

BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET

CABINET

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

Thursday, 13th February, 2025

Present:

Councillor Kevin Guy (Ch)	Leader of the Council, LD Group Leader, Member Advocate for Armed Forces and Veterans
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

66 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

67 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

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

68 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Tim Ball and Dave Wood.

69 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

It was noted that the Monitoring Officer has granted the following dispensations to enable members present to participate in the debate and to vote on item 12 (Budget and Council Tax 2025/26 and Financial Outlook).

- Cllr Sarah Warren – dispensation granted due to a family member being in receipt of an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP).
- General dispensation for all Councillors who pay Council Tax.

A copy of the dispensations is attached as an appendix to these minutes.

70 TO ANNOUNCE ANY URGENT BUSINESS AGREED BY THE CHAIR

There was no urgent business.

71 QUESTIONS FROM PUBLIC AND COUNCILLORS

There were 21 questions from Councillors and 72 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 an Appendix and are available on the Council's website.]

Cllr Sarah Warren made the following statement regarding the questions that had been received in relation to the Bath Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Links (BWWCL) scheme.

“Active travel schemes create a lot of discussion, and I welcome the input from communities, which is important as part of our commitment to 'giving people a bigger say'. For the BWWCL scheme in Bath we recently consulted and had over 1700 comments, suggestions and questions back which we are now considering. I received a further range of questions in advance of this meeting. To ensure that the Council replies properly and considers all the feedback raised I have asked my team to bring those questions into the formal Engagement Report that will be published/brought to Cabinet in the coming months. This means that we as Cabinet have full and detailed information on the community views with which to make decisions on the scheme. It also means that the same information is provided transparently to everyone with an interest in the scheme. Thank you again for the comments and questions raised on this scheme, which I passionately want to get right for our communities.”

72 STATEMENTS OR PETITIONS FROM PUBLIC OR COUNCILLORS

Members of the public and Councillors made statements as follows:

- Charlie Knight – Growth Proposals around Clean and Green Funding and Bus Services
- Mark Bradley – Road Safety by St Gregory's Catholic College
- James Chalmers – Alexandra Park Leisure
- Rosie Phillips – (CEO of Developing Health and Independence) – The Future of Local Service Provision, Accountability and Sustainability
- Cllr Jess David – Breathing Space Support Line

(Copies of the statements are attached as appendices to these minutes).

73 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS CABINET MEETING - 14TH NOVEMBER 2025

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 14th November 2024 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

74 CONSIDERATION OF SINGLE MEMBER ITEMS REQUISITIONED TO CABINET

No single member items were requisitioned to Cabinet.

75 MATTERS REFERRED BY POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY BODIES

No matters were referred by Policy Development and Scrutiny Panels.

76 SINGLE MEMBER CABINET DECISIONS TAKEN SINCE PREVIOUS CABINET MEETING

The Cabinet agreed to note the report.

77 BUDGET AND COUNCIL TAX 2025/26 AND FINANCIAL OUTLOOK

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

- The budget reflects ongoing uncertainty, despite moving away from the previous chaotic Tory regime.
- The Labour government has been slow to implement the significant reforms needed for local government stability.
- The promised multi-year settlements are not yet confirmed; only 50% of the direct costs from the Employers' National Insurance increase are funded.
- Successful bids for new schools are still pending central government funding, causing additional costs to the Council.
- The government's review into social care, set to complete in 2028, shows a lack of understanding as to the urgency of the issues facing local authorities with social care funding.
- The starting point for the 2025/26 budget was a £14m shortfall, addressed through £6.7m in income generation and £7.31m in savings.
- Unpredictable financial pressures, especially in Children's Services, have impacted the budget.
- An increase of £6.5m in social care funding is proposed, following an £8m increase last year. It is important to ensure that those who need care have the funding in place to meet their needs.
- Significant contingency and provision budgets are included to mitigate risks, including £2.6m for contract inflation and £4.3m for high-risk service demand and cost increase provision.
- Funding is being provided for "clean and green" initiatives, electric waste and recycling vehicles, new school street schemes, pedestrian crossings, and extended park and ride hours.
- There is also investment in new technology to improve customer service and coordination.
- The budget aims to protect the most vulnerable while managing unpredictability and uncertainty.
- The council has healthy reserves and is not at risk of financial difficulty, unlike some other local authorities.
- The budget reflects the council's commitment to improving lives and maintaining stability despite many current challenges.

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

- Children's Services have been under intense pressure, but the administration has supported the service and openly and consistently backed the most vulnerable in our community.
- Through this budget the children's base budget of £36m has increased to nearly £41m following the previous year's commitment of a 10% increase.
- Reviews and inspections have consistently shown that the children's services the Council provides are good with outstanding features delivered by dedicated staff.

Cllr Manda Rigby spoke about the new proposal to extend the hours of the Park and Ride scheme on a trial basis from April, to run until 11.30pm Monday to Saturday. This will help the nighttime economy and will be beneficial to tourists visiting the city. The importance of marketing this extended service was noted.

Cllr Alison Born stated that the decision to bring adult social care services back in-house has allowed for more skilled and compassionate care, early intervention, collaborative decision-making, and better resource allocation. Despite rising demand, costs, and staff shortages, progress is being made on transformation plans with continued investment from the administration. However, the council must also develop universal services, balancing investment in adult social care with necessary savings. Long-term, central government must address the increasing costs of adult social care, as local authorities cannot bear this burden alone. The forthcoming review by Louise Casey is welcomed but needs timely action.

Cllr Sarah Warren welcomed the funding that has been provided in the budget for the School Streets initiative. This scheme will reduce traffic in and around schools during drop off and collection times to create a safer environment for children and to encourage active travel to improve health and wellbeing.

Cllr Matt McCabe highlighted the additional funding that has been secured for housing initiatives.

Cllr Kevin Guy thanked Cllr Elliott and officers for their excellent work to produce a balanced budget in difficult financial circumstances.

RESOLVED, unanimously:

(1) To recommend Council to approve:

- The General Fund net revenue budget for 2025/26 of **£151.71m** and the individual service cash limits for 2025/26 as outlined in Annex 1 of the report.
- The savings and income plans outlined in Annex 2(i), funding requirements 2(ii), in conjunction with the Equalities Impact Assessment Report in Annex 3 of the report.
- An increase in Council Tax of 2.99% in 2025/26 (an increase of £51.92 per Band D property or £1 per week).
- An increase of 2% to Council Tax for the Adult Social Care Precept in recognition of the current demands and financial pressures on this

service. This is equivalent to an increase of £34.72 on a Band D property (67p per week).

- The movement in reserves outlined in section 5.6 and the adequacy of Un-earmarked Reserves at £12.58m within a risk assessed range requirement of £11.8m - £13.0m.
 - To note the Children's Services management plan update set out in section 5.2.6 of the report.
 - The Efficiency Strategy attached at Annex 4 of the report.
 - The Capital Programme for 2025/26 of £76.41m including new and emerging capital bids outlined in Annex 5(i), planned sources of funding in 5.8.3, and notes the programme for 2026/27 to 2029/30 and that any wholly funded projects coming forward during the year will be added to the Capital Programme in line with the Budget Management Scheme.
 - The delegation of implementation, subject to consultation where appropriate, of the capital programmes set out in Annex 5(i) to Annex 5(iv) to the relevant Director in consultation with the appropriate Cabinet Portfolio Holder.
 - The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) allocations and amendments outlined in Annex 5(v) of the report.
 - The Capital & Investment Strategy attached at Annex 6 of the report.
 - The MRP Policy attached at Annex 7 of the report.
 - The Capital Prudential Indicators outlined in 5.8.7 of the report.
 - The Annual Pay Policy Statement at Annex 8 of the report.
 - The Community Contribution Fund extension outlined section 5.5 of the report.
 - The Council Tax Support Scheme for 2025/26 shown in the following link: <https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2025-01/Bath%20%26%20NE%20Somerset%20S13A%20202526%20FINA%20L%20.pdf> and referred to in 5.3.5 of the report.
 - The Fees and Charges schedule for 2025/26 at Annex 11 of the report and support its publication following approval of the budget, with delegation to amend individual costs within the schedule in line with market needs, to the Director of Place Management, in consultation with the appropriate Cabinet Portfolio Holder.
- (2) To agree that the Council include in its Council Tax setting, the precepts set and approved by other bodies including the local precepts of Town Councils,

Parish Councils, and Charter Trustees of the City of Bath, and those of the Fire and Police Authorities.

- (3) To note the S151 Officer's report on the robustness of the proposed budget and the adequacy of the Council's reserves outlined in 5.7 of the report.
- (4) To note the budget consultation responses in Annex 10, and the PDS Panel feedback in Annex 12 of the report.
- (5) To authorise the Council's S151 Officer, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Resources, to make any necessary changes to the draft budget proposal for submission to Council.

78 REVENUE & CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING, CASH LIMITS AND VIREMENTS – APRIL TO DECEMBER 2024

Councillor Mark Elliott, Cabinet Member for Resources, presented the report, moved the officer recommendation and made the following points:

- In Children's Services there is a significant predicted overspend of £5.51m.
- The main pressures which are leading to the overspend are: Residential care, increased care packages particularly in the Disabled Children's Team, Unaccompanied Asylum Seeker Children, and home to school transport.
- Long-term mitigation measures include building in-house provision.
- The aim is to reduce reliance on the open market.
- There has been an improvement since the quarter two position of just under £4.6m.
- The current predicted overall overspend is just under £1m.
- This is a better position compared to the same point in the last financial year.
- Cllr Elliott thanked officers for their hard work in improving the financial position and noted that a balanced budget was expected by year-end.
- 77% of the £16.4m planned savings have been delivered.
- The remaining 23% of savings is expected next year or will be mitigated by one-off underspend or income in-year.
- This has been a challenging situation but there is a commitment to approve a balanced budget each year.

Cllr Manda Rigby seconded the motion and commended Cllr Elliott and the officers on their ability to make mid-year adjustments as required. She also noted the importance of regular budget monitoring.

RESOLVED, unanimously:

- (1) To note the 2024/25 revenue budget position (as at the end of December 2024).
- (2) To note the revenue virements listed in Appendix 3(i) of the report.
- (3) To note the capital year-end forecast detailed in paragraph 3.33 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.

79 BATH & NORTH EAST SOMERSET HOUSING PLAN

Cllr Matt McCabe, Cabinet Member for Built Environment, Housing and Sustainable Development, introduced the report, moved the recommendation and made the following points:

- It is acknowledged that there is a housing and affordability crisis.
- The housing waiting list is currently over 5,500 with only 500 properties available annually.
- There is a long wait time for larger homes due to loss of stock through the Right to Buy scheme.
- There is reliance on market sales to subsidise affordable and social housing.
- It is increasingly important to utilise Council assets to enable affordable housing development.
- We can then deliver more affordable and social rental units through Aequus and B&NES Homes.
- It is important to spread tenures widely to address various needs (e.g. Temporary, Supported, Social Units).
- This will enable us to support vulnerable individuals and families, enhance lives and allow people to maintain community ties.
- Aequus products will be required to meet EPC A standards for new builds and retrofits.
- This will contribute to our Net Zero goals and will reduce heating bills for tenants.
- The appendices give a complete picture of the plan's impact on vulnerable people.

Cllr Alison Born seconded the motion emphasising the critical need for warm, secure, and affordable housing. She highlighted the inadequacy of current provision in B&NES, particularly for low-cost, energy-efficient, family-sized, and specialised housing. She supported the housing plan's clear strategies to improve availability and address market failures. This plan has the potential to transform lives.

Cllr Paul May also welcomed the Housing Plan and was pleased to note that care leavers would be a priority. He also noted that that plan is linked in with other corporate strategies.

RESOLVED unanimously:

To approve the following documents, attached as appendices to the report, for publication and implementation, subject to minor textual updates including confirmation of the final governance structure:

- (1) Bath & North East Somerset Housing Plan 2025-2030;
- (2) Domestic Abuse Accommodation Strategy 2024-29;
- (3) Housing Services Charging Policy 2025.

80 ACTIVE TRAVEL MASTERPLAN

Cllr Sarah Warren, Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency and Sustainable Travel, introduced the report, moved the officer recommendation and made the following points:

- The Council declared a climate emergency in March 2019 and remains committed to enabling the district to be net zero by 2030.
- Transport accounts for nearly a third of carbon emissions in B&NES.
- Decarbonising transport is crucial for health and environmental benefits.
- The Active Travel Masterplan sets out a 20-year vision to promote walking, wheeling, and cycling.
- The aim is to make these modes of transport the natural choice for more journeys.
- There is a comprehensive plan for interconnected walking, wheeling, and cycling routes.
- The plan focuses on safety, reducing inequalities, improving air quality, tackling obesity, and reducing traffic congestion.
- The target is to reduce car mileage by 25% per person. Safe infrastructure is necessary to achieve this goal.
- E-bikes make cycling more accessible, even for medium-length journeys.
- The Plan identifies current barriers to active travel and proposes connected infrastructure and public education.
- The Plan addresses the needs of residents without cars and ensures travel accessibility for all, regardless of income, age, gender, or physical ability.
- Adoption of the masterplan as council policy will open doors to external funding sources.
- The next steps will be further analysis and prioritisation of proposed routes.
- There will also be collaboration with West of England Combined Authority and Active Travel England.

The motion was seconded by Cllr Matt McCabe. Cllr McCabe noted the difficulty of cycling and walking on country lanes between local villages which could be dangerous. He felt that this scheme would assist those people who wished to be more active.

Cllr Alison Born stated that it is essential for the Council to invest in this project. There are multiple benefits of active travel such as improving air quality, fitness, health and wellbeing.

RESOLVED unanimously:

To formally adopt the Active Travel Masterplan.

81 CREATING SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES IN NORTH EAST SOMERSET: THE JOURNEY TO NET ZERO

Cllr Sarah Warren, Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency and Sustainable Travel, introduced the report, moved the officer recommendation and made the following points:

- The "Journey to Net Zero: Creating Sustainable Communities" transport strategy outlines our vision and strategic approach to sustainable development amongst the towns of North East Somerset and its larger villages.
- The Strategy is based on extensive research and community engagement in collaboration with key stakeholders.
- The vision is to create great places for living, working, and raising families and to offer healthy, low-carbon travel choices to reduce car dependency.
- It builds upon ideas put forward in the 2022 Journey to Net Zero strategy for Bath.
- It addresses transport's role in climate change, social inequality, and economic resilience.
- It puts forward a vision of high-quality, frequent public transport links seamlessly integrated with active travel infrastructure.
- There should be access to essential services and affordable housing without needing to drive.
- There will also be support for drivers to reduce their environmental impact by providing improved car charging facilities and the provision of car clubs to reduce the need for car ownership.
- There will be continued collaboration with local stakeholders and communities and an emphasis on building consensus for a healthier, lower-carbon future.

The motion was seconded by Cllr Matt McCabe. He highlighted the challenge of reducing vehicle mileage per person by 25% while accommodating the construction of 29,000 new houses over the next 20 years, potentially adding 60,000 new cars to the roads. The Council will seek to build homes with adequate infrastructure and job access, secure developer contributions for active travel routes, and provide diverse transport options. Recent public transport initiatives such as Westlink have not been fit for purpose, and it will be important to work with WECA to make public and active transport attractive choices. Serious action needs to be taken to reduce car journeys, tackle the climate emergency, and improve residents' health and fitness.

RESOLVED unanimously:

To formally adopt the Creating Sustainable Communities in North East Somerset: The Journey to Net Zero.

82 TREASURY MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE REPORT TO 31ST DECEMBER 2024

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

- The return on operational investments is 5.05% (just above the benchmark rate).
- The return on strategic investments is 4.32% (slightly higher than the benchmark rate).
- Capital financing costs are running at £1.05m lower than budget due to higher investment returns and capital spend reprofiling.

- This helps to alleviate the revenue budget pressures highlighted in the quarter three performance report.
- All indicators are favourable and well within borrowing limits.
- Our portfolio credit rating is A+.
- We had a minimum of £15.3m in liquid cash.
- The interest rate exposure risk is low as is the refinancing risk.
- Early repayment risks are on or below limits and we are under-borrowed by about £9m for the rest of the year.
- The Council is in a robust underlying position and Cllr Elliott commended officers for their work in maintaining this position.

Cllr Paul Roper seconded the motion and stated that these good solid investments enable the Council to proceed with its ambitious plans for the future.

RESOLVED unanimously:

To note:

- (1) The Treasury Management Report to 31st December 2024, prepared in accordance with the CIPFA Treasury Code of Practice; and
- (2) The Treasury Management Indicators to 31st December 2024.

83 TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT 2025-26

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

- The Treasury Management Strategy guides the council's treasury activities and ensures prudent financial management.
- Borrowing at the end of December was just under £270m.
- Investments were just over £43m.
- There is exposure to financial risks like loss of invested funds and changing interest rates, so it is important to identify, monitor and control financial risks.
- Risk management is conducted within the CIPFA Code of Practice framework which requires approval of a treasury management strategy before each financial year.
- The Strategy sets out:
 - Treasury limits to control risk and activities.
 - Treasury Management Indicators.
 - Current treasury position.
 - Borrowing requirement.
 - Prospects for interest rates.
 - Borrowing strategy.
 - Investment strategy.

Cllr Paul Roper seconded the motion.

RESOLVED unanimously:

- (1) To recommend the actions proposed within the Treasury Management Strategy Statement (Appendix 1 of the report) to Council.

(2) To note the Treasury Management Indicators detailed in Appendix 1 of the report.

The meeting ended at 7.45 pm

Chair _____

Date Confirmed and Signed _____

Prepared by Democratic Services

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BATH & NORTH EAST SOMERSET COUNCIL

MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT

Grant of a Dispensation

Name of Members	All Councillors
Meeting and item of business for which the dispensation has been sought	Cabinet– 13 th February 2025 (Cabinet Agenda item 12 Cabinet Budget and Council Tax 2025/26 and Financial Outlook).
Reason for dispensation	The Monitoring Officer issued a general dispensation for all Councillors who pay Council Tax and therefore had an interest in these items, to enable them to take part in the debate and vote.

Having received a request at the meeting from the councillors requesting this dispensation, it was granted.

Signed**Michael Hewitt**.....

M Hewitt
Monitoring Officer – Bath & North East Somerset Council

Dated 13th February 2025

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BATH & NORTH EAST SOMERSET COUNCIL

MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT

Grant of a Dispensation

Name of Member	Cllr Sarah Warren
Meeting and item of business for which the dispensation has been sought	Cabinet– 13 th February 2025 (Cabinet Agenda item 12 Cabinet Budget and Council Tax 2025/26 and Financial Outlook).
Reason for dispensation	Cllr Sarah Warren The Monitoring Officer issued a specific dispensation for the above-named Councillor who has a family member in receipt of social services and therefore had an interest in these items, to enable her to take part in the debate and vote.

Having received a request at the meeting from the councillors requesting this dispensation, it was granted.

Signed**Michael Hewitt**.....

M Hewitt
Monitoring Officer – Bath & North East Somerset Council

Dated 13th February 2025

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CABINET MEETING – 13th February 2025

STATEMENTS FROM PUBLIC AND COUNCILLORS

1. Charlie Knight – Growth Proposals around Clean and Green Funding and Bus Services
2. Mark Bradley – Road Safety by St Gregory's Catholic College
3. James Chalmers – Alexandra Park Leisure
4. Rosie Phillips (CEO of Developing Health and Independence) – The Future of Local Service Provision, Accountability and Sustainability
5. Cllr Jess David – Breathing Space Support Line

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS - COUNCILLORS

M	01	Question from:	Cllr Karen Walker
<p>Cllr Rigby, in the upcoming budget 2025/26, a sum of £21,000 has been allocated from the draft Public Rights of Way Improvement Programme. Eckweek Lane Peasedown St John PROW BA7/12, to level and lay stone (hoggin), add drainage on a NEW section not an existing bridleway, subject to the dedication of the Parish Council.</p> <p>Residents living on Eckweek Lane have raised concerns, that several surveys have not been carried out.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A risk assessment due to the topography i.e. elevation. The PROW has been closed since 1996 because of the location and risk to users. Where the proposed exit/entrance of the PROW is on the A367, horses, pedestrians and cyclists would be joining a road with a speed of 50mph. • An Ecological Survey to protect the many species of animals and insects that live there (this council declared an ecological emergency in July 2020). • An Equality Impact Assessment, an evidence-based approach to consider barriers to participation or disadvantage to any protected groups. • An anti-social behaviour assessment, due to drug and alcohol misuse. Motor bikes and scooters using the proposed PROW as an escape route. • Public consultation, to find out if there is a need for this particular PROW to be re-instated, even if the law says you have the right to access some land for walking or certain other leisure activities. 			

Have all the 5 assessments mentioned above been carried out, why is it the council are paying out £21,000 for an additional PROW on Parish council land?

Answer from:

Cllr Manda Rigby

To date, works have only been carried out to the existing bridleway in accordance with our statutory duties to ensure that rights of way are open and available for use by the public. The necessary surveys and assessments would be carried out once the scheme starts being progressed in the new financial year and those surveys and assessments would be taken into consideration when deciding whether to enter into a dedication agreement with the parish council to create a new bridleway on their land. The Council is considering the scheme as a means to resolve the outstanding issue created by previous highway schemes which have resulted in the existing bridleway being made inaccessible at its northern end.

M

02

Question from:

Cllrs Karen Walker and Gavin Heathcote

In April 2022, Peasedown Councillors received the good news from WECA that funding had been secured, though the government's City Region Sustainable Transport Fund, for a roundabout to be built at the junction connecting the southern end of Bath Road and the A367.

This was partly in response to a 20-year campaign led by successive councillors and residents to secure a much-needed roundabout at this junction.

After meeting staff (both at WECA and B&NES) and a public consultation on a roundabout commencing in early 2024 with the community, we were then horrified to learn recently from the transport department that a roundabout is no longer going ahead, and the funding has been pulled.

We'd like to know from the relevant Cabinet Member:

- When was this project passed by WECA to B&NES Council?
- Why was this project passed by WECA to B&NES Council?
- Why has the council decided to pull the plug on funding for a project that the community has been calling for since 2005 when the first public meeting was held over concerns about this junction?

- Will the council review this decision and re-implement funding, as agreed by WECA, for a roundabout to be built at this junction?

Answer from:

Cllr Sarah Warren

This is a complicated project, and I would like to offer to meet with Councillors Walker and Heathcote to discuss this further.

M

03

Question from:

Cllr Joanna Wright

Following complaints about the new microphone system and voting process in the Guildhall chambers, councillors were informed that they voted for this based on very limited information in the 2024-2025 budget papers. However, given the lack of clarity in these papers, how can councillors be confident in what they are voting for?

Answer from:

Cllr Mark Elliott

The council budget setting papers deal with high level budget setting and are not designed to detail every individual line of operational spend that will take place during the financial year. The decision to replace the AV system in the council chamber was an operational one made by the SLT utilising COVID contingency funding.

M

04

Question from:

Cllr Joanna Wright

Please can you give details of when you have discussed the flying of flags above the Guildhall with other group leaders?

Answer from:

Cllr Kevin Guy

14 May 2024

M	05	Question from:	Cllr Joanna Wright
<p>There used to be quarterly meetings with First Bus where councillors could drop in and raise important issues. These meetings are no longer happening. Why not?</p>			
Answer from:			Cllr Sarah Warren
<p><i>The West of England Combined Authority (WECA), as the transport authority for our region, is responsible for public transport operations. Bath & North East Somerset Council is keen to ensure that passenger feedback is used to improve services and continues to call on WECA to facilitate this.</i></p> <p><i>We recognise that direct engagement with bus operators is valuable for raising issues and shaping future services. While we are not responsible for the discontinuation of previous meetings, we continue to press WECA to ensure effective communication between councillors, operators, and passengers.</i></p>			
M	06	Question from:	Cllr Eleanor Jackson
<p>The diverted D2X Frome to Bath via Radstock service is only temporary at present until the road works at Limpley Stoke are completed.</p> <p>Would you consider making the route permanent, as it is proving very popular with passengers and drivers. It is the only public service transport available to the Sulis Hospital, but it is also fast and efficient compared with the 414/424 Midsomer Norton to Frome via all the villages in between. Would you consider the question in the context of ...</p> <p>What steps are you taking to work with Wiltshire and Somerset to maintain community bus services?</p>			
Answer from:			Cllr Sarah Warren
<p><i>The West of England Combined Authority (WECA), as the regional Transport Authority, is responsible for public transport operations. The</i></p>			

current diversion of the D2X service is in place due to roadworks in Wiltshire, and any decision on making this routing permanent would need to be led by WECA in consultation with the relevant operators and local authorities.

Bath & North East Somerset Council is committed to working with neighbouring authorities to support sustainable transport and ensure communities remain well connected. However, responsibility for maintaining and developing public transport services, including cross-border routes, sits with WECA. We will continue to engage with WECA, Wiltshire, and Somerset to support improved connectivity and ensure passenger needs are considered in future transport planning.

M	07	Question from:	Saskia Heijltjes
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At the start of January, many passengers in Lambridge were left stranded due to cancellations on bus services 6 and 7. What steps are BANES leaders taking to work with First Bus to ensure a reliable service for residents in the east of Bath?

Answer from:	Cllr Sarah Warren
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Bath & North East Somerset Council recognises the significant impact that service cancellations have had on residents in Lambridge and across the east of Bath. While responsibility for public transport operations lies with the West of England Combined Authority (WECA), we continue to engage directly with First Bus and WECA to press for improved reliability.

In response to these recent issues, we have raised our concerns with senior management at First Bus, seeking assurances on steps being taken to minimise disruption. We will continue to hold both First Bus and WECA to account to ensure that passengers receive the reliable service they deserve.

M	08	Question from:	Saskia Heijltjes
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The circulation plan or movement strategy has been on the Climate Emergency and Sustainability Policy Development and Scrutiny panel workplan for several meetings in 2024, but it still hasn't been presented to the panel.

With the Liveable Neighbourhood programme moving forward, when can the panel and wider public expect to see the draft movement strategy?

Answer from:

Cllrs Sarah Warren

The Movement Strategy is currently being developed by officers. We hope to be in a position to share progress and engage with communities later in this year.

M

09

Question from:

Saskia Heijltjes

Have all officers within the Highways team been informed on the Vision Zero motion which was passed unanimously in November 2023? Have all officers been offered training to support this?

Answer from:

Cllr Manda Rigby

The Highways service is adopting Safe Systems principles into its working practices to work towards the goal of there being no one killed or seriously injured on our roads. Safe Systems is an internationally recognised approach to reducing road casualties and used by many organisations that have adopted the Vision Zero target. The various highway teams are being introduced to the concept in order that Safe Systems is considered in all aspects of its work.

M

10

Question from:

Cllr Sam Ross

Please can you give details of the Climate and Nature conversations events - are these happening in every ward? How much is this budgeted for in the 2025-2026 papers?

Answer from:		Cllr Sarah Warren
<p><i>We have been running the Climate and Nature Community Conversations to gather residents' views to feed into our new Climate and Nature Strategy. So far, we have held conversations in Bathavon North and Midsomer Norton. Engagement will continue throughout 2025, linking in with other place-based engagement work that will be happening in Keynsham, Bath and beyond. Conversations will also be complimented by other activity which is still being scoped and finalised.</i></p> <p><i>There is no specific budget line for this work as it will be drawn from a mix of service areas and grant funding for place-specific projects.</i></p>		
M	11	Question from:
		Cllr Sam Ross
<p>Following a winter of extreme rainfall, the threat of flooding is more apparent than ever. What collaborative work is the Council doing with other government bodies to ensure we have accurate data on rainfall and water flow, as well as comprehensive flood risk management plans for vulnerable areas? How has the Council accounted for flood risks in its budget for the coming year?</p>		
Answer from:		Cllr Tim Ball
<p><i>Data on both rainfall and river flows is available to us in real time from the MET Office and the Environment Agency. Met Office weather warnings (received via their Hazard Manager system) are received and used to trigger our severe weather protocol severe which includes proactive checks of known flooding hotspots and assets including gullies and watercourse screens.</i></p> <p><i>The Environment Agency is the lead authority for fluvial flooding from main rivers including The Avon, Chew, Cam Brook and Wellow Brook. They have Flood Risk Management Plans in place, significant projects are funded via the Wessex Regional Flood & Coastal Committee who administer Flood Defence Grant in Aid and Local Levey funding streams. Current projects include Bath Flood Defence Scheme (Twerton Gate refurbishment to better protect 1186 properties) and the Pulteney Gate Appraisal Project.</i></p> <p><i>The Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) is the lead authority for surface water flooding. We hold Surface Water Management Plans and Local Flood Risk management plans which are due for renewal this financial year. The budget for LLFA activities sits within Highways, in</i></p>		

2024/25 the revenue budget included £364k for highway gully maintenance & £332k for drainage schemes including highway drainage, land drainage and watercourse maintenance. Gully cleansing operations currently exceeds the allocated revenue budget with shortfall made up from the revenue schemes budget. Capital funding in 2024/25 was set at £375k to deliver improvement schemes and investigation works, the capital funding for 2025/26 is increasing to £600k. Schemes include partnership working with Wessex Water, land drainage and highway drainage improvements.

The Emergency Management Team writes and co-ordinates the Local Authority's flood plan and response. This involves risk assessing, triggers, training and co-ordinating Incident Management Team Meetings. The Emergency Management Team are also engaged with local communities in respect of providing support, flood resilience and warning and informing, whilst also helping tackle local issues, The Emergency Planning Team supports communities to have a unified voice to communicate ideas and queries to others in their areas.

M	12	Question from:	Cllr Sam Ross
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It has recently come to light that Keynsham Town Council discovered BANES had to return £168,000 of S.106 money to a property developer because it was not spent within the required time period. How does the Council track S.106 funding to ensure it is spent within the designated timeframe, and how are local ward councillors kept informed of this?

Answer from:	Cllr Matt McCabe
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The planning service and the various services requesting funding through s106 obligations are together responsible for tracking the spend and implementation of s106 financial contributions, to ensure contributions are spent in time and in accordance with the relevant obligations. The protocols for managing this process are currently being reviewed. Management and spend of S106 contributions are principally an operational matter.

M	13	Question from:	Cllr Liz Hardman
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Context:

Last month, the Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel on health and wellbeing learnt that B&NES council knew in January 2024 that Newton House would stop offering short-term Respite Care by February 2025.

- Dimensions, who run Newton House, had made B&NES aware that the rates paid by B&NES had been loss-making for some time, and advised B&NES in January 2024 that the financial position was untenable.
- Yet it wasn't until 11 months later in December 2024 that the families who depend on respite care at Newton House to keep their families together were made advised that its respite care– the only such facility in B&NES - would no longer be available from February 1st, 2025.

If B&NES knew in January 2024 that Respite Care would no longer be available in 2025, why were the families not informed until December 2024?

Answer from:

Cllr Alison Born

Dimensions initially approached the commissioning team in January 2024, and they worked together to explore a number of options for the future of Newton House. Their conclusion was set out in the letter that was sent to families in early December. It was my decision with Director of Adult Social Care to pause the process once we were aware of the letter that was sent to families. We have now agreed that Newton House will remain open for respite until the end of 2025 to allow time for the council to work with families to agree the future model of provision for this client group. This has been discussed with families and confirmed in writing.

M

14

Question from:

Cllr Liz Hardman

Dimensions advised B&NES that the financial position was untenable in January 2024. Given that this was the only short-term respite care in B&NES, why were negotiations not in place to address the financial shortcomings to ensure respite care continued to be available to B&NES residents throughout the year between knowing and enacting a decision to end the offer to these B&NES families?

Answer from:

Cllr Alison Born

Last year the council worked together with Dimensions to explore a number of options for the future of Newton House. This included reviewing demand for the service and options for re-modelling the service within current registration and available budget. Newton House is not the only short-term respite service in B&NES. Respite in the community and overnight for people with different levels of support is provided by several other services, including shared lives and community support.

M**15****Question from:**

Cllr Liz Hardman

Given that 2 of the 6 beds were reported as regularly empty, when families say they requested but were denied extra respite care, and others say they were never told it existed, what work was done during 2024 (and if appropriate, how often) to fill those 2 beds from within B&NES, or, if nobody wanted them, from other local authorities nearby?

Answer from:

Cllr Alison Born

Newton House is a respite service for people over the age of 18. People can use Newton House if they have had a Care Act assessment/Carers Assessment and as a result of their assessment have needs of such complexity that they require a residential respite service. When planning services with individuals we would discuss the most appropriate service to meet people's needs.

There is currently no waiting list for respite in B&NES.

Supplementary Question 1

All potential adult respite users should have had statutory assessments by law. So what action was taken between January 2024 and January 2025 to understand the needs of Newton House users (when we believe no statutory assessments were completed)?

Response

All people accessing Newton House had a care act assessment and a support plan, respite was provided as a result of this 15 of 17 people have had a completed new assessment or review in the last few months, with 2 reviews still being completed with families.

Supplementary Question 2

If Newton House is filled as a result of properly signposting it at an appropriate cost-covering rate, will B&NES – working with Dimensions – keep this important and unique facility open after 31 December 2025?

Response

We are reviewing demand for respite and completing a needs analysis. This includes looking at the needs of B&NES population and also speaking with neighbouring local authorities. Take up of respite support out of area is informed by several factors, including level of need, proximity and choice. This information will be taken into consideration in informing future options for respite in B&NES.

M	16	Question from:	Cllr Lesley Mansell
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How much money has B&NES contracted to pay HCRG Care Group for the Bath & NE Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire Integrated Care Board (ICB) community-based care contract over the length of the full contract, and then for possible extensions?

Answer from:	Cllr Alison Born
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The total contribution from the council will be £35,440,461 of the contract over 7 years. This includes services provided for children and young people, a proportion of the Better Care Fund and Reablement.

Supplementary Question

How are you going to ensure that B&NES residents will be informed of improved outcomes to their health and healthcare and what level of public scrutiny will there be?

Bearing in mind this is public money, and the scrutiny panel were not informed of how ‘improvements’ will be monitored. In fact, it is the experience in B&NES that with HCRG it is difficult to get meaningful information on service delivery, performance, transformation targets, budgets, or staffing issues.

Response (provided by the ICB)

HCRG will be held to account for supporting the delivery of our ambition for transforming community-based care in BSW, which will see people in Bath and North East Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire receiving more health and social care in or near their homes, in a more joined-up and streamlined way.

HCRG will be expected to deliver the [transformation priorities](#) set out within the ICBC contract. These transformation priorities are informed by the BSW [Integrated Care Strategy](#) and [Primary and Community Delivery Plan](#).

The ICBC contract includes an outcomes framework which sets out the requirements of the contract, what outcomes will be delivered as a result and how they will be measured. Within the contract there are also specific mandated quality measures. This will allow the ICB to measure progress on delivering the [transformation priorities](#) and long-term improvements in services and support provided to people across BSW.

The monitoring of the contract will be overseen by a joint forum of commissioners, known as the BSW ICBC Collaborative Oversight Forum, which includes local authority representation, in line with national guidance.

As a provider of health and care, HCRG Care Group's performance will also be reviewed by the healthcare regulator the Care Quality Commission and NHS England pursuant to its provider licence.

The ICB is committed to ongoing engagement with the Health Select Committee, and the Health and Wellbeing Board, to provide updates on quality of care and health outcomes. Additionally, as is the case now, our Board papers are made publicly available and Board meetings take place in public, both of which provide routine reporting on the performance and quality of services.

M	17	Question from:	Cllr Lesley Mansell
Will the council call on the ICB to provide evidence, through an impact assessment, to show the benefits this contract will have on the whole community across B&NES?			
Answer from:			Cllr Alison Born

An EQIA was completed by BSW ICB and regularly updated throughout the procurement and was included in the ICBC Programme Board papers to accompany decision gateways. This will be handed to the ICBC Provider who will update and publish at the appropriate time.

M	18	Question from:	Cllr Lesley Mansell
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Concerns were raised about the process to select a provider of community care services, specifically about the lack of transparency in committing millions of pounds of public money to a private company when the relevant policy development and scrutiny panel learnt of this contract only when it was a completed 'done deal'. Will B&NES council now contact the Secretary of State for Health and request that he call-in the decision?

Answer from:	Cllr Alison Born
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The ICBC procurement led by the BSW ICB and overseen by the ICBC Programme Board (with Local Authority membership), was subject to assurance by NHSE throughout the procurement and all decision gateways. The ICBC Procurement was subject to robust scrutiny and oversight through the ICB's Finance and Investment Committee, and approval was given through the ICB Board (which includes LA members and is attended by NHSE). While Cabinet would prefer community health services to be delivered by an NHS provider, it recognises that due process was followed in the contract award.

Supplementary Question

I think there is some misunderstanding here. The call in for this project is about the failing to trigger the service reconfiguration regulations. Will you call on the Secretary of State for Health to call in this decision on the basis that it has not met the two criteria for calling in such decisions, these are:

- (i) Concerns around the consultation carried out with patients, staff, the public and key stakeholders
- (ii) Concerns that the proposal is not in the best interests of health services in the area.

That is if service re-configuration is triggered there is a need to formally engage with the public, national bodies and local authorities. Clearly this has not happened which constitutes grounds for a call in.

What guidance was sought in this case? There was no consultation with the Scrutiny Panel, so what meaningful consultation was carried out with councillors and the public?

Response (provided by the ICB)

All public sector procurement processes are subject to legal guidance and strict confidentiality rules which limit the information that can be placed in the public domain during the procurement.

The ICB had a legal duty to proceed to procurement because our existing contracts were ending and there was no scope to legally extend them further. Therefore, reprocurring the contract could not be subject to consultation as it was not optional.

Private companies are entitled to bid for contracts. Therefore, the ICB could not meaningfully consult on who the provider would be.

Likewise, under the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (PCR), which was the procurement process the ICB had to use because of when procurement had to start, the detail of the procurement is not something you can consult on as is commercial in confidence and again a process bound by legal responsibilities (including confidentiality). Additionally, the successful bidder is not something that can be consulted on under procurement rules.

The procurement was carried out in line with the requirements of the process; therefore outcome has to be abided by.

There are no proposed changes to service delivery at this stage.

The new contract is designed around [transformation priorities](#) and an outcomes framework that is informed by the BSW [Integrated Care Strategy](#) and [Primary and Community Delivery Plan](#).

Engagement with patients and the public took place on the Health and Care model and elements of Integrated Care Strategy, which gave a framework of priorities that fed into market engagement events with providers. These events shaped the Primary and Community Delivery Plan and subsequent transformation priorities and key outcomes for integrated community-based care which formed the basis of the ICBC programme, and the following procurement. In summary this process included:

- *Engagement on the BSW Health and Care Model involving over 2300 people, 65 events, surveys and direct conversations.*

- *Engagement on the BSW Integrated Care Strategy.*
- *Three market engagement events with 225 people in attendance overall representing 69 providers.*
- *An online survey specifically for clinical and non-clinical primary care staff to provide feedback on the proposed primary care and community delivery plan.*
- *Conversations, discussions and briefings between the programme team and stakeholders.*
- *People with lived experience were also involved in informing the priorities in key thematic areas such as Learning Disability and Autism, and Children Services, and people with lived experience also were involved in the evaluation of the bids, bringing their unique perspectives to the process.*

The current focus is on the safe transfer of services without interruption, and therefore without changes being made.

Transformation is due to begin from 1 April 2025, and HCRG Care Group is required to commit to engagement and co-design opportunities as part of this process and their actions in this regard will be subject to monitoring by the ICBC Collaborative Oversight Forum (made of the 5 commissioning organisations). Commissioners welcome review from the Select Committee as part of this process.

HCRG Care Group committed in their bid to both co-design and engagement with service users, staff and the community as well as working with the ICB in any formal consultation required.

The ICB will exercise its statutory public involvement duties (Health and Care Act 2022) as required and expected. These ICB duties do not apply to HCRG.

The ICB will of course continue to engage with scrutiny committees across the three local authorities as work progresses so they can determine if any proposed changes to services in the future may constitute substantial variation that requires formal consultation.

Further, HCRG Care Group have assured us they will place great importance on meaningful engagement and two-way dialogue with the workforce through partnership arrangements led by local leadership teams and that they are working through updating their current approach to scale up for the new contract, including that ensuring colleagues are involved and represented in the transformation of community services, and will be sharing more on this ahead of the transfer. As part of the tender process, we saw evidence of their past approaches to engaging colleagues and of the positive results of two-way dialogue with the workforce.

To date, they have:

- *Engaged with transferring colleagues through their existing staff representatives and unions, group consultations, and online engagement events.*
- *Launched a welcome portal featuring transparent communication, including FAQs and other key information.*
- *Regularly asked colleagues for feedback, facilitating improvement and providing an opportunity for transferring staff to share their views in a confidential, open forum*
- *Begun developing a Partnership Working framework for the BSW contract, which will include union and colleague group engagement to shape the transformation of services. HCRG Care Group expect to be able to share more information on their proposals in this space in the coming weeks.*

Additionally, HCRG Care Group will be establishing a system-wide Community Services People Partnership Forum to share best practices and continuously improve employment standards across all community providers.

M	19	Question from:	Cllr Robin Moss
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I have been contacted about the lack of card payment facilities in BaNES taxis. This can mean that potential passengers are left in a vulnerable position particularly late at night. I understand that some taxi drivers believe having a card machine will be a breach of their licensing conditions.

What steps are BaNES taking to bring ourselves in line with neighbouring authorities in encouraging the use of card machines in taxis.

Answer from:	Cllr Tim Ball
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Officers are currently in the process of conducting a comprehensive review of the Taxi & Private Hire policy and associated conditions. As part of this review, the team will be surveying all affected Hackney Carriage Proprietors to gather their views on the implementation of card payment systems.

This approach will help the team understand the perspectives and concerns of taxi drivers, ensuring that any changes that are made are well-informed and considerate of all stakeholders. Our goal is to align with best practices and enhance the overall experience for passengers and drivers alike.

In the meantime, I can confirm that all licensees in B&NES are provided with a copy of their licence conditions on issue of a licence so there

should be no confusion and Officers are always willing to clarify any matter regarding licensing compliance; having a card machine does not breach any current licensing conditions, and I urge anyone who is unclear on the matter to contact the Licensing Team directly.

M	20	Question from:	Cllr Eleanor Jackson
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At the behest of Westfield Parish Council the Clerk has written to yourselves asking why it is that in consultation exercises such as those relating to public transport in and through Westfield (and Paulton) are ignored, Blaming it on Google maps is not good enough. She has repeatedly tried to get the directional signs from Highways that we want. Westfield Industrial Estate, Midsomer Norton confuses everyone. As our motto goes, 'Westfield is a community committed to education and enterprise!' Certain officers and councillors in the administration seem to think the world ends at Bath College (which is in Westfield) Why is this?

Answer from:	Cllr Manda Rigby
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Highways officers are aware of the parish council's request for directional signage to be provided to Westfield and have advised them over this matter.

A number of existing direction signs would need to be replaced in order to incorporate the additional destination. In many of the locations where the signs would be located, there is not sufficient space to add on a separate 'Westfield' sign. This isn't something that can be done in a piecemeal manner because there needs to be continuity in direction signage for drivers and riders to follow. This signage work would be a considerable cost.

We appreciate the importance of signage in helping to create a sense of identity for communities, but we have to balance this request with the many competing demands upon our highway budget. Unfortunately, we do not currently have the budget available to do this.

M	21	Question from:	Cllr Eleanor Jackson
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A straw poll I have conducted among mothers and carers of young people in Westfield entitled to respite care at Newton House shows they were never informed of this option when they desperately needed a break. Why is this?

Answer from:	Cllr Alison Born
<p><i>Newton House is a respite service for people over the age of 18, it is not registered to provide support to young people/children. People can use Newton house if they have had a Care Act assessment/Carers Assessment and as a result of their assessment have needs of such complexity that they require a residential respite service. When planning services with individuals we would discuss the most appropriate service to meet people's needs.</i></p>	

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS - PUBLIC

P	01	Question from:	Anne Coghlan
<p>Several BANES officers attended and presented at the West of England Combined Authority: Active Travel Ambition event on Wednesday 16 October. Why were no cabinet members from BANES present? Transport portfolio holders from Bristol and South Gloucestershire were in attendance.</p>			
Answer from:		Cllrs Sarah Warren and Manda Rigby	
<p><i>B&NES Cabinet members were not invited to attend. I believe this was an error on the part of the organisers. B&NES officers who attended shared information from the event.</i></p>			
P	02	Question from:	Anne Coghlan
<p>TIER-Dott halted the long-term hire of e-scooters with immediate effect in September of last year. A few weeks later, hire prices of e-</p>			

scooters and e-bikes went up from 16p per minute to 22p per minute, a rise of 37.5%. What is BANES doing to mitigate these changes to ensure that our residents can reliably use this form of sustainable transport?

Answer from:

Cllr Sarah Warren

This question needs to be submitted to WECA for response.

P 03

Question from:

Anne Coghlan

Why is B&NES advising cyclists and runners to wear hi-vis clothing when a 2013 study from the University of Bath showed that drivers do not change their behaviour in response? Each year, a significant number of pedestrians and cyclists are seriously injured or killed by drivers in B&NES. The council should focus on educating drivers about their responsibilities rather than placing the burden on those who walk, wheel, and cycle.

For reference, see the tweet here: <https://x.com/bathnes/status/1842188017240256601?s=19> and the study here: <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2013-11-high-visibility-ineffective-driver-behavior.html?s=08>

Answer from:

Cllrs Sarah Warren and Manda Rigby

Our social media post is reflecting what is stated under rule 59 of the Highway Code; Light-coloured or fluorescent clothing can help other road users to see you in daylight and poor light, while reflective clothing and/or accessories (belt, arm or ankle bands) can increase your visibility in the dark.

A social media post was also released in the same month aimed at drivers asking them to be more vigilant, looking out for pedestrians and cyclists as the evenings draw in. These pieces of promotional resource were evaluated and supplied by Co-Pilot, industry leaders in reducing road casualties and positive behaviour change for all road users.

<https://x.com/bathnes/status/1849828404071121080>

P	04	Question from:	Salam Hussein
<p>For the past three years, I have requested that card payment facilities be made mandatory in Hackney taxis, yet the licensing department has consistently stated this was under review. Will the council commit to implementing mandatory card payment facilities in Hackney taxis by May, aligning this change with the re-licensing of Hackney vehicles by including it in the licensing conditions?</p> <p>Card payment options are essential to ensure all members of the public, including vulnerable individuals, can access taxis regardless of payment method. This measure would guarantee that no one is left stranded, particularly at night, when safety concerns are paramount.</p> <p>As card payment systems can be implemented by taxi drivers at no cost to the council, will the Cabinet take immediate action to prioritize this issue and ensure it is resolved within the stated timeline?</p>			
Answer from:			Cllr Tim Ball
<p><i>The review of the Taxi and Private hire policy and associated conditions has been commenced, and the policy and conditions will be placed for full consultation in 2025. The team remains dedicated to creating a comprehensive and cohesive document to assist prospective and existing licensees. This document will include a recommendation to make card payments facilities mandatory in Hackney Carriages. This recommendation along with all others will be subject to consultation with the public, trade and wider stakeholders. The review will consider the existing policy and conditions with new recommendations, statutory guidance as well as best practice recommendations and harmonisation with neighbouring local licensing authorities' policies and conditions to ensure greater service and safety of vehicles and drivers in B&NES.</i></p>			
P	05	Question from:	Chad Allen
<p>Is the Council going to tell the people the truth about 15-minute cities and the impact this will have on them?</p>			
Answer from:			Cllr Sarah Warren

The concept of 15-minute cities is an urban planning model where most daily necessities and services, such as work, shopping, education, healthcare, and leisure, can be easily reached within a 15-minute walk, bike ride, or public transit ride from any point in a city or town. This approach aims to reduce car dependency, promote healthy and sustainable living, and improve the overall quality of life of residents.

Bath and North East Somerset Council is not currently seeking to apply a 15-minute city model.

P	06	Question from:	Chad Allen
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Will this Council tell the people the truth about why B&NES and WECA are pushing to remove all parking spaces so that they will not be available to vulnerable and disabled people?

Answer from:	Cllr Manda Rigby
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We would like to assure you that retaining access for Blue Badge holders is of the utmost importance for the council and we remain committed to ensuring that access to key services and facilities is possible for everyone. Our current Parking Policy document “Balancing Your Needs: A parking strategy for Bath & North East Somerset” sets out a long term plan for managing parking across Bath & North East Somerset. Within the document we identify a hierarchy of kerb space with access for blue badge holders prioritised.

Recent changes to parking across B&NES have been made as part of our wider transport schemes including the recent city centre security scheme. These measures are in place to protect public safety, and we have carefully considered the impact on Blue Badge holders in accordance with our statutory equalities duty. Measures have been put in place to continue to either allow access where possible or provide alternative parking options nearby where possible.

Additionally, we undertake Equality Impact Assessments to evaluate any significant changes to parking supply or its management, ensuring that the needs of Blue Badge holders are always considered. Blue Badge holders may also use their badge to provide up to three hours of parking on yellow lines, or all day in any on street paid for parking or resident permit holder bays free of charge as long as their badge is displayed.

We remain committed to meeting the needs of Blue Badge holders and will continue to review and adapt our policies accordingly. Detailed

information and maps on access and parking are available on our website as below:

- Accessible parking - <https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/accessible-parking>.
- City Centre Security consultation and study - <https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/bath-city-centre-security-consultation-update>.
- An Equality Impact Assessment produced in relation to the City Centre Security scheme is available at <https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Equalities%20Impact%20Assessment%20-%20City%20Centre%20Security%20-%20Final.pdf>

P	07	Question from:	Chad Allen
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Will this Council admit that they are following the Agenda 2035 or 2050 Protocol to decarbonise Bath city centre? To fully decarbonise, it will be necessary to plant more trees and hedges to absorb the carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and produce oxygen instead of simply removing vehicles. Is this Council willing to do that?

Answer from:	Cllr Sarah Warren
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Bath & North East Somerset Council has resolved to provide the leadership to enable the district to be net zero by 2030. Our Climate Emergency Strategy sets out our priorities – to decarbonise buildings, decarbonise transport, increase renewable energy generation and cut council operational carbon emissions to net zero by 2030. Between 2005 and 2022, greenhouse gas emissions for the Bath and North East Somerset area fell by 43% and we are committed to continuing this trend through the actions set out in our latest Progress Report and action plan - https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2023-24_Annual_Climate_%26_Nature_Progress_Report_Full_Version.pdf

Although nature-based solutions, including tree planting, can make an important contribution to mitigating climate change globally by absorbing carbon, the contribution of tree planting in the centre of Bath will be very small relative to the total emissions in the wider district. Trees and other vegetation in urban areas can play an important role in adapting to the impact of climate change by providing shade and regulating temperatures. They can also improve people’s health and wellbeing.

We are committed to increasing tree cover across the district, including urban areas. Between 2019 and 2023, we planted 100,000 trees in collaboration with partners and communities. However, there are challenges in planting trees in Bath’s centre due to the underground vaults below much of the city centre, which have an important heritage value.

<i>This year we will publish our updated Climate and Nature Strategy – bringing together our approach to tackling these emergencies for the first time and identifying how we can go further to reduce emissions, adapt to climate change and facilitate nature recovery.</i>			
P	08	Question from:	Edmund Cannon
Has the road safety officer been involved in the design of Liveable Neighbourhoods?			
Answer from:			Cllr Manda Rigby
<i>As part of the technical assurance process for the development of all highway schemes, officers from across the Council provide expert comment and opinion on their specialist areas, including road safety.</i>			
P	09	Question from:	Edmund Cannon
Grosvenor Bridge is scheduled for maintenance in 2025/26. This is a key route for people walking, wheeling and cycling from the east of Bath. Will the route be closed during the planned work?			
Answer from:			Cllr Manda Rigby
<i>We are currently developing the programme of works involving Early Contractor Involvement, due to the restrictive nature of the likely works it will be necessary to have some closures, we will work with our contractor to minimise the duration of any closures and will ensure advance notice and communications are provided.</i>			
P	10	Question from:	Edmund Cannon

How much money has B&NES given to Cleveland Pools in total?

Answer from:

Cllr Mark Elliott

The council has given grant support of £940K from Council Funding.

This was:

- *£350K towards Business Case for NHLF submission (budgets decisions in 2014 & 2017 – paid in instalments to 2019)*
- *£590K toward implementation (CIL award and from corporate contingency in 2022)*

P

11

Question from:

Grace Wiltshire

What services are B&NES offering to refugees who are from a country other than Ukraine?

<https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/homes-ukraine-guidance-guests>

Answer from:

Cllr Kevin Guy

As well as overseeing and supporting Ukrainian arrivals under the Homes For Ukraine scheme (and their B&NES hosts), the council provides the following services to other refugees:

- *Casework and integration support to refugee households arriving into the B&NES area on the UK Resettlement Scheme (this is a ‘global’ resettlement scheme - its purpose is to resettle vulnerable refugees in need of protection from a range of regions of conflict and instability across the globe). So far the council has resettled 74 people in B&NES via this scheme – mainly Syrian*
- *Casework and integration support to refugee households arriving into B&NES under the Afghan Schemes (Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy and Afghan Citizen’s Resettlement Scheme) So far the council has resettled 46 people in B&NES under these schemes with others scheduled to arrive in the coming weeks*
- *Support for Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children in the care of B&NES Council*

- *Arrivals with Hong Kong British National (Overseas) visas – ensuring that Hong Kong visa holders can access government destitution finding if they need it, and English Language providers claim and receive government funding to support their work.*

P	12	Question from:	Grace Wiltshire
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Why are we giving planning permission for paving over gardens? This causes drainage issues and leads to a decline of green space?

Answer from:	Cllr Matt McCabe
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The construction of paving on an area less than 5 square metres using permeable paving is permitted development which means that some works to create small hard standings for cars in gardens do not require planning permission. This will include many driveways and hardstanding. Larger areas will require permission. Usually paving will be proposed to be constructed using permeable materials and that is encouraged by both Planning and Building Regulations legislation as water run-off is a widely recognised problem which is being addressed nationally. Each planning application has to be looked at in its entirety when deciding what is acceptable.

P	13	Question from:	Grace Wiltshire
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Can you explain how the programme for resurfacing roads across B&NES is prioritised?

Answer from:	Cllr Manda Rigby
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High-definition video surveys are undertaken every year of the carriageway and footway assets and it this condition information that drives consistency across the annual improvement programme development. Several other factors are considered and the decision making process is a technical/operational assessment made by experienced officers who are responsible for the prioritisation of the programme to minimise risk across the B&NES highway network. The team will consider ward member requests and public contacts when developing the maintenance programmes.

P	14	Question from:	Michael Coffey
<p>The budget papers presented at the recent Corporate Policy, Development and Scrutiny meeting provide limited detail on planned spending or budget adjustments, making it difficult to offer meaningful analysis of the 2025-2026 budget. How can B&NES Council improve the transparency and clarity of information regarding savings?</p>			
Answer from:			Cllr Mark Elliott
<p><i>The information provided to the Corporate PDS panel on 28th Jan included annexes which set out the spending increases (annex 2ii) and savings & income generation adjustments (annex 2i) that are proposed for the 2025/26 financial year against the 2024/25 financial year, along with the changes to each portfolio service “cash limit” - essentially the cost centre – between 2024/25 and 2025/26 (annex 1).</i></p> <p><i>There is a balance to be struck between providing enough data to allow appropriate scrutiny, and too much data which makes it difficult to assimilate.</i></p> <p><i>As offered at the Corporate PDS panel meeting, I’m very happy to work with the panel members to discuss and agree what further information would assist the panel when reviewing the budget proposals.</i></p> <p><i>Obviously, if revisions to the standard budget reports are wanted, we need to plan for that well in advance for those reports to be created, so I would only ask that panel members request that extra information well in advance of the budget meetings.</i></p>			
P	15	Question from:	Mark Coffey
<p>The Full Business Case (FBC) to WECA for Liveable Neighbourhoods fails to meet the standard of evidence-based decision making required for significant interventions, no measurable targets, no traffic reduction assessments, no air quality improvement data and no road safety evaluations. Can you please:</p>			

(1) Explain how the deliverability of schemes is legally allowed and

(2) Provide the legal costs the Council are budgeting for?

Answer from:

Cllr Manda Rigby

The Liveable Neighbourhoods programme is compliant with the Council's policy framework and the full business case for the programme has received the necessary approval for funding for delivery from the Combined Mayoral Authority (WECA):

- *The Liveable Neighbourhood strategy was agreed by the Council in June 2021 via a Cabinet decision E3285.*
- *The full business case for the Liveable Neighbourhoods programme was approved by the Combined Mayoral Authority in September 2024. In giving such approval, the project would have been subject to an assurance process at the Mayoral Combined Authority that is led by an independent Grant Assurance Team as part of the business case process, to ensure that spend and delivery plans are appropriate to the funding.*

Any legal costs would be met from contingency for the Liveable Neighbourhoods programme.

P

16

Question from:

Michael Coffey

Since the Climate Hub has moved into the old ticket office at the bus station in Bath, staff there are getting lots of questions on buses – there is clearly a desperate need for information at the Bath bus station. Is BANES working with the bus companies to provide this?

Answer from:

Cllr Sarah Warren

Bath & North East Somerset Council is committed to supporting sustainable transport and ensuring that up-to-date and accurate information is available to the public. We recognise that the Climate Hub, now based at the bus station, is naturally encountering questions regarding

bus services.

Public transport operations, including the provision of bus service information, fall under the responsibility of the West of England Combined Authority (WECA), as the regional Transport Authority. However, the Council works closely with WECA and local bus operators to improve the availability of information for passengers.

P 17

Question from:

Luanne Thornton

How much money has the Council spent on play equipment in Alice Park in the last 10 years?

Answer from:

Cllr Tim Ball

The Council is sole corporate trustee of Alice Park Trust. The Council's Parks Department support the Trust in maintaining the park, and its play equipment. The annual cost of maintaining the play equipment for the past 10 years is summarised in the table below. For reference and context, the annual subsidy to which the Council covers the net operational costs of running the park (including grounds/tree maintenance, public conveniences and play equipment) is also detailed in the table for information.

Furthermore, in the last 10 years the Council has spent £118,739 of capital investment on the Alice Park Skatepark.

Financial Year	Annual Play Equipment Maintenance or Purchase Costs charged to Alice Park Trust (£)	B&NES annual subsidy to Alice Park Trust to help fund operational running costs (which includes the cost of maintaining Play Equipment) (£)
2015-16	7,433	35,100
2016-17	8,000	11,903
2017-18	8,080	21,981

2018-19	10,786	22,592
2019-20	8,487	29,192
2020-21	8,575	21,402
2021-22	10,745	22,290
2022-23	8,920	19,985
2023-24	9,098	17,658
2024-25*	2,591	19,290

**Forecast costs*

P	18	Question from:	Luanne Thornton
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How many additional public toilets does the Council put in place for the Christmas Market?

Answer from:	Cllr Tim Ball
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Christmas 2024 the council provided:

Terrace Walk: 5x female, 2 male + urinals + accessible unit

Bilbury Lane: 5x female, 2 male + urinals + accessible unit

Royal Avenue: 5x female, 2 male + urinals + accessible unit

Guildhall: 2x female, x1 male + urinals (x2)

P	19	Question from:	Luanne Thornton
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How do locations for bollards get selected? When they are selected and knocked down, what measure are taken to replace them?

Answer from:		Cllr Manda Rigby
<p><i>Bollards are installed on footways generally to protect areas where there is a high number of pedestrian movements, as a safety feature, bollards are also used to protect footway areas that are regularly damaged from high levels of vehicle over run, prominent in busier urban areas and particularly across the City Centre. Preference would be to limit the install of bollards as they individually become a maintenance liability, so we consider the cost impact of protection to prestige footways versus the install and maintenance cost of installing bollards, as you would expect maintenance and repair of footways particularly natural stone footways can be very expensive. Where bollards are knocked down they will be scheduled for repair on a priority basis dependant on location and safety risk.</i></p>		
P	20	Question from: Gareth Eynon
<p>The consultation on Queen Square public realm improvements was open for just 10 working days, which seems insufficient for residents to provide meaningful feedback. Why was the consultation period so short, and what are the council's internal guidelines for determining the length of consultations?</p>		
Answer from:		Cllrs Tim Ball and Paul Roper
<p><i>The public consultation ran for two working weeks, including two in-person events and an online questionnaire. It was advertised in advance across the council's social media and via press release. Specific workshops were also held with key stakeholders ahead of the consultation, including with boules users, heritage groups and events organisers. This approach was agreed with the council's communications team as proportionate to the scale of the project, whilst allowing scope for sufficient feedback. The events in Queen Square were well-attended, and the online form received almost 100 responses, which will inform the next stage of design. A full engagement report will be published on the council website in due course.</i></p>		
P	21	Question from: Gareth Eynon
<p>In the Clean Air Action Plan, it says next to "park and ride sites and car clubs" action description: "a number of park and ride sites already</p>		

exist in Bath and there are some existing car clubs. No further actions are planned in this area”.

<https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/bath-air-quality-action-plan-2024-2029-public-consultation>

How will the Council be encouraging fewer private car journeys into Bath and greater access to car clubs in the 2025-26 budget?

Answer from:

Cllr Sarah Warren

In the 2025-26 budget, Bath and North East Somerset (B&NES) Council will be taking several steps to encourage fewer private car journeys into Bath and greater access to car clubs. B&NES Council is actively working with a national charity market specialist, to support policy development and demand assessment for car clubs. They will advise on commercial models and assist with market engagement to deliver a competitive tender process, which is set to commence shortly. This collaboration aims to enhance the availability and attractiveness of car clubs, providing residents with more sustainable travel options.

The Council is also focusing on improving the operation of existing Park and Ride (P&R) sites. These improvements include transforming P&R sites into transport interchanges, in line with the Creating Sustainable Communities transport strategy. This strategy, alongside the Journey to Net Zero for Bath aims to provide better connectivity and more travel choices, making it easier for people to switch between different modes of transport, such as buses, bikes, and car clubs.

While the Clean Air Action Plan currently notes that no further actions are planned for park and ride sites and car clubs, the Council is committed to reviewing and enhancing these facilities to support sustainable transport goals. These commitments will be reflected in future updates to the Air Quality Action Plan. This includes exploring ways to make P&R sites more efficient and user-friendly, potentially integrating additional services including electric vehicle charging stations and improved public transport links.

Additionally, the Journey to Net Zero transport plan for Bath includes several short-term measures aimed at reducing traffic entering the city. These measures include enabling active travel by improving infrastructure for walking and cycling, enhancing public transport services to make them more reliable and convenient, and implementing traffic management schemes to reduce congestion. The plan also emphasises the importance of community engagement and education to encourage residents to adopt more sustainable travel habits.

P 22

Question from:

Gareth Eynon

Why is air pollution from wood/solid fuel not mentioned in the Bath Air Quality Action Plan 2024-2029? What costs would be involved in

enforcing this air pollution issue?

Answer from:

Cllr Sarah Warren

The Bath Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) seeks to reduce concentrations of nitrogen dioxide within the Bath Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). Our source apportionment suggests that domestic sources (including household burning) contribute approximately 6% to local concentrations of nitrogen dioxide, whereas 75% come from vehicle emissions at our key monitoring locations within the AQMA, hence why the actions are focussed mainly on reducing emissions from vehicles. Particulate Matter is the pollutant most associated with pollution from solid fuel. Measures to reduce pollution from other pollutants, including particulate matter from wood and solid fuel burning will be considered in a wider Air Quality Strategy which the Council is developing.

We do not breach the objective limits for particulate matter, but if you are concerned by smoke being emitted from a particular premises, please contact our Environmental Protection Team (who are already funded through the revenue budget) who will be able to investigate. You can find further information here <https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/form/report-a-bonfire> and note that on the forward plan for decision making, there is a report for me as Cabinet Member which recommends supporting the introduction of Financial Penalties, set at £175 for a first offence, and £300 for subsequent offences for smoke discharged from a chimney within the Smoke Control Area as introduced by the Environment Act 2021.

P 23

Question from:

Heather Stack

The Bath Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Links (BWWCL) scheme – Oldfield School to Newbridge Hill, proposes to remove approximately 193 on street parking spaces to create dedicated cycling routes. How does the Council plan to mitigate the impact on residents and businesses who rely on these parking spaces for daily living and for whom these proposals represent a significant threat to quality of life and daily living? Will there be a resident permit scheme and visitor passes, and if so, how will this be implemented?

Answer from:

Cllrs Sarah Warren and Manda Rigby

We have received a number of questions relating to the Bath Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Links project which cover a number of key

<i>themes. Please see our statement, attached as an appendix, which picks up the key points and is published on the project website.</i>		
P	24	Question from: Heather Stack
Given the significant adverse impact of the BWWCL proposals on residents' daily lives, for dubious or uncertain gain, what steps has the council taken to genuinely consult with and incorporate feedback from all residents? How will the council address situations where the majority of residents in a particular street or area oppose the changes due to the adverse effect on their quality of life and daily living?		
		Cllr Sarah Warren
<i>We have received a number of questions relating to the Bath Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Links project which cover a number of key themes. Please see our statement, attached as an appendix, which picks up the key points and is published on the project website.</i>		
P	25	Question from: Heather Stack
Considering that UNESCO closely monitors changes to World Heritage sites, how has the council engaged with UNESCO and other heritage bodies to ensure that the BWWCL proposals, combined with other recent and planned developments, do not risk Bath's World Heritage status? Can you provide details of any heritage impact assessments conducted in line with UNESCO guidelines?		
Answer from:		Cllrs Sarah Warren
<i>We have received a number of questions relating to the Bath Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Links project which cover a number of key themes. Please see our statement, attached as an appendix, which picks up the key points and is published on the project website.</i>		
P	26	Question from: Barbara Gordon
How much has the removal of the Residents' Parking Zone (RPZ) (road markings to create a chicane set up for parking) in Claremont Road,		

Lambridge cost B&NES council?		
Answer from:		Cllr Manda Rigby
<i>The cost of altering the parking bays and associated signage in Claremont Road was £4,508.23.</i>		
P	27	Question from: Barbara Gordon
The bollards on Claremont Road have been damaged by vehicles and are no longer in place. This poses a serious hazard for pedestrians, as there is nothing to prevent large vehicles from mounting the pavement. Could you please let me know the cost of installing new bollards and when they are expected to be replaced?		
Answer from:		Cllr Manda Rigby
<i>We understand that vehicles sometimes park on the double yellow lines at this junction which were extended last year to help deal with vehicles overrunning the footway when making this tight turn. Our civil enforcement officers will be making additional observations at this location to help deter parking on the yellow lines. The existing bollards will be reinstated shortly if they are in a condition that enables them to be re-used. The re-installation cost for typically say 4 recovered bollards would be £390. If 4 new Manchester Bollards were needed this would be an additional £680.</i>		
P	28	Question from: Barbara Gordon
Recent research by the Bikeability Trust, conducted by TRL, highlights a strong link between early Bikeability training and a reduction in road deaths and serious injuries. The report reveals that Bath and North East Somerset has a low Level 2 Bikeability participation rate, at under 26%, which is significantly lower than most other local authorities. What steps are being taken in this year's budget to increase Bikeability training and improve this statistic.		

Source: | https://www.bikeability.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/Full-report-Modelling-Bikeability-Training-and-KSIs.pdf?utm_source=substack&utm_medium=email

Answer from:

Cllrs Sarah Warren and Manda Rigby

BANES recognises the importance of Bikeability delivery in schools, and that is why we have been growing the level 1 & 2 Bikeability delivery over the last 4 years. The figure of 26% cited in the question does not accord with our records as reported to Bikeability Trust. The below chart shows the last 4 years of combined Level 1&2 data. We combine level 1&2 to ensure no child is left behind in developing skills to feel confident cycling on the road.

2022-23 figures were down due to a vacancy. Since then, we have grown the service annually, and will continue to do so. We believe we are on target to reach 70% in 2025.

	Total attending Bikeability Level 1&2 course	Year YOY %	5/6 pupils % of total Year 6 in BANES
Financial year 2021-22	757	na	39.3%
Financial year 2022-23	708	-6.5%	36.7%
Financial year 2023-24	923	30.4%	51.0%
Financial year 2024-25	1144	23.9%	63.2%

We also highlight that Bikeability level 1&2 is the largest part of what we deliver, but it is not all we do. The team also delivers Learn to Ride, Adult Cycle Training and Bike Loans so that families who cannot afford to buy a bicycle are not overlooked as we deliver cycle training into schools.

P	29	Question from:	Dominic Tristram
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What is the cause of the high number of SEND appeals in 2024 and what action is the council taking to avoid cases going to tribunal? Every case going to tribunal can mean that the child is without appropriate support for a significant amount of time. How much does the Council save by not putting in place the necessary needs of each of these children during these delays?

Answer from:	Cllr Paul May
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If a case is highly complex, for example the child or young person is electively home educated and therefore has no record of the graduated response to their need, we ask a third-party service to support with ways forward meetings as there is no school to facilitate this work. In all cases we offer access to advocacy from the Banes Parent Carer Forum, who are able to attend with families and provide peer support. The take up for mediation and ways forward meetings is low.

At every stage we work to resolve disagreements and move forwards. Only if the ways forward and mediation meetings are unsuccessful at finding a resolution does this progress to a tribunal hearing, and whilst families await this we try to resolve at every stage. There are times when the Local Authority and families do not agree on the appropriate next steps for an EHCP, it's content or the provision and setting it provides. In these cases, it is appropriate that the tribunal decides this if no other resolution can be found.

It is not possible to calculate cost savings in these cases, as we only proceed to tribunal if we believe we have suggested the right way forward and that funds are already in place to meet a child's needs. If the tribunal is due to a disagreement around school placement or provision, the current level of funding is provided to schools whilst this process continues.

P	30	Question from:	Dominic Tristram
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How do we ensure that the council holds developers to account over biodiversity net gain rules? What data does the council keep on flora

and fauna at the start of the planning process so that removal can be measured and monitored?

Answer from:

Cllr Matt McCabe

Planning applications subject to biodiversity net gain legislation are required to provide ecological surveys with baseline habitat assessments to record the site's habitat type and condition prior to any development. This requirement is additional to surveys for priority and protected species.

The biodiversity baseline needs to be agreed by the Planning Service prior to a planning permission being issued. Habitat and species information is available from Natural England and the Bristol Regional Environmental Record Centre to assist in validating the ecological survey. It is acknowledged that this information is in various states of comprehensiveness and extent within B&NES. In the absence of a complete and up to date ecological survey of the region, officers will utilise aerial photography, site level photography and site visits when agreeing the baseline.

In the event of habitat degradation prior to submitting a planning application, legislation states that if degradation has occurred after January 2020 a precautionary approach should be taken, and the value of the lost habitat should be assumed to be high in the baseline and mitigated. The inclusion of this rule is intended to act as a deterrent to attempts to lower the value of the baseline.

A developer's proposals will often include retained habitat and improvements, as well as losses, within the development. These habitats can count towards the biodiversity net gain objective of a 10% gain. Depending on the proposals officers can use planning conditions or legal agreements for habitat management and monitoring plans (HMMPs) to assist in holding developers to account over commitments. Compliance and enforcements officers are needed to add rigour to the process.

P **31**

Question from:

Dominic Tristram

What service agreement does B&NES have for weeding roads and pavements? What budget is allocated to keep pavements safe for pedestrian access?

Answer from:

Cllr Tim Ball

Weeding within B&NES is conducted by multi-skilled ward teams who handle weeding along with other cleansing duties such as litter picking and sweeping. These activities are funded from the £4.1M cleansing budget.

Additionally, we employ dedicated clean and green weeding teams that use hot washes and various mechanical equipment. These C&G teams are funded from the clean and green budget, which was £345,228 for 24/25 and is set to increase in 25/26.

P	32	Question from:	Michael Parr
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BWWCL Proposals Oldfield School to Newbridge Hill

For those residents whose homes directly front onto Kelston Road, what road/cycleway/pavement resources will be allocated for safe access and egress for homeowners and family and friends on a 24/7 basis; likewise for post and parcel deliveries on a daily basis; and again likewise for utility services providers, and maintenance and repair contractors on an occasional basis?

Answer from:	Cllr Sarah Warren
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We have received a number of questions relating to the Bath Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Links project which cover a number of key themes. Please see our statement, attached as an appendix, which picks up the key points and is published on the project website.

P	33	Question from:	Michael Parr
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What road/cycleway/pavement resources will be provided for Oldfield School bus services, and parental pupil drop-off and pick-up every working day, and for parental and coach parking for all Oldfield School activities requiring parental or other school visitations, or school excursions?

Answer from:	Cllr Sarah Warren
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We have received a number of questions relating to the Bath Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Links project which cover a number of key

<i>themes. Please see our statement, attached as an appendix, which picks up the key points and is published on the project website.</i>		
P	34	Question from: Michael Parr
Which Authority(s), national, regional, and/or local will be responsible for the enforcement of the new laws, rules, regulations, and any other non-statutory arrangements imposed/required by the Bath Walking, Cycling, and Wheeling Scheme proposals?		
Answer from:		Cllr Sarah Warren
<i>We have received a number of questions relating to the Bath Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Links project which cover a number of key themes. Please see our statement, attached as an appendix, which picks up the key points and is published on the project website.</i>		
P	35	Question from: Jonathan Wilder
<u>BWWCL Proposals Oldfield School to Newbridge Hill</u>		
In the <i>West of England Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan 2020 – 2036</i> , an alternative route was marked on the <i>Cycling Map Bath routes 3 and 4</i> as “Bath route 3 variant”. This route seems to represent an alternative which mitigates many of the objections raised by residents, key stakeholders and other interested parties during the Consultation Period.		
If the Council allowed for a continuation of Bath route 3 variant along Brassmill Lane and then for cyclists to join Newbridge Road and turn into the Park and Ride, there might be sufficient space for a safe Cycle Store for cyclists, who could then use the recently finished steps to complete their journey on foot to join the pavement outside Oldfield School.		
Can the Council please clarify the reasons for not promoting this alternative during the Consultation Period and detail how many of the objections raised during the Consultation Period would be met by using this alternative route?		
Answer from:		Cllr Sarah Warren

We have received a number of questions relating to the Bath Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Links project which cover a number of key themes. Please see our statement, attached as an appendix, which picks up the key points and is published on the project website.

P	36	Question from:	Jonathan Wilder
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All residents of Bath will quite rightly support the Council's policy of Vision Zero. There is a significantly dangerous stretch of the proposed plan at the top of Old Newbridge Hill – marked on the plan as “Departure from design standards required here due to narrow highway”. Whilst many residents have articulated how the proposals run contrary to the five core design principles set out in LTN1/20, we accept that Councillor Warren has advised us that “experts from Active Travel England will assist us with ensuring the compliance with LTN1/20 of the final scheme”.

Currently the Council is encouraging cyclists to undertake a journey along a route beginning with segregated cycle lanes whilst knowingly leading them towards a section where such cycle lanes are not possible.

Given that the basis for safety at this section is explained as “Existing speed limit is proposed to be reduced from 30mph to 20mph as cyclists share space with traffic” why has the Council ruled out the alternative option of reducing the speed limit to 20mph along the whole route from Oldfield School to Newbridge Hill to allow cyclists “to share space with traffic safely”?

Answer from:	Cllr Sarah Warren
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We have received a number of questions relating to the Bath Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Links project which cover a number of key themes. Please see our statement, attached as an appendix, which picks up the key points and is published on the project website.

P	37	Question from:	Jonathan Wilder
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As yet the Council seems to have no knowledge of the number of journeys that will be reduced by the proposed plans or the number of people that might wish to make the journey to Oldfield School (any cyclist wishing to travel beyond the school must be both confident and experienced given the narrow, hilly and twisting road from the School towards Kelston). We understand that these numbers will be forthcoming in the business case to support the planned cycle lanes with respect to the impact on pollution and health / wellbeing.

Whilst the benefits to health in relation to an anticipated increase in cycling (yet to be justified) might be factored into the cost/benefit analysis promised, how is the Council proposing to factor in the negative impact to the health of residents, with significant distress already causing mental health concerns as a result of the negative impact on residents of an inability to park their cars on the road, receive visitors / carers who need to park their cars, receive deliveries due to lack of parking and due to a serious degradation in the value of their properties?

Answer from:

Cllr Sarah Warren

We have received a number of questions relating to the Bath Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Links project which cover a number of key themes. Please see our statement, attached as an appendix, which picks up the key points and is published on the project website.

P 38

Question from:

John Douglas Skehan

Street parking on Kelston Road and Newbridge Hill is used intensively by residents and perhaps in greater numbers, by non-residents, as an important part of their day to day domestic, social and employment lifestyles. The likelihood is of over 90% occupancy and more at peak times - by any standards an efficient and valid use of a public resource.

The benefit to the users may be direct or indirect - consider the residents ability to travel to and from their homes or receive services, visitors, deliveries etc (live their normal lives). Also consider the value to staff and visitors to RUH delivering or receiving healthcare.

The impact of removing parking in the BWWCL scheme should obviously undergo careful judgement of the needs, benefits and harms across the community, especially those who will be very significantly involved. We believe this has not taken place and should be revisited before further action.

Speaking informally to users of the parking I find that the great majority of non-residents do not know about the BWWCL proposals. Many have said that it would cause them difficulties if parking restrictions increase and that they have not been offered opportunities to represent their position in the consultation.

Has a meaningful survey of users of street parking on Newbridge Hill and Kelston Road been conducted and please supply a breakdown of users (and non-user residents) the former in the following categories?

- residents who have no off-street parking

- residents who combine off street and street parking (multiple vehicles or regular essential visitors for care/support)
- RUH staff
- RUH patients or visitors
- Newbridge Hill Surgery/Pharmacy visitors
- Tradesmen providing essential services. - Health workers conducting home visits
- Delivery drivers.

Answer from:

Cllr Sarah Warren

We have received a number of questions relating to the Bath Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Links project which cover a number of key themes. Please see our statement, attached as an appendix, which picks up the key points and is published on the project website.

P 39

Question from:

John Douglas Skehan

Have the impacts to the above categories been explored and ranked as:

- positive (supports proposal)
- minor concern (only occasional problem). - moderately difficult (daily pressure). - moderate-severe harms (stops shopping, visitors)
- severe harm (unable to continue daily routines such as family/carers/work)?

Answer from:

Cllr Sarah Warren

We have received a number of questions relating to the Bath Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Links project which cover a number of key themes. Please see our statement, attached as an appendix, which picks up the key points and is published on the project website.

P	40	Question from:	John Douglas Skehan
Do the BWWCL proposals have specific and verifiable evidence that cycling safety will be better than simply reducing the speed limit from 30 to 20mph from Kelston Road/Newbridge Hill into the city to support the ambitions of VisionZero?			
Answer from:			Cllr Sarah Warren
<i>We have received a number of questions relating to the Bath Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Links project which cover a number of key themes. Please see our statement, attached as an appendix, which picks up the key points and is published on the project website.</i>			
P	41	Question from:	Lesley Wilder
<u>BWWCL Proposals Oldfield School to Newbridge Hill</u>			
Contrary to the Core Design Principles set out on Page 8 of LTN1/20, cyclists will be required:			
1. At the section at the top of Newbridge Hill where the cycle lanes discontinue either to join the traffic at the reduced 20mph proposed to continue their journey or, if not comfortable or confident doing so, to dismount and then cross and recross the Kelston Road and Old Newbridge Hill to reach the next section of the segregated cycle lane (the pavement is too narrow to push a bike along the north side of Kelston Road in this section).			
2. At Evelyn Road, when travelling towards Bath, to cross to the other side of Newbridge Hill to join the cycle lane on the South side of the road and then to recross Newbridge Hill before navigating the roundabout at the junction with Coombe Park.			
Given that cycle lanes should be designed such that "Cycling should be accessible to people of all ages and abilities" (LTN 1/20 Page 18), how does the Council expect them to negotiate these sections if they are not comfortable or confident cycling with traffic?			
Answer from:			Cllr Sarah Warren

We have received a number of questions relating to the Bath Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Links project which cover a number of key themes. Please see our statement, attached as an appendix, which picks up the key points and is published on the project website.

P	42	Question from:	Lesley Wilder
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The proposals indicate the removal of some 193 car parking spaces with half of these taken by the Oldfield School to Newbridge Hill proposal. Without such spaces, residents who rely on on-street parking and visitors to the area for valid work reasons or social/care reasons will need to find alternative parking spaces in the locality. Rather than simply stop when they reach their destination and turn off their engines, these cars will be forced to drive around seeking elusive spaces in already fully congested side streets.

In response to those who need a car either to live or work in the neighbourhood, where does the Council see some 193 cars parking with the removal of these spaces?

Answer from:	Cllr Sarah Warren
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We have received a number of questions relating to the Bath Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Links project which cover a number of key themes. Please see our statement, attached as an appendix, which picks up the key points and is published on the project website.

P	43	Question from:	Lesley Wilder
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As residents of Kelston Road, we do not have off street parking and can only park our car on the road. The Oldfield School to Newbridge Hill proposals will lead to our property being landlocked, with no space either to park, unload, receive deliveries etc.

What weight does the Council give to us and the many other residents along this route who are in the same position where the proposals will lead to a detriment in our ability to live “a normal life” in our houses, have already caused mental health issues, and to the significant negative impact on property valuation?

Answer from:	Cllr Sarah Warren
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We have received a number of questions relating to the Bath Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Links project which cover a number of key themes. Please see our statement, attached as an appendix, which picks up the key points and is published on the project website.

P	44	Question from:	Jonathan Poole
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BWWCL Proposals Oldfield School to Newbridge Hill

The loss of parking spaces will negatively impact property values and residents' quality of life, and serve to isolate people from their family, friends and social support network, in addition to making it challenging to carry out household maintenance, have healthcare visitors or other support. Has the council conducted any studies on the potential economic and social consequences of reduced parking availability in residential areas, and if so, what were the findings?

Answer from:	Cllr Sarah Warren
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We have received a number of questions relating to the Bath Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Links project which cover a number of key themes. Please see our statement, attached as an appendix, which picks up the key points and is published on the project website.

P	45	Question from:	Jonathan Poole
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The proposed removal of approximately 93 on-street parking spaces along Newbridge Hill/Kelston Road raises significant concerns about residents' ability to maintain their quality of life and necessary family and friend support networks. How will the council ensure that residents can still:

- a) Host friends and family for important social interactions and family events, which are crucial for mental health, well-being and a sense of belonging?
- b) Arrange for essential home maintenance and repairs, considering that tradespeople often require vehicles to transport tools and materials?
- c) Receive adequate healthcare support, including visits from district nurses, home care workers, and other medical professionals who may need to park close to residences, especially when caring for elderly or disabled individuals?

d) Accommodate other essential visitors such as social workers, childcare providers, or delivery services for those who rely on home deliveries?

e) Park their own cars within a reasonable distance of their residence?

Answer from:

Cllr Sarah Warren

We have received a number of questions relating to the Bath Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Links project which cover a number of key themes. Please see our statement, attached as an appendix, which picks up the key points and is published on the project website.

P **46**

Question from:

Jonathan Poole

Can the council provide a detailed plan addressing each of these concerns outlined in Question 2, including any proposed alternatives or mitigation strategies to ensure that the reduction in parking does not lead to social isolation, neglect of property maintenance, or compromised access to essential care and services?

Answer from:

Cllr Sarah Warren

We have received a number of questions relating to the Bath Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Links project which cover a number of key themes. Please see our statement, attached as an appendix, which picks up the key points and is published on the project website.

P **47**

Question from:

Geoff Castle

BWWCL Proposals Oldfield School to Newbridge Hill

What surveys – visual, phone, email, etc. – have been made and how do they justify the expense and daily disruption to 90 or so vehicle owners? Do they distinguish between the type of cyclists, e.g. casual/family, who would use the path or club/training runs (groups travelling 15-20 mph), who, for obvious reasons, would not use the path?

Answer from:		Cllr Sarah Warren
<i>We have received a number of questions relating to the Bath Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Links project which cover a number of key themes. Please see our statement, attached as an appendix, which picks up the key points and is published on the project website.</i>		
P	48	Question from: Geoff Castle
The proposed route between Evelyn Road and Chelsea Road is bi-directional so cyclists travelling south-east (towards town) will have oncoming traffic on their left and on-coming cyclists on their right. Not an enviable situation. What will be the width of the cycle path at this stage and what protection – such as a buffer – will exist between the cycle path and the roadway?		
Answer from:		Cllr Sarah Warren
<i>We have received a number of questions relating to the Bath Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Links project which cover a number of key themes. Please see our statement, attached as an appendix, which picks up the key points and is published on the project website.</i>		
P	49	Question from: Tracy Carter
How many public toilets are there in Bath city centre? How accessible are these toilets for people with disabilities or mobility issues?		
Answer from:		Cllr Tim Ball
<i>In central Bath there are three public toilets sites managed under the Council's contract with Healthmatic. These sites are located at the entrance and at the rear of Charlotte Street car park, along with those in Parade Gardens. All Healthmatic operated sites include a fully accessible disability compliant unit.</i>		
<i>In addition, the Council have two further public toilet facilities available in the One Stop Shop at Lewis House and within the Guildhall.</i>		

Southgate also provide facilities in two locations within central Bath, one block in their main plaza and the other being a Changing Places facility near the train station.

The parks surrounding central Bath, namely Royal Victoria Park, Sydney Gardens and Henrietta Gardens also have Healthmatic operated public toilets.

P	50	Question from:	Tracy Carter
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Bristol City Council no longer support Bristol Shopmobility, WECA give them a grant to pay for this service and they are classed as a community transport organisation.

How has B&NES Council been working to create a shopmobility service through WECA? What budget is in place for supporting this service?

Answer from:	Cllr Alison Born
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This question needs to be submitted to WECA for response. We would be happy to work with WECA on a solution for B&NES.

P	51	Question from:	Tracy Carter
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How many people are on housing lists in B&NES? How many social rented properties does the council own and have access to? How many children are living in temporary accommodation in B&NES?

Answer from:	Cllr Matt McCabe
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There are currently around 5,600 households on Homesearch, which is the Council housing waiting list. Additionally, the district has total of 12,003 social rented properties. This figure is broken down into 9,359 general needs properties and 2,644 supported or older persons housing units. The Council owns 56 units of general needs and supported housing. At the time of writing there were 28 children living in temporary accommodation.

P	52	Question from:	Derek Hall
<p><u>BWWCL Oldfield School to Newbridge Hill</u></p> <p>LTN/1/20 states that a clear stakeholder engagement plan to articulate the case for change can take time but will increase political and public acceptance of a scheme at an early stage, so why has the Council moved straight to the consultation process without any engagement with residents and stakeholders “before any specific proposal is put forward”?</p>			
Answer from:			Cllr Sarah Warren
<p><i>We have received a number of questions relating to the Bath Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Links project which cover a number of key themes. Please see our statement, attached as an appendix, which picks up the key points and is published on the project website.</i></p>			
P	53	Question from:	Derek Hall
<p>Why has the Council brought forward proposals which are not clear about the disadvantages to residents and other stakeholders? By seeming to ignore the guidance in LTN 1/20 this has provoked hostility and mistrust where there should be optimism and confidence.</p>			
Answer from:			Cllr Sarah Warren
<p><i>We have received a number of questions relating to the Bath Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Links project which cover a number of key themes. Please see our statement, attached as an appendix, which picks up the key points and is published on the project website.</i></p>			
P	54	Question from:	Derek Hall
<p>Can the Council explain why it is supportive of the cycling lobby over and against the needs and concerns of its own residents? No meaningful analysis of the demographic profile in order to support this proposal has been made available, and the consultation process was</p>			

flawed, incomplete and unsatisfactory, with no evidence provided to demonstrate the need for major changes to Newbridge Hill and Kelston Road. The consultation should have taken place before the publication of the proposals, so that a balanced view of pros and cons could be presented.

Answer from:

Cllr Sarah Warren

We have received a number of questions relating to the Bath Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Links project which cover a number of key themes. Please see our statement, attached as an appendix, which picks up the key points and is published on the project website.

P 55

Question from:

Alex Hunt

Bath Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Links

The proposed BWWCL scheme aims to expand Bath's cycling network by more than 10%. What cost-benefit analysis has been conducted to justify this investment, and what specific metrics will the Council use to measure its success?

Answer from:

Cllr Sarah Warren

We have received a number of questions relating to the Bath Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Links project which cover a number of key themes. Please see our statement, attached as an appendix, which picks up the key points and is published on the project website.

P 56

Question from:

Alex Hunt

The proposed BWWCL scheme is presented as a means to improve public health outcomes. What material research has the Council conducted on the demographic profile of residents in areas affected by the scheme (including key factors such as age, gender, weight, current activity levels, health profile, co-morbidities etc.)?

Answer from:		Cllr Sarah Warren
<i>We have received a number of questions relating to the Bath Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Links project which cover a number of key themes. Please see our statement, attached as an appendix, which picks up the key points and is published on the project website.</i>		
P	57	Question from:
		Alex Hunt
<p>The proposed BWWCL scheme is presented as a means to contribute to Bath and North East Somerset's Climate Emergency goal of reducing car usage by 25% by 2030. What material evidence can the Council produce to demonstrate that the implementation of the BWWCL scheme will actively incentivise people to shift from car travel to walking, wheeling, or cycling? Specifically, what data supports the assumption that the proposed changes will lead to measurable behavioural shifts, rather than simply displacing car journeys to other routes or areas?</p>		
Answer from:		Cllr Sarah Warren
<i>We have received a number of questions relating to the Bath Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Links project which cover a number of key themes. Please see our statement, attached as an appendix, which picks up the key points and is published on the project website.</i>		
P	58	Question from:
		Monika Hall
<p>LTN 1/20 states that cycle routes must flow, feeling direct and logical. How does the Oldfield School to Newbridge Hill route match these criteria given that it does not go to or from useful destinations. It also necessitates cyclists stopping and restarting at Old Newbridge Hill in order to join traffic, stopping and starting at the zebra crossing by the back gate of Newbridge School, as well have cyclists having to cross busy traffic lanes at Evelyn Road and Combe Park in order to remain on the proposed cycle path.</p>		
Answer from:		Cllr Sarah Warren

We have received a number of questions relating to the Bath Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Links project which cover a number of key themes. Please see our statement, attached as an appendix, which picks up the key points and is published on the project website.

P	59	Question from:	Monika Hall
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Can the Council explain why the vast majority of residents and other stakeholders were completely unaware of these proposals until alerted to them by a few local people in mid-November after the first two consultation meetings had taken place? Reliance on social media and BANES on-line communications in the form of newsletters is simply not appropriate. Something of this importance should be widely, effectively and efficiently communicated using a variety of platforms including written notices in order to reach all residents affected.

Answer from:	Cllr Sarah Warren
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We have received a number of questions relating to the Bath Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Links project which cover a number of key themes. Please see our statement, attached as an appendix, which picks up the key points and is published on the project website.

P	60	Question from:	Monika Hall
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Have alternative proposals for this route been considered? For example, walking can be made safer and more popular by improving the quality of pavements throughout Bath. Cycling could be made more popular by fixing potholes, making it safer for everyone, even where there are no designated cycle paths. This would provide benefits for all residents in Bath and would be both popular and more cost-effective.

Answer from:	Cllr Sarah Warren
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We have received a number of questions relating to the Bath Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Links project which cover a number of key themes. Please see our statement, attached as an appendix, which picks up the key points and is published on the project website.

P	61	Question from:	Ian Simpson
<p><u>Bath, Walking Wheeling and Cycling Links</u></p> <p>The loss of parking spaces will negatively impact property values and residents' quality of life, and serve to isolate people from their family, friends and social support network, in addition to making it challenging to carry out household maintenance, have healthcare visitors or other support. Has the council conducted any studies on the potential economic and social consequences of reduced parking availability in residential areas, and if so, what were the findings?</p>			
Answer from:			Cllr Sarah Warren
<p><i>We have received a number of questions relating to the Bath Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Links project which cover a number of key themes. Please see our statement, attached as an appendix, which picks up the key points and is published on the project website.</i></p>			
P	62	Question from:	Ian Simpson
<p>Bath is renowned for its iconic vistas and carefully planned urban layout. How has the council assessed the potential impact of new cycle lanes across all proposed sites, including signage and associated infrastructure, on key heritage views and the overall aesthetic of the city? Can you provide details of any visual impact assessments conducted?</p>			
Answer from:			Cllr Sarah Warren
<p><i>We have received a number of questions relating to the Bath Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Links project which cover a number of key themes. Please see our statement, attached as an appendix, which picks up the key points and is published on the project website.</i></p>			
P	63	Question from:	Ian Simpson

Given the importance of preserving Bath's timeless beauty, how reversible are the proposed changes? If the cycle lanes prove detrimental to the city's character or are less effective than anticipated, what provisions are in place to restore affected areas to their original state, and at what estimated cost?

Answer from:

Cllr Sarah Warren

We have received a number of questions relating to the Bath Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Links project which cover a number of key themes. Please see our statement, attached as an appendix, which picks up the key points and is published on the project website.

P

64

Question from:

Rob Dallison

Context – Pollution and Air Quality

The proposed BWWCL scheme indicates that approximately 193 on-street parking spaces will be removed. This is likely to result in vehicles circulating longer in search of alternative parking, with a concomitant increase in pollution levels and traffic congestion in affected areas.

(We believe that the number of parking spaces affected will in fact be significantly higher than 193, due to the intensive usage of “cross-driveway” spaces along Newbridge Hill. But for the purposes of this question, we will adopt the 193 spaces as outlined in the BWWCL consultation.)

The following simple and conservative analysis shows the projected additional CO₂ emissions generated by cars idling or driving through side streets in search of parking spaces. All of the numbers used here are conservative, based on direct observation and lived experience in the Newbridge Hill neighbourhood.

- Each displaced vehicle spends an average of 5 to 10 extra minutes searching for a space;
- Each eliminated parking space sees an average of 2 to 4 parking events every 24 hours;
- A car travelling at low speeds with stop/start emits CO₂ at the rate of at least 5kg/hour, and up to 10kg/hour;
- **This will result in the emission of between 59 and 470 additional tonnes of CO₂ per year.**

[LOW: 193 spaces x 2 events per day x 5 minutes per event x 365 days per year / 60 minutes x 5kgCO₂ per hour / 1,000kg = 58.7t CO₂]

[HIGH: 193 spaces x 4 events per day x 10 minutes per event x 365 days per year / 60 minutes x 10kgCO₂ per hour / 1,000kg = 469.6t CO₂]

This outcome appears to work directly against the Council's stated goal of achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2030.

What material evidence can the Council produce to show that removing 193 parking spaces will in fact have a beneficial effect on air quality, pollution levels, and traffic congestion in areas affected by the scheme?

Answer from:

Cllr Sarah Warren

We have received a number of questions relating to the Bath Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Links project which cover a number of key themes. Please see our statement, attached as an appendix, which picks up the key points and is published on the project website.

P

65

Question from:

Rob Dallison

Context – Traffic Safety, Congestion and Emergency Services

It is widely documented that parked cars naturally act as a traffic-calming measure. The removal of parking spaces from Newbridge Hill is therefore likely to increase (not decrease) average vehicle speeds along that road. Increased average traffic speed will pose a heightened risk to pedestrians, cyclists, and other vulnerable road users, including hundreds of children and parents who walk to and from school every day along Newbridge Hill. Removal of 193 parking spaces will also significantly increase congestion in side streets where traffic already flows with difficulty at busy times of day. This poses a particular problem for emergency vehicles and could adversely affect emergency response times.

What risk assessment has the Council undertaken regarding the heightened risk to vulnerable road users due to higher vehicle speeds along Newbridge Hill? What specific traffic-calming measures will be introduced to mitigate this increased danger?

Answer from:

Cllr Sarah Warren

We have received a number of questions relating to the Bath Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Links project which cover a number of key themes. Please see our statement, attached as an appendix, which picks up the key points and is published on the project website.

P	66	Question from:	Rob Dallison
<p>How does the Council plan to address the potential obstruction of emergency vehicles in areas where parking displacement may lead to increased congestion and reduced road access? Has any risk assessment been conducted to ensure that emergency response times will not be negatively affected?</p>			
Answer from:			Cllr Sarah Warren
<p><i>We have received a number of questions relating to the Bath Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Links project which cover a number of key themes. Please see our statement, attached as an appendix, which picks up the key points and is published on the project website.</i></p>			
P	67	Question from:	Matthew Devereux
<p><u>BWWCL Proposals Oldfield School to Newbridge Hill</u></p> <p>I am a local tradesman running a small local landscaping business.</p> <p>How does the Council envisage local builders and tradesmen managing the delivery of materials and equipment if there is no parking outside properties in Newbridge Hill or Kelston Road?</p>			
Answer from:			Cllr Sarah Warren
<p><i>We have received a number of questions relating to the Bath Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Links project which cover a number of key themes. Please see our statement, attached as an appendix, which picks up the key points and is published on the project website.</i></p>			
P	68	Question from:	Matthew Devereux

Tradespeople need frequent access to their van during the working day in order to get the right tools and equipment as a job progresses. How can they do that if there is no parking in Newbridge Hill or Kelston Road?

Answer from:

Cllr Sarah Warren

We have received a number of questions relating to the Bath Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Links project which cover a number of key themes. Please see our statement, attached as an appendix, which picks up the key points and is published on the project website.

P 69

Question from:

Matthew Devereux

These proposals appear to threaten the ability of workmen and local tradespeople to work efficiently and effectively and will have a negative economic impact. How does the Council propose that local businesses can thrive if jobs take much longer because of unfavourable and inefficient road changes, thereby making estimates costlier and clients less satisfied, while journeys may well take longer and lead to increased traffic congestion and more pollution?

Answer from:

Cllr Sarah Warren

We have received a number of questions relating to the Bath Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Links project which cover a number of key themes. Please see our statement, attached as an appendix, which picks up the key points and is published on the project website.

P 70

Question from:

Rosie Phillips, CEO of Developing Health and Independence

Following Public Health's intent to award the Treatment Contract to national charity Turning Point, and a number of other recent procurement decisions which leave the local VCSE sector fragile, with even the larger local charities teetering - what is the council's strategy to maintain a diverse and vibrant local VCSE?

Answer from:		Cllr Alison Born
<p><i>The Council's Corporate Strategy 2023-27 is the Council's overarching strategic plan, which was adopted on 20th July 2023. Our core policies seek to listen to and work with residents to act on their concerns. In particular, under the Council's core ambitions and priorities one of the key principles is to deliver for local residents – which includes improving frontline services across our communities, whilst protecting the most vulnerable by focusing on prevention. The Corporate Strategy 2023-2027.pdf can be viewed in full as the Council's strategy.</i></p> <p><i>The Council continues to prioritise engagement with the local VCSE and recognises the invaluable contribution they make in supporting our local population. In relation to procurement activity, the local VCSE are routinely consulted as key stakeholders to inform needs assessments, developing service specifications and through market engagement events. The Council provided a dedicated procurement briefing for local third sector providers to increase knowledge and understanding around procurement processes. This information is also available on our website. https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Procurement%20Process%20Overview%20Session.pdf</i></p> <p><i>The Council will continue to ensure that it follows a lawful, fair and transparent process as to the provision of services and that the services are procured in accordance with the procurement regulations.</i></p> <p><i>(The response was provided within five working days of the meeting).</i></p>		
P	71	Question from: Rosie Phillips, CEO of Developing Health and Independence
<p>The PSR appeal Panel pointed out that it was not in their remit to make judgments about the Council's commitment to the Social Value Act. B&NES Council utilised the minimum possible Social Value weighting in the tender of Community Drug and Alcohol Services. The Social Value Act is intended to bring social value to the local community and organisations. Given the importance of this aim, why does the Council adhere to a level that is below LGA guidelines?</p>		
Answer from:		Cllr Alison Born
<p><i>The Council ensures that when delivering services that it does so in the spirit of and in accordance with the Social Value Act. The Council recognises the importance of social value and weightings are considered alongside a range of factors including the quality of the proposed services to vulnerable service users. There is no legal minimum weighting for social value, but the Council keeps this under review and</i></p>		

remains committed to ensuring that social value factors and the needs/outcomes of service users are balanced to reach appropriate weightings. We will continue to work closely with local communities and organisations.

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

P **72**

Question from:

Rosie Phillips, CEO of Developing Health and Independence

Given this is a drug and alcohol treatment contract worth over £13M with ramifications for community health and safety - why were none of the Directors or Deputy Directors of public health, nor any senior criminal justice representative on the panel?

Answer from:

Cllr Alison Born

Senior Public Health managers were involved in the Drug and Alcohol Service procurement activity and associated decision-making processes and governance. All stages of the procurement were routinely reported to the Community Services Transformation Public Health Programme, which is chaired by the Director of Public Health and Prevention.

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

BATH WALKING, WHEELING AND CYCLING LINKS STATEMENT

We are aware that a number of questions have been submitted to the council about the Bath Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Links (BWWCL) project following the end of the public consultation. The BWWCL team is currently reviewing all feedback from the consultation process, including around 1700 responses from the questionnaire.

In the near future an engagement report will be published outlining the project's next steps. All questions submitted to the Council/Cabinet meeting will be addressed either in the engagement report or the business case for the project. Updated timescales for these elements of the project can be found on the project website.

To stay up to date with BWWCL, and when the engagement report is published, we encourage you to sign up to our alerts as this is the best way to stay informed. Sign up here: <https://mailchi.mp/d878e6336e71/bwwcl>

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Hi, I'd like to take the chance to talk about a few elements of the budget today, specifically the Clean and Green expansion and the bus services in the north-east of the city.

Firstly, it's excellent to see a proposal for the expansion of the clean and green teams. Road cleaning seems like such a small thing, but it makes a massive difference to our communities, and I'm delighted that the council are investing more to ensure that residents can take pride in their local areas. I do hope that some of this funding will go into promoting the FixmyStreet app to residents, so they can take full advantage of this excellent improvement. As part of a family of asthmatics, I'm also very glad to hear that the council is taking action to remove glyphosate weedkillers from the process of street cleaning, as the respiratory effects from prolonged exposure can be extremely harmful.

Secondly, I've had the chance to talk to a number of residents in the Larkhall and Lambridge areas, and an issue that's come up repeatedly is resident concern around the 6 and 7 bus services. There's substantial worry that First Bus are considering reducing these services which already face a high rate of cancellation and delay. Many residents in these areas, particularly the elderly and families with young children, do rely on these buses as the area is exceptionally hilly. Given that BANES is already subsidising the 6a route, the uniquely difficult terrain (I know Bath as a whole is hilly but this area is really hilly), and one of our strategic priorities for transport (Creating Sustainable Communities- E3593 Appendix A) being quote 'Support for vulnerable adults and children... [through] reducing inequality on the transport network', I think the case for ensuring these services are maintained is overwhelming. This issue is especially concerning at this moment due to the failure of the current WECA leadership to protect buses in local communities across its jurisdiction. I don't want this individual issue to obscure the effort the council has already and continues to make with the Park & Ride services, where further funding can only enhance a service which has already made a palpable difference in reducing congestion within the city.

Thank you for your time and attention Councillors.

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Council Statement by Mark Bradley
13 February 2025
Road Safety by St Gregory's Catholic College

Good evening, I am Mark Bradley a Parent Governor at St Gregory's Catholic College in Odd Down. One of my roles is as the chair for the Finance and Premises Committee that also looks at matters related to safety.

I was recently given the opportunity to talk to all the staff about Health and Safety and shared some personal stories, including about the Lyme Bay disaster where a group of school children on a canoeing trip drowned. The reason it was personal to me was that at the time I was working at a Hampshire County Council Activity Centre at Calshot. Some of the instructors working there had worked at the Lyme Bay centre prior to the accident and had written to the centre principal, prior to the accident saying, "We think you should take a careful look at your standards of safety, otherwise you may find yourself trying to explain why someone's son or daughter is not coming home."

Following that session encouraging all staff to speak up about any safety concerns a member of staff got in contact about the safety of students once they have left the school site after school. In particular around the junction between the A367 Upper Wellsway and the Old Fosse Road and the two bus stops. Whilst the area does have a pelican crossing it has narrow pavements which get clogged to overflowing and there is no physical barrier between the students and the vehicles on the road.

As a school we recognise the risk of serious injury or death by road traffic accident and have done what we can to mitigate the risk with what the Health and Safety Executive would describe as administrative controls. Staff are asked to go on duty to seek to control students after the school day and off the school site. However, the Health and Safety Executive identify Engineering Controls should be considered before resorting to administrative controls. We have invited BANES officials to look at the risk and they have taken the view that nothing can be done.

Therefore, the purpose of this statement is to ensure that the elected members understand the risk that they own, on the record, and to invite them to re-consider if it is a risk they wish to tolerate or whether there are further mitigations they could put in place before a serious accident occurs.

If any of the members or their officials would like to see in person, the risks the students face the school would be pleased to host them at the end of a school day.

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I'm here to propose a new swimming pool in Alexandra park.

After the lockdowns in 2020 a number of swimming facilities in Bath closed despite demand.

Public facilities in Bath are limited and under maintained while private pools are expensive and exclusive. There aren't enough pools for children in Bath. Services like Puddleducks have been trying to find local facilities but are moving out to Chippenham and further.

There are various expensive pools but there is, as of yet, no middle ground.

A heated indoor swimming pool that allows you to swim for £15 would be welcomed.
A pool with the amazing view over the city from Alexandra Park would be loved.

I propose a sheltered swimming facility is built. A 40x20m mid sized pool near the existing bowling green. It would make enough space for a pool that could be used by tourists, nearby schools and locals.

I recommend the pool be built by digging into the hillside. Once the construction is finished it should be covered with turf and with trees replanted nearby to merge with the existing landscape and to not change this area of outstanding natural beauty.

A similar design to the glass walled roof area of the Thermae would allow one of the best views in the world: the skyline from Alexandra Park.

Inside the building could have a sauna, steam room and other affordable spa facilities.
Changing rooms, showers, reception and a waiting room that also has the view.

Many of the tourists coming to Bath come with the agenda to bathe which generates a large amount of income for the city. The Bath skyline is a global highlight. It's frequently posted online but is not directly generating local income.

Many of the local schools don't have a pool.

(Locally Beechen cliff school, hayesfield, ralph allen, st gregs, culverhay and the paragon)

The pool could be crowd-funded. Crowd funded pools online for larger pools in less prestigious or high demand areas have had donations for millions. I'm quite confident that funding for this project can be met if advertised correctly. It could be a great investment opportunity.

Potential income after construction could be in the millions but that will vary depending on the finished product.

The Thermae's yearly revenue was allegedly £4 million.

I believe that if care is given to not damage the park this project will bring joy to the community and tourists.

I hope friends of the council can see the feasibility of this project. I'd like to begin the discussion on how to cultivate it.

With professional help from local civil engineers, surveyors and architects I think this project could be wonderful.

I'd like to find other people interested in this project and for it to be communally realized.

James Chalmers

*Included in your briefings are annotated photos of the proposed site with reference to how much expected change should be noticeable by completion.

£:

An uncovered 40x20m pool could cost £1,000,000

A steel structure to house it £65,000 (unsure if this includes labor.)

Surface area 800 m²

1300 m³

Three existing trees should be moved.

£1000 to £10,000 each.

Chlorine £500

Water £3000 initialy, £200 more monthly

500 kwh power a day.

(Providing residents with solar panels would reduce to near 0)

£2000 a year maintenance

Thermae recorded revenue of £4 million on glassdoor.com

On the partially annotated pictures below, the blue shaded areas are the proposed pool sites. Green is for existing trees. The third photo is what the view would likely be (Sometimes without fog)









Statement to Cabinet Meeting 6pm: 13/2/25

The future of local service provision, accountability, and sustainability

I am sad and alarmed DHI has lost its appeal over the award of the Drug and Alcohol Treatment Service. A legal and technical win for BNES, but an outcome that represents a very significant loss for Bath & North East Somerset.

When a charity has for over 25 years delivered high-quality, innovative, and effective services without major incident or failure, I ask you to consider whether the commissioning and procurement processes that led got it right: an outcome which sees Project 28 and adult treatment pass to national provider Turning Point, alongside Bristol Drugs Project.

This decision comes at a considerable cost to BNES who lose:

- Local accountability and knowledge built over decades of service.
- Added value – as DHI has consistently secured additional grant and trust funding to enhance its work.

We have worked in partnership with the local authority to deliver efficiency-driven initiatives like Burlington Street Detox.; drugs education lesson plans for schools. We have stepped in during crises, helping set up the Wellbeing Hub during COVID-19 and we picked up Project 28 after the national it was part of became insolvent. In short, our role has always extended well beyond contractual obligations.

We are significantly wounded by such a heavy loss, and this loss will be felt across the system.

Statutory PSR guidance says that “Relevant authorities are expected to avoid destabilizing providers” through their decision making, to assess risk, and consider whether their decision making is justified by the wider benefits of the proposal.

The Council told the appeal panel that its analysis in the lead up to its commissioning decision was reasonable and proportionate, and that “it would not be possible, reasonable or proportionate for us have analysed the specific impact of our commissioning decision on every local provider”.

The panel were satisfied with this response. I am not.

It required PH to look at the impact on one local provider. DHI, one of the largest, most successful providers in BNES. This £3 million a year treatment contract being both our biggest, and BNES PH’s biggest by some considerable margin. Its loss has a big impact on us, especially after Bristol, a loss BNES PH would have been very well aware of and had time to take account of.

Close relationships and commissioning models emerge from relationships, joint work, knowledge and expertise. It is this that puts the local players in a position of preparedness for recommissioning – helping level the playing field against the considerable resource that national providers can divert to win a target bid.

In contrast, DHI were notified of the tender by way of a Public Information Notice the same day every other interested party was notified. No advance conversation, no co-production.

Across my career, I have never known an incumbent provider to be treated in such a distant, bureaucratic manner.

The role of HCRG as contract holder and commissioner with DHI may have contributed to the growing disconnect between DHI, public health commissioning and procurement.

I would ask the cabinet 3 things:

1. To satisfy themselves that Public Health have robust plans to ensure the safe transfer of this service by 1 April.
2. To ensure there is a full and proper risk assessment on DHI before PH decides whether to transfer a further £1.2M of OHID grant funding to the new provider, as there is no requirement to do so, and we are well placed to deliver.
3. Finally, to reflect on this decision and consider your long-term strategy for safeguarding local providers. National providers come and go, winning and losing contracts as part of the nature of their work, but once a local provider is gone, it is gone for good.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Rosie Phillips

Chief Executive Officer

Developing Health & Independence

Cabinet statement – Breathing Space phone line (13 February 2025)

Good evening. I am here today to speak about changes to the provision of community mental health services.

I understand that the Integrated Care Board which covers Swindon Wiltshire and Bath North East Somerset has recommissioned contracts for community mental health services, and as a result there will be changes to the services that have been provided locally, including those provided by Bath MIND.

A resident in Moorlands, who I know through local projects, has shared her sadness and fear at termination of the Breathing Space Phone Line which provides support to people in crisis. The value of this service to her is that she can call and speak to people who can help her from home – which is essential when she feels she cannot leave the house due to anxiety or other health issues.

The contract for this evening crisis line is terminating on 31 March and will not be re-commissioned.

She has written a poem which describes what this service means to her which I would like to read:

A reflection,
Of what I could be,
Haunts me.
I work towards it,
and never reach it.
Unendingly.

When this all gets
Too much
And I know: I'm,
Not enough.
Things are just:
Tough.
God is there in the rough.

But He also
Gave me for this season,

People to guide me through.

To listen,

Plan a future,

With me in it.

And a reminder:

I am enough.

Thank you Breathing Space for always guiding me through.

In addition to the closure of the evening support line, Bath MIND has lost contracts for their Access and Intensive Outreach services which will move to another provider based in Bristol, with changes to operating hours.

I'm concerned that many vulnerable residents across our area will be facing uncertainty at the loss of, or changes to services that they have come to rely on.

The Bath and North East Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire Integrated Care Board covers a large geographical area (1,511 miles squared).

Whilst its intended outcomes are to reduce the variation in care – and standardise best practice – I am concerned that commissioning at this scale will mean a gradual degradation of local services.

I'm also concerned about the impact on charities like Bath MIND, its staff, and long-term sustainability.

I would like to ask specifically if Cabinet Members can do anything to prevent the loss of this evening support line, potentially by identifying other sources of funding?

More widely, what they can do to ensure this wider approach to commissioning services is not at the expense of valued local services?