment of members of the public by politicians. So I'm here to put that right.

How is it OK for any Councillor to engage in and use his position to widely promote a campaign that publicly and loudly points the finger of responsibility at residents for the existence of an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO) that is the decision of a local council?

How is it OK for Parish Councillors to share with thousands of people such a campaign targeting residents?

How is it OK for these politicians to stand by and do nothing when the consequences of their actions play out in the residents they pointed at being harassed on line and accosted on the street, in Officers being subjected to horrendous abuse at public meetings and in road workers being abused in the street?

I hope B&NES has measures in place to support staff who are subjected to such hate and bullying – but how is it OK there is no support for the residents who are being subjected to bullying and harassment, often by unidentified individuals?

How is it OK for a Councillor in a Council meeting, without challenge, to make assertions about congestion and air pollution which are unsubstantiated and which he appears to lack the understanding to comment on, and to ask residents questions about data that it isn't their responsibility to know? How is it OK to gaslight residents who have in their own time come to express their own **personal** views to Council?

Councillors were correct to condemn the levels of toxicity in public and politics.

But your resolution didn't go far enough. A zero-tolerance approach to abuse should not just apply to councillors and officers but also to the way politicians treat others.

It is not enough to challenge the normalisation of intimidation and abuse only against councillors and officers. Residents engaging in good faith with council policies should be entitled to the same respect and support from Councillors.

**All** residents had the opportunity to participate in multiple phases of widely publicised consultation over a period of more than three years, as well as the current ETRO consultation phase.

Politicians should not be using members of the public who chose to participate as a political football because they chose to participate.

Politicians who do this need to be challenged.

I ask you to consider what more can be done to support residents who are being targeted as a result of such ill-considered political campaigns.

## **Future funding of services in B&NES**

Now that 14 years of Tory mismanagement of the economy has been consigned to history, attention will need to turn to the shocking legacy they have bequeathed to the country. In local government the position is particularly acute with some councils already effectively insolvent and subject to central government intervention.

The Tories systematically stripped funding away from local government during their time in office and progressively transferred the cost of running local government from central government to local taxpayers. B&NES council alone lost approximately £300m in grant funding between 2010 and today. Other councils will have lost more.

The election of a new Labour Government and the arrival of a significant LD caucus in Parliament together with a re-elected LD MP for Bath provides a potential conduit into government to advance ideas about how the funding crisis in local government can be addressed but in particular how this council can begin to set out its own solutions to the funding gap.

The council needs to clearly set out the options it prefers for placing the funding of local services on a long-term sustainable basis. Whether this refers to the urgent reform of social care funding, the creation of new income streams such as tourism levies, or the broader reform of council tax and business rates is not for me to describe, that is your job as elected representatives. I have attached the current LGA ask of government, but B&NES will have its own unique circumstances to feed into the debate particularly managing the costs of the high level of tourism as a double World Heritage site and dealing with the loss of income that having two popular Universities in Bath creates.

My plea to you is that you take this issue very seriously and act swiftly because the window will rapidly close, decisions will be made, and once again you will be into the depressing cycle of cuts and council tax increases that have been the feature of local government and this council for so long. If any doubts exist about the course of action I am suggesting, then you only have to look at the two financial reports elsewhere on this agenda which clearly demonstrate the long-term lack of sustainability in the council's finances.

What I believe you should do (working across party) is to generate and analyse ideas for raising regular new income streams for the council. These need to be politically supported and made publicly available. These ideas can then be promoted through to ministers and civil servants in the way that was very successfully undertaken during the covid pandemic. The LGA list provides at least a starting point but no doubt councillors will have other ideas of their own.

The chancellor has made it clear that her cheque book will not readily be opened to plug the funding gap and so it is up to local government to make its own case to the government. If you agree with me, do it now. Be Leaders not followers.

Richard Samuel  
11.7.24

**The LGA shopping list**

- **Funding fit for the future.** Sufficient, multi-year funding for local government with combined funding pots so that local services can develop and transform in a planned way, alongside a cross-party review of, and debate on, options to improve the local government finance system. This includes: updating the formulas and the underlying data used for the assessment of relative needs and resources combined with transitional mechanisms to ensure that no council experiences a loss of income in the move to new formulae; reform of, and freedoms and flexibilities over, council tax, business rates and sales, fees and charges; assignment, to local areas, of a proportion of nationally collected taxes paid by citizens in each area; and the freedom to collect different taxes in different ways to support local priorities, or introduce new local levies, such as a tourism tax, an e-commerce levy, and the power to introduce a workplace parking levy.
- **Ensure future growth funding cycles are allocated on a six-to-eight-year basis as consolidated pots** for councils to invest according to local need.
- **An increase in Affordable Homes Programme (AHP) grant levels** per unit to deliver more new affordable homes and ensure inflationary pressures do not jeopardise continued delivery.
- **Continue to uprate Local Housing Allowances (LHA) rates** to the 30th percentile of local rents beyond 2025/26.
- **Increase the subsidy for temporary accommodation**, so that it is no longer frozen at 90 per cent of 2011 LHA rates.
- **Strengthened Housing Revenue Accounts via a long-term rent settlement** and restoration of lost revenue due to rent cap/cuts, to give councils certainty on rental income and support long-term business planning.
- **The Government should meet existing cost pressures to stabilise the children's social care system and invest in solutions that work.** Fully funding placements for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children and care leavers. Programmes that reduce demand for placements and expand placement capacity. Review the

new burdens funding for Staying Put policy for children in care to address current underfunding.

- **Dedicated action to increase the number of children’s social workers**, including Government-funded training programmes and bursaries to encourage retraining from other professions and £500,000 to fund an extension to the Return to Social Work programme to bring 200 social workers back to the profession. This will help to address challenges in recruiting sufficient children’s social workers and support improved stability for children and young people.
- **The DWP should work with the DfE to share data and automatically enrol all children who are eligible for free school meals**, as well as automatically providing pupil premium funding for all children who are eligible – regardless of whether they wish to claim a meal.
- **The Government should review the current £7,400 income threshold for free school meals**, which has remained unchanged since its introduction in 2018, to reach more children who are on the cusp of experiencing food poverty as household budgets are squeezed by rising prices and inflation.
- **Allow councils to build maintained schools if that is the local preference** (new schools currently must be academies).
- **Extend funding for Household Support Fund (£500 million) to the end of March 2025**. Work with the LGA and councils to design a more preventative and sustainable approach to local welfare support.
- **Empower and adequately fund councils to better shape locally how they engage with their communities**. Recognise and support the value of innovative forms of community engagement in shaping places, tackling entrenched inequalities and reaching marginalised communities.
- **Avoid funding cliff edge in drug treatment**. The current three years’ worth of drug treatment funding (£533 million) comes to an end in March 2025, whilst Government is only three years into its 10 year strategy.
- **Review the public health grant and the mandated functions that local authorities deliver**. Sufficient ongoing funding is needed to ensure all councils can meet their statutory public health

responsibilities. A review of the public health grant and how it is distributed should consider changes in population, deprivation and need.

- **Fund adult social care adequately, sustainably and with trust** in councils as democratically accountable bodies. The exact funding requirement should be identified through a collaborative process.
- **Dedicated funding for apprenticeships and recruitment programmes related to the regulatory services workforce** to boost the future pipeline of officers entering local government. There is currently an ageing workforce and in regulatory services and a shortfall of new recruits, leading to under inspection in food safety and threatening the ability to deliver regulation in the future.
- **A shift in the allocation of funding resources towards a more substantial investment in prevention and early intervention programmes to reduce the number of people entering the criminal justice system and re-offending.** This will have the long-term benefit of reducing crime rates, as well as reducing costs around policing and community safety. Such programmes could also reduce instances of violence against women and girls and with issues like domestic abuse.
- **Further and continued investment in measures that build community cohesion and resilience within communities.** Specifically, resume funding for the LGA Special Interest Group on Countering Extremism.
- **Fire and rescue authorities should be funded according to risk and have access to capital funding.** Fire and rescue authorities do not currently have access to capital funding. It is clear that the risks facing the fire service are changing in terms of adapting to climate change and capital funding would support services to respond to these risks.
- **Funding the LGA to provide improvement support to the fire and rescue sector.** The LGA is currently not funded to provide improvement work to the fire sector through the Home Office. We believe we could provide useful improvement support to the sector. This would be particularly meaningful given the issues around culture that have come out through the media. Members play a significant role in driving change, and this would support them to do that, improving culture within the sector and enhancing the service's connection with communities.

- **Increased investment in local government mental health support to adults and reform the Mental Health Act.**
- **Increase investment in supported housing.**
- **Reinstate local suicide prevention funding.** The NHS Long Term Plan invested in local suicide prevention services through integrated care boards. This funding has now come to an end and valuable local services are facing a funding cliff edge if councils are unable to reallocate funding from already stretched budgets. Many individuals at risk of suicide have not engaged with mental health and clinical services, meaning local suicide prevention initiatives are crucial.
- **Allow councils appropriate freedoms to borrow and invest,** without the need to seek prior approval from government and make the flexible use of capital receipts.

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**B&NES**  
**Cabinet Meeting**  
**11 July 2024**  
**6.30pm**  
**Guildhall, Bath**

I am speaking as a local resident on New Sydney Place to express my support of your – this Council’s – Liveable Neighbourhood programme in general, and the through traffic restriction trial on Sydney Road in particular.

We are now half way through the trial period.

We have seen some immediate opposition to the closure of Sydney Road on social media and in the press, only days into the trial. But we have also seen a lot of positive feedback. This includes responses from neighbours in adjacent areas, who had been rather sceptical before, from people travelling through the area, visitors to Sydney Gardens and the Canal as well as children who tell us they are now walking to school since “the bollards have been put up”.

Let me just reiterate a few points that seem easily forgotten in this debate.

Sydney Road was a classic example of a residential road being used as a “short-cut” for a trunk road. This resulted in excessive speeding and huge traffic volume – all well documented by Community SpeedWatch sessions and the police. These issues were the greatest concerns expressed by residents in the Public Engagement Report of January 2022.

As reflected in B&NES’ baseline monitoring before the trial, our own traffic counts, too, consistently showed that this residential road was used as a main artery into and out of Bath.

Having said all that in relation to this particular trial, **the central goal of the LN programme is a reduction of motorised traffic in Bath.** Therefore, we must look at the long-term rewards of the scheme: the Sydney Road LN is only the start; it takes time to change travel behaviour and car ownership levels. (I am speaking here to you as someone who does live with the voluntary “inconvenience” of not owning a car myself.)

**The Sydney Road LN is pivotal for B&NES’ overall LN strategy, which is to encourage people to walk, wheel or cycle short journeys if possible.**

Reducing the dominance of vehicles will reduce road traffic congestion for people who rely on their cars – whether because they live or work in rural areas, or because they are elderly or disabled.

This LN cannot be assessed in isolation but is part of a bigger picture: the promotion of safe, active and more sustainable transport for the whole of Bath, in the light of climate emergency. We need LNs as active-travel corridors. **They are transformational schemes that make it safer for everyone to move around actively. Streets belong to all of us, not just motorists.**

This programme – your programme – has had huge support in the multiple stages of public consultation open to everyone. It was prominent on the LibDem manifesto in the last local elections – again with overwhelming support. And the recent general elections again endorsed those standing up for Liveable Neighbourhoods in Bath.

Please be assured of that public support and continue the policy you started. Thank you!

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**STATEMENT FROM CLLR DAVID HARDING – STANTON DREW CHILDREN'S  
PLAY AREA AND BISHOP SUTTON FOOTBALL GROUND**

I am here this evening to talk to you about two community resources in the Chew Valley.

The first is the Children's Play Area in Stanton Drew.

This much used and loved play area features the typical equipment, for the children of the village to climb and balance and swing on, as you would find in many areas across the district.

However, the equipment is ageing and decaying. The wooden construction is constantly being patched up and repaired, but this can't continue much longer, and the equipment will soon need to be condemned or replaced.

The second resource I wish to mention is the football ground at Bishop Sutton FC.

The ground is used not only by the club for games, but for a wide variety of sporting and social activities for children and young people in the area, including hosting local football cup finals and coaching events for all ages.

The ground is desperately in need of modernisation, upgrading of facilities and repair.

Both Stanton Drew Parish Council and Bishop Sutton Football Club are unable to repair and update their facilities as they cannot access grants for the tens of thousands of pounds needed.

The reason they cannot access grants is that land both facilities stand upon are owned by B&NES Council.

And this is the reason I bring this matter to Cabinet tonight both Stanton Drew Parish Council and Bishop Sutton FC have applied for Community Asset Transfers (CATs) in their favour but there has been no discernible progress in the 14 months I and my ward colleague Cllr Box have been aware of and working on this matter.

In fact, I would like to point out Stanton Drew Parish Council first applied for a CAT 5 ½ years ago! 5 ½ years, come on Cabinet, Council really has to do better than this.

So, I ask Cabinet please:

- 1) help to expedite the CATs for both these assets, and
- 2) give me a timescale by which the Council will aim for to complete these processes.

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