

## **BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET**

### **MINUTES OF CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND SUSTAINABILITY POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL MEETING**

Thursday, 2nd May, 2024

Present:- **Councillors** Andy Wait, Michael Auton, Jess David, Ian Halsall (in place of Anna Box), Saskia Heijltjes, Shaun Hughes (in place of June Player), Hal MacFie (in place of Alex Beaumont) and Toby Simon (in place of John Leach)

Apologies for absence: Councillors: Grant Johnson

#### **64 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

#### **65 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE**

The Chair drew attention to the emergency evacuation procedure.

#### **66 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS**

Councillor Player sent her apologies and was substituted by Councillor Hughes

Councillor Beaumont sent his apologies and was substituted by Councillor MacFie

Councillor Leach sent his apologies and was substituted by Councillor Simon

Councillor Johnson sent his apologies

#### **67 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were none.

#### **68 TO ANNOUNCE ANY URGENT BUSINESS AGREED BY THE CHAIRMAN**

There was none.

#### **69 ITEMS FROM THE PUBLIC OR COUNCILLORS - TO RECEIVE STATEMENTS, PETITIONS OR QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE BUSINESS OF THIS MEETING**

- Adam Reynolds made a statement regarding Road Danger Reduction Strategy. *A copy of this statement is attached to the minutes.*

There were no factual questions.

- Talia Kelly (Governor for parent voice/safeguarding at Freshford School) made a statement regarding School Streets. *A copy of this statement is attached to the minutes.*

Councillor Heijltjes asked if the school would be interested in a trial. Talia Kelly stated that there is a group who are willing to support this.

Councillor David asked what support from the Council was given regarding walking buses. Talia Kelly explained that if it is initiated by the school, there are insurance implications and concerns around budget impact. We are trying to get parents to do it informally, but it can be difficult to organise.

In response to a question from Councillor Wait, Talia Kelly stated that, on the whole, parents are in favour – there is a community who are concerned with active travel - but there is more work to do.

- John Taylor made a statement regarding School Streets. *A copy of this statement is attached to the minutes.*

In response to a question from Councillor Heijltjes, John Taylor explained that not all residents prioritize the school and children. He stated that parking enforcement have insufficient resources. He explained that Active Travel will give children a lifelong habit to walk or cycle.

- Alice Boden made a statement regarding School Streets and child health. *A copy of this statement is attached to the minutes.*

Councillor Heijltjes asked if she would support School Streets for secondary schools. Alice Boden stated that she would and there could be a bigger impact.

Councillor Wait stated that he had been in education for 40 years and certainly agreed with the concept of School Streets.

## **70 MINUTES**

The Panel confirmed the minutes of the previous meeting as a true record and they were duly signed by the Chair.

## **71 CABINET MEMBER UPDATE**

Councillor Manda Rigby, Cabinet Member for Highways, gave an update which covered the following: (a copy of the full statement is attached to these minutes).

- General update from last meeting
- Traffic management, Network Management, road safety
- Local Highway Improvement Programme
- City Centre Security

- Highway maintenance
- Parking
- Liveable Neighbourhoods delivery
- Forward plan of work for next period

Panel members asked the following questions:

Councillor David stated that there had been good feedback regarding the resurfacing works on Moorland Road. She asked about levels of staffing regarding parking enforcement. The Cabinet Member explained that around 90% of the roles have been filled – shift patterns have changed and there is a zero abuse strategy which has made the job more attractive. We are doing the best we can.

Councillor Heijltjes asked how the Cabinet Member thought the scheme at Lyme Gardens would enable modal shift. The Cabinet Member explained that the scheme had come forward from ward Councillors and is moving towards an ETRO which will tease out the issues. The area may fit the School Streets criteria.

Councillor Simon asked for an update on the Devonshire Tunnel. The Cabinet Member explained that this was operated by SusTrans and not the Council but some of the work to fix the issue was on Council land. She understands that it would not be a simple fix and that the plan involved pumping out water. In terms of the relevant Cabinet portfolio – it was confirmed that it was within the Cabinet Member for Economic and Cultural Sustainable Development.

Councillor Heijltjes asked about the removal of physical barriers on a public rights of way. The Cabinet Member stated that there was one rights of way officer and there is a programme of work which includes looking at accessibility and checking for barriers.

Councillor Sarah Warren, Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency and Sustainable Travel, gave an update which covered the following: (a copy of the full statement is attached to these minutes).

- Green Transformation
- Energy
- Climate and Engagement
- Nature
- Sustainable Transport
- Active Travel Masterplan
- Consultation and opportunities to engage

Panel members asked the following questions:

Councillor Heijltjes asked for an update on Tier (E Scooters). The Cabinet Member explained that there are plans to expand the zone. In response to a question from Councillor Hughes, the Cabinet Member explained that the Government set the terms of the trial, it will currently run up to March 2026 (it has been extended 3 times so far).

Councillor David stated that she welcomed the plan for parking slots for the E Scooters – she stated that locally there was some support but others did not like them on the pavements. She asked if there were any other methods of funding. The Cabinet Member explained that she was hopeful of a move (with WECA) to have a share of the income.

Councillor Halsall asked about the training for officers regarding the retrofitting of historic buildings and also progress on the challenges regarding building consent. The Cabinet Member stated that this was an ongoing challenge.

## **72 SCHOOL STREETS (POLICY DEVELOPMENT DISCUSSION)**

Councillor Sarah Warren, Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency and Sustainable Travel, introduced the discussion on School Streets and gave a presentation which covered the following:

- School Run
- Aims of School Streets
- Policy Basis
- Step approach to mode shift
- Objectives and Benefits
- Work done so far in BANES
- Enforcement – options
- Qualifying criteria
- Table – School Streets prioritisation criteria
- Outline programme

Panel members made the following points and asked the following questions:

Councillor Hughes asked why information was not circulated in advance on this item. The Cabinet Member explained that this was a discussion around policy development rather than scrutiny.

Councillor Hughes asked if LTNs (Local Traffic Neighbourhood Schemes) and School Streets schemes are sitting separately and asked how School Streets could be similarly prioritised. The Cabinet member explained that, if a request for a School Street scheme comes forward, there would be scope for inclusion into an LTN. She added that a pot of funding has now been allocated for School Streets (from the CAZ – Clean Air Zone).

Councillor Heijltjes stated that she would like to see a reference to social and community aspects in the objectives. She also asked if School Streets would be promoted in the next tranche of LTN schemes. The officer explained that it is important to identify which policy intervention is needed at what point in time for

which problem. Councillor Wait stated that LTN and School Street schemes could work in unison.

Councillor David stated that she agreed with the objectives in the presentation. She stated that there had been a car free day (and week) at Widcombe school – there had been good community engagement and positive feedback. She stated the importance of working with local businesses to provide locations for park and stride. She added that it was good news that there is funding for a school travel officer and asked if this officer could support walking buses. Councillor David also suggested that some messaging about sustainable transport be mentioned at the application and admissions stage regarding schools. The officer explained that there is a walking bus tool kit and that there is mostly no additional (insurance) premium, but schools will need to do a risk assessment. She added that secondary schools are a natural disruptor event and there has to be a stepped approach when it comes to these schools – such as level 3 bike ability courses. Councillor Wait advised to start any scheme like this after Easter as year groups are fading out, it is best not to start in September.

Councillor Heijltjes stated that schools are under pressure and it is important that they know our vision. The Cabinet Member acknowledged the point.

Councillor David stated that the call should go out as widely as possible and it is useful to have some flexibility in the criteria (for example a bus route should not preclude a scheme). She explained that mode shift stars provides a framework but schools are doing things outside the administrative system of the scheme. She also stated that nurseries are often near schools.

Councillor Auton stated that Multi Academy Trusts could be contacted as they often cover many schools.

Councillor Hughes asked that the difference between rural and city schools be kept in mind as car dependency can be different.

The Cabinet Member thanked that Panel members for their points and asked them to communicate any further thoughts on how to approach School Streets.

## **73 LOCAL FOOD GROWING SCRUTINY TASK GROUP - FINAL REPORT**

Councillor Sam Ross, Chair of the Food Growing Task Group, introduced the item. She explained that, if the Panel accept the report, it will be forwarded to the relevant Cabinet Member/s for response.

Panel members made the following points and asked the following questions:

Councillor Wait commented that the report was helpful in moving towards the development of a strategy. Councillor Auton thanked Councillor Ross for chairing the group well and highlighted the good participation.

Councillor Wait noted that there was nobody from Keynsham on the Panel. Councillor MacFie stated that the number of allotments in Keynsham differs from that of Bath and asked about allotment space coming through building developments.

Councillor Ross acknowledged the point about Keynsham but pointed out that a lot of similar issues were covered in the report – the group could not cover every area.

Regarding the planning developments Councillor Halsall stated that developers are generally encouraged to allow suitable areas for food growing. Councillor Ross stated that the location is important as some allotments (through 106 agreements) are not in or near the development.

Councillor Simon stated that commercial allotments are not mentioned. He added that allotments in Combe Down are under threat and would like Cabinet Member comment. Councillor Ross explained that the group did touch on commercial allotments. She added that these are expensive (can be £600 annually as opposed to £25).

Councillor Hughes stated that from a parish/town Council perspective, allotments can be challenging, they must be self-sustaining as they can be expensive to manage.

Councillor Halsall commented that it is a good idea to create more diversity in size with existing Council owned allotments.

Councillor Ross stated that support could be limited in terms of support staff - responsibility was with the Parks Team.

The Chair invited Adam Reynolds to add a comment. Adam Reynolds commented that in Timsbury, he had an allotment plot and it had been a valuable community connection as well as a hobby.

Councillor Heijltjes stated that a lot of schools are involved in food growing. Councillor Ross commented that only 7 schools are now under Local Authority Control (not academized), she stated that the recommendations do mention 'partnerships' which could include schools. Councillor Wait commented that this generally worked best if there is an enthusiast on the staff.

The Panel agreed to refer the report to the Cabinet Member (the recommendations are set out below).

- i) **Better use of space** - To welcome the initiative of offering a more diverse range of allotment plots/community garden spaces and encourage the further development of this approach to help address waiting lists.
- ii) **Better use of space** - To invite allotment holders and the Allotment Association to contribute to a refresh of B&NES Council's allotment [rules and guidance](#)

To include consideration of:

- Provision of starter plots, introductory lessons, a buddy system to help new tenants.
- Varying the size of plots to allow sharing and to consider groups to be tenants rather than just individuals.

- iii) **Preserving growing space** – to invite the cabinet member with responsibility for planning to ensure the developing Local Plan and its supporting guidance complements the aims of the developing Local Food Growing Strategy, whilst also recognising the environmental and economic value of local Grade 1 agricultural land.
- iv) **Creating new space** -. To encourage the cabinet member with responsibility for planning to explore through Supplementary Planning Documents the potential of putting more responsibility on developers, particularly through larger developments to ensure local food growing opportunities are incorporated into submitted plans.
- v) The council to identify an officer lead for coordinating and leading implementation of the developing Local Food Strategy.
- vi) The Task Group welcomes and encourages the proposal to create a new Food Partnership – council led- which brings together community partners to implement the new Local Food Strategy.
- vii) The council through its community forums to initiate a ‘big food conversation’, inviting our communities to input into delivery of the Local Food Strategy, ensuring collective ownership.
- viii) The council through its Parish Liaison or Community Area Forums to facilitate support and the sharing of good practice for town and parish councils requesting support with the management of their allotments.

## 74 PANEL WORKPLAN

The Panel noted the future workplan.

The Chair asked for a verbal update on the Food Group to the July meeting and a further update item in September.

The meeting ended at 12.09 pm

Chair(person) .....

Date Confirmed and Signed .....

**Prepared by Democratic Services**

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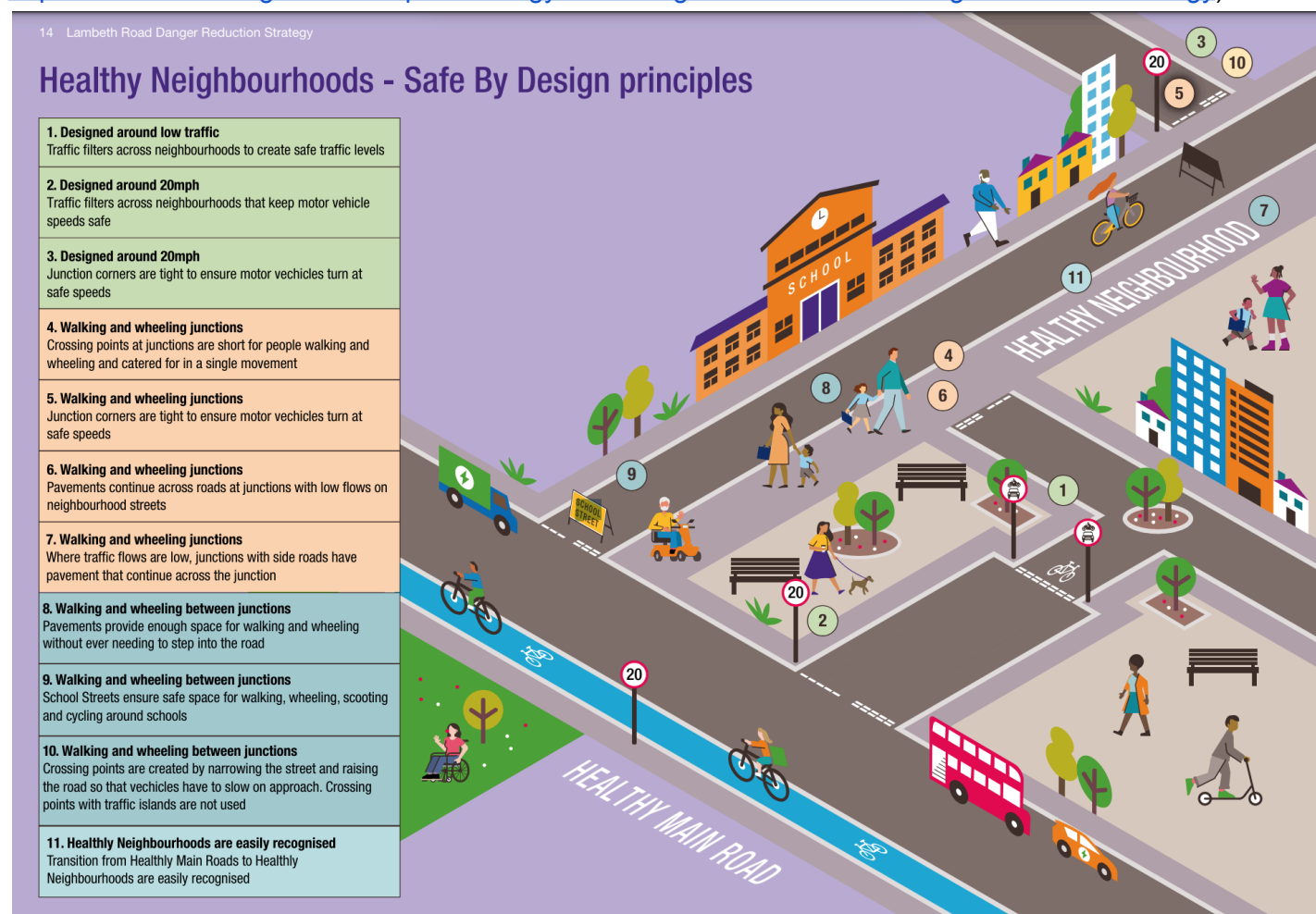
As someone deeply entrenched in the study of transport policies at local, regional, and national levels, it's glaringly evident that the failures of Bath & North East Somerset council to deliver School Streets extend beyond mere political leadership lapses to a fundamental absence of a robust road danger reduction strategy.

Consider the debacle surrounding the failed Mount Road Liveable Neighbourhood project, where an ineffectual Zebra Crossing outside Roundhill Primary School was financed from the BaNES Highways budget, despite ample funding availability from the West of England Combined Authority for a more holistic Low Traffic Neighbourhood and School Street solution. This oversight underscores the failure of the Liveable Neighbourhoods team to consult with the Road Safety Officer, crucial for determining the safest interventions for residential roads according to the UK's longstanding road classification hierarchy.

By my estimation there have been 12 opportunities to deliver or begin to deliver 11 School Streets yet have been and are repeatedly being squandered. King Edwards, Bathwick St Mary, Roundhill Primary, Newbridge Primary, Combe Down Primary, Bathampton Primary, The Paragon, Kingswood Prep, St Andrews Primary, St John's Primary, and Moorlands Junior have all been neglected, despite the clear safety benefits such measures provide.

The council's disregard for the Vision Zero Motion passed last November, coupled with the exclusion of the Road Safety Officer from crucial design processes, further highlight the systemic shortcomings. What's more concerning is the stark absence of a comprehensive Road Danger Reduction Strategy akin to those successfully implemented elsewhere, such as in Lambeth

<https://www.lambeth.gov.uk/transport-strategy/road-danger-reduction/road-danger-reduction-strategy>).



Even basic commitments from political leadership, such as ensuring that "A school street will be required for all viable Primary Schools," are conspicuously absent. It's high time to recognize the urgent need for a cohesive road danger reduction strategy and to institute council processes that prioritise the safety of our children on our streets.

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### **3-minute statement 02/05/24 Talia Kelly**

#### The concern:

Following an increase in traffic, congestion, poor parking, growing confrontational situations between residents and parents, and a number of near misses/incidents outside Freshford Primary School during school pick up and drop off times, the school and governing body initiated surveys and multi-agency group meetings to identify problems, address issues and establish a vision for safer streets in the vicinity of the school during school run times.

#### The impact, context and background giving rise to the concern:

Despite ongoing work to influence and nudge families to embrace active travel options and operate park and stride initiatives with local businesses, the 'mode shift' in behaviour has been slow at best.

On 22<sup>nd</sup> March, 2024, Freshford School hosted a 'Playing Out' event as an experimental endeavour to address residents' concerns, particularly regarding traffic congestion, and give children a chance to see what safe streets look like. This also helped initiate robust dialogue about traffic issues the village faces and possible solutions amongst a variety of stakeholders. The event was a success and a post-mortem survey illustrated that, in the main, respondents felt the Playing Out initiative helped to address traffic and travel concerns outside the school, noting how the children could play and move around much more safely.

Survey participants were particularly interested in exploring future walking bus/park and stride options and would like to see similar events in the future.

#### Action requested of the Council:

- Formalising walking buses is currently costly and difficult to administer from within cash-strapped, resource-limited schools. Financial support (e.g. for insurance purposes) and less red tape would ensure the viability, longevity and success of these endeavours.
- Reclassifying roads to lower categories where possible would provide safer walking routes for families by avoiding all too familiar battles with poor driving behaviours (e.g. rat running and speeding). This would enable families accessing schools from a wider catchment area to utilise active travel options more readily. For example, the recent Wales and West road closures through Lower Stoke/Crowe Hill have encouraged many Freshford School families to utilise active travel options more regularly. Sadly, many are considering returning to driving once again after the road is reopened. This would be a real step backwards.
- Providing opportunities to schools who have demonstrated real commitment to active travel/tackling poor driver behaviours to trial ETROs and school streets.

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2/5/24  
Alice Boden

Statement to Climate Emergency and Sustainability Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel

Resources included:

The Toxic School Run (UNICEF)

<https://www.unicef.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/UUK-research-briefing-The-toxic-school-run-September-2018.pdf>

School Streets to Shape Child-Friendly Cities (Clean Cities Campaign)

[https://cleancitiescampaign.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/School-Streets-Factsheet\\_w.pdf](https://cleancitiescampaign.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/School-Streets-Factsheet_w.pdf)

I am a resident of Bath, a mother of two school aged children and a GP. I am here to urge you to view your decisions about school streets from a child and public health perspective. As the President of the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health said last year:

“Air pollution is the largest environmental risk to public health in the UK, with children being particularly vulnerable. All children deserve the opportunity for the best chance for a healthy start in life. Exposure to air pollutants during pregnancy and early childhood can have harmful and irreversible effects on the development of the lungs and other organs leading to potential long-term health effects well into adulthood.”

A study in London - discussed in the UNICEF report distributed to you - found that children received 15% of their daily exposure to air pollution during travel to and from school. Children are disproportionately vulnerable to air pollution: both because of their developing lungs, and because they breathe faster and are nearer to the level of car exhausts. Studies of school streets in the UK have demonstrated reductions of nitrogen dioxide levels of 23% and particulates of up to 36%. School streets could therefore have a positive impact on the health of children in Bath and North East Somerset, both now and for the rest of their lives.

National guidelines recommend at least 1 hour of physical activity each day for all children. However, less than half of children are currently achieving this. A School Streets pilot in Hackney, London demonstrated a 51% increase in cycling to school and a 30% increase in walking. As GPs, we are currently seeing both increasing levels of obesity and more children struggling with their mental and emotional wellbeing. A 2017 study demonstrated a positive association between active travel to school and psychological wellbeing.

As a Mum of children who have attended local schools in Oldfield Park throughout their school lives, I have seen this at first hand. We have experienced the social and emotional benefits of walking to school. My children have grown up within their community rather than being driven through it, and they now walk confidently to their secondary school. However, my youngest daughter has asthma and often feels wheezy and tight chested after walking home along busy roads.

In the years from 2019-22, there were 211 child deaths in the UK due to road traffic accidents. 35% of serious injuries and deaths of children in road traffic collisions occur during travel to or from school. School Streets could make travel to school safer by reducing road traffic on the surrounding streets.

So, in conclusion, your decisions on School Streets could improve the physical and mental wellbeing of generations of children in Bath and North East Somerset. You have the power to prevent potentially fatal asthma attacks, improve children's lung health, prevent future ill health, improve children's psychological wellbeing and prevent injuries and deaths on the roads. Thank you for listening.

#### References / further reading:

Royal College of Paediatric and Child Health, statement from President:

<https://www.rcpch.ac.uk/news-events/news/rcpch-launches-action-support-clean-air-human-rights-bill>

Physical activity guidelines for children:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/physical-activity-guidelines-children-and-young-people-5-to-18-years>

Children's activity levels:

<https://www.sportengland.org/news-and-inspiration/childrens-activity-levels-hold-firm-significant-challenges-remain#:~:text=Children%20and%20young%20people's%20overall,and%20physical%20activity%20a%20day>.

Increase in walking and cycling with school streets pilot in Hackney:

<https://www.london.gov.uk/press-releases/mayoral/mayor-hails-success-of-schools-streets-programme#:~:text=Hackney%20Council's%20School%20Streets%20pilot,cent%20reduction%20in%20tailpipe%20emissions>.

Active travel to school and psychological wellbeing:

[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/325540291\\_Active\\_school\\_travel\\_attitudes\\_and\\_psychological\\_well-being\\_of\\_children](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/325540291_Active_school_travel_attitudes_and_psychological_well-being_of_children)

National Child Mortality Database: [https://www.ncmd.info/publications/report-child-accident-](https://www.ncmd.info/publications/report-child-accident-injury/#:~:text=There%20were%20211%20deaths%20of,and%2078%20in%202021%2D22)

[injury/#:~:text=There%20were%20211%20deaths%20of,and%2078%20in%202021%2D22](https://www.ncmd.info/publications/report-child-accident-injury/#:~:text=There%20were%20211%20deaths%20of,and%2078%20in%202021%2D22).

Road Injury Prevention: Resources to support schools to promote active travel:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/505277/25\\_Feb16FINAL\\_DOCUMENT.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/505277/25_Feb16FINAL_DOCUMENT.pdf)



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## **A Plea For Joined Up Thinking About School Streets**

I live on what could be a school street, Charmouth Road in Bath, where Newbridge Primary School is situated. I am so pleased that the council is finally beginning to consider promoting school streets, but this action is very late and sadly demonstrates the lack of joined up thinking within the local authority as part of its journey to net zero.

I worked with children for forty years, fifteen as a primary school headteacher in two large schools, so I feel qualified to comment on issues affecting schools. I am also a member of a residents' group next to Newbridge Primary School. We requested residents' parking from 2018 but had to change our approach for Liveable Neighbourhoods. We submitted the proforma provided by BANES to our local councillors.

The word 'school' was never mentioned in that Liveable Neighbourhood proforma. Nor were the words 'child' or 'children'. However we included the school as top of the priorities in our submission.

The school street element of the bid disappeared without trace as BANES evaluated the bid. A golden opportunity to promote children's needs was lost.

We ended up with a residents' parking zone, taking little account of the school and fifteen months later i.e. now, a proposal to remove five of those new RPZ places and introduce a one way system (two way for cyclists). This scheme claims to be part of a Liveable Neighbourhood, but in reality increasing speed where children walk to school.

What does this demonstrate? Another opportunity lost, no joined up thinking, overall vision or planning.

I hope you succeed in promoting school streets. They are sorely needed but will need some thinking outside the box to make each one succeed. Too many opportunities have slipped through your fingers as a council. It's time you put children first.

John Taylor 30.04.2024

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## **Cabinet Member update from Councillor Warren**

### **Green Transformation**

#### **Energy**

- **LEAD project (Green Heritage Homes) has delivered training with Council conservation and planning officers on retrofit of historic buildings and heat pumps in historic buildings. Pre-planning application visits are now being undertaken by heritage planning officer with Bath and West Community Energy- 6 completed so far. Landlord support offer to be launched soon, recognising the high levels of fuel poverty in private rented properties. webinar for owners of historic properties – taking place on 15 May <https://www.tickettailor.com/events/bathwestcommunityenergy/1190612>**
- **We are working with colleagues across the Council to progress a Power Purchase Agreement for the solar PV at BWCE's Fairy Hill site in Compton Dando, subject to planning approval. This will help to fill a significant gap in generation on the Council's estate to meet our 12MW target for our corporate electricity use.**
- **Mission Net Zero (Bristol Innovate UK project) – includes a regional Local Area Energy Plan which will provide evidence to underpin strategy for 300MW by 2030. We're working closely with colleagues in Bristol and across West of England to ensure this supports BANES' needs. Work has already begun and should be finished by end 2024.**
- **Bath Sports & Leisure Centre is set to benefit from energy saving measures with the installation of rooftop solar PV, with £173,166 from the government's Swimming Pool Support Fund (SPSF). We expect up to 212 kilowatt peak (kWp) capacity. An estimated 124kWp is required to provide the electricity needed for the swimming pools with the additional array potentially providing electricity for future air source pumps that may be installed as part of a longer-term decarbonisation plan for the building.**

#### **Climate & Engagement**

- **Friends of the Earth**
  - **Friends of the Earth have recently released an updated State of Environment Report, which presents environmental data at a constituency level.**
  - **Areas assessed include environmental jobs and the green economy, energy security and climate change, health, and transport.**
  - **Across the three constituencies covered by Bath & North East Somerset, concern about climate change and the environment remains high. In Bath, 79% of voters report that these policies will be important for them in the next general election.**
  - **The report is aimed primarily at the next government, and includes recommendations for increased investment into green industries, household insulation programmes, public transport, active travel and increased action on air quality.**
- **Funding for rural communities on climate & nature projects**
  - **Nine parishes have been awarded the money from the West of England Rural Fund.**

- o Farmborough - grant funding to install an air-to-air source heat pump heating system and hot water system in a refurbished community building to reduce energy consumption.
- o Westfield - funding for a new footbridge to enhance and encourage public access to Grove Wood, Haydon Batch and Waterside Valley
- o Retrofit for village halls: East Harptree, and Bishop Sutton will have solar panels installed on the roof, Peasedown St John will benefit from solar panels and roof insulation and Compton Martin will have insulation added to the vaulted roof of the hall.
- o Chelwood – repairs to village hall roof and insulate the building
- o Chew Magna - retrofitting an emergency room to help adapt to flooding events creating a place of safety with facilities.
- Community Conversations
- o Plans for our pilot community climate conversation are underway. An initial Steering Group meeting including representatives from Grow Batheaston and local Parish Councils took place on Friday 19th April.
- o The meeting demonstrated that there was clear support for a conversation of this type combining discussion on climate and nature. Based on feedback, we are now seeking a date for the conversation later in the year and will set up further Steering Group conversations to discuss and agree the details.

### Nature

- Our Charlcombe Meadows BNG Pathfinder site has had its first grass cut in 10yrs to support the creation of a wildflower meadow and a new community group has been formed to help with the site management and monitor species recovery.
- We submitted successful Green Recovery Fund to WECA and have secured £225,827 to further the work of Bathscape to support the delivery of the ecological emergency action plan
- We have submitted a change request to WECA to secure further funding to deliver more for nature in the Somer Valley as part of Somer Valley Rediscovered.
- We are working closely with Bristol Water (now SW Water) in the Chew Valley to deliver phase 2 of Chew Valley Recreational trail and have developed the Chew Valley Reconnected Partnership which bring together community, town & parish and NGOs working together to deliver more for nature
- For the second year in a row, Bathscape's Footprints podcast has been nominated for a prestigious ARIAS award – the radio BAFTAS. The industry awards for radio and podcasts are national, and Footprints is nominated in the 'best local show' category.

### Sustainable Transport

- E-scooter trial – we will shortly be introducing painted parking bays at 10 locations we have identified as being long term on-pavement parking spots (i.e. squares, very wide pavements). We have funding from WECA later this year to introduce a further 10 on-road spaces, with ambitions

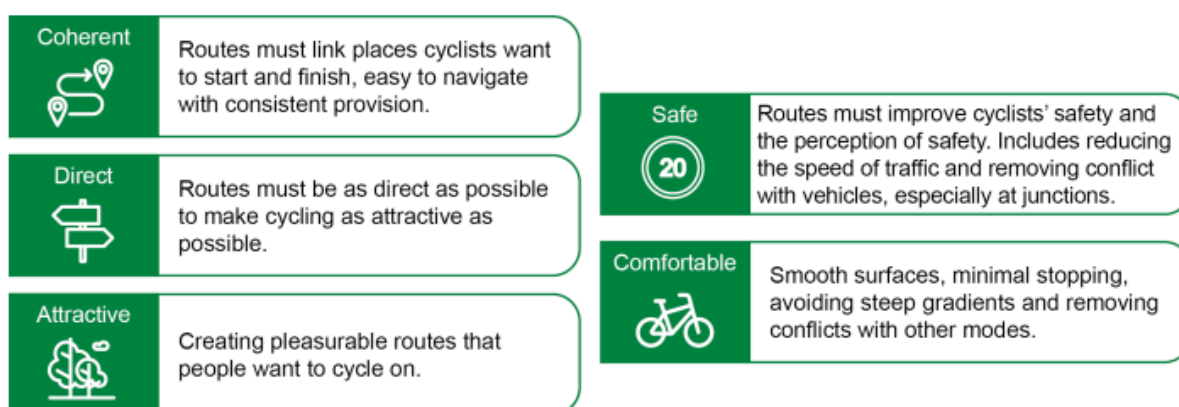
to expand this further as funding becomes available. This will enable us to expand the service south and east.

- **Bike hangars** – we are finalising a shortlist of 20 locations to receive a hangar, with installation planned later this year.
- **Travel to Work Survey** – over 14,000 people completed the survey across B&NES with a number of businesses taking part who will receive a bespoke report with the findings. We are already planning for next year to help increase the numbers further.
- **Just approved a single member decision to move to FBC on Somer Valley Links sustainable transport corridor (part of City Region Sustainable Transport Fund) and we can expect release of the consultation findings on the A4 Bristol Bath on 13th May.**

**We are preparing** transport strategies for our towns to set out the vision for the transport system for the next 20 years. Each plan looks to the long term and includes proposals needed to provide a transport system that is fit for purpose for those living, working and visiting the area, enabling more travel via sustainable modes.

**Also an Active Travel Masterplan**, a comprehensive plan that sets out the existing and future network of active travel infrastructure. The plan will be for all types of active travel whether for commuting, leisure, business or every day journeys such as travelling to a local shop, school or doctor's surgery. We have developed the Vision & Objectives which set the framework for the plan and have been asking people to share their insight, identify priorities and help shape the Masterplan.

Our work has been underpinned for 5 core principles:



**Consultation and opportunities to engage:** we have been out across the district at public events talking to people about their current levels of connectivity and the issues they face and anticipate ore consultation this Summer before publication of a draft in the Winter 2024.

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### Cabinet Member Briefing Note

Report Title	Climate Transport and Environment PDS
Cabinet Member	Manda Rigby
Sponsor Director	Chris Major
Meeting Date	2 <sup>nd</sup> May 2024

#### 1. Update from last meeting:

##### General update

Whilst the weather over the last period was slightly improved, the ground remained sodden in many areas which continues to present operational issues for some teams including PROW.

We are now moving into the delivery of the extended highway improvement scheme and highway maintenance programme. The extended programme of works will be ongoing through the year.

Significant works over the next period include the closure of North Parade Bridge for a period of 8 weeks from 20<sup>th</sup> May for bridge deck water proofing and resurfacing works. This will generate some disruption on the network, we communicate using VMS and digital media.

The submitted bid to DfT for traffic signals maintenance funding to help address aging and obsolete traffic signals infrastructure referred to within the last update was unfortunately unsuccessful. We have requested feedback, but the bid-based funding approach does require significant resource, and this is challenging when unsuccessful.

- Traffic management, Network Management, road safety
  - We continue to progress the Data transition for the implementation of the new digital systems for managing Traffic Regulation Orders. The new system will increase accessibility for all members of the public to the proposals. This is a requirement for all Local Authorities as set out within the Kings Speech.
- Local Highway Improvement Programme
  - Significant programme to deliver. We are continuing to seek additional resource but recognise that qualified staff within this field are scarce and it is difficult to find suitable candidates.
- City Centre Security

- Upper Borough Walls location is progressing well. We undertook significant utility diversion to progress the works. All works are on programme to complete in late May / June.
- Highway Maintenance
  - CAZ funded resurfacing improvements around Queen Square, Old King Street and Queens Parade Place completed.
  - Footway paving improvements in Queen Square in progress.
  - Significant Capital programme progressing well this includes street Lighting, footways, drainage, carriageways and structures.
  - Continued investment in pavements with 60% funding increase year on year
  - Winter maintenance and gritting work completed–
    - Our 9 gritters completed 50 runs spreading nearly 2000 tonnes of road salt this winter.
    - Operational procedures progressing for new salt barn at Pixash HWRC which has been filled with road salt stocks in line with DfT best practice.
- Parking
  - Informal TRO work underway for parking charging proposals
  - New Pay & Display machines installation close to completion - replacing our end-of-life technology and adding card readers.
  - National Grid works needed for final two machines.
- Liveable Neighbourhoods delivery
  - Work completed on Sydney road ETRO
    - Some issues with inconsiderate drivers mounting the pavement to go around the bollards
  - Work progressing with Lyme Gardens/Charmouth Road scheme
    - Letter issued to residents and webpage made live

## 2. Forward plan of work for next period

- Traffic Management, Network Management, road safety
  - Complete procurement of temporary additional staff resource to enable delivery of 24/25 programme.
  - Procurement of new bus stop maintenance contract
  - Action plan for Vision Zero
  - Continue delivery of the challenging Local Highways Improvement programme - £2.8m of work (compared to usual £1.1m)
  - City Centre Security complete Upper Boroughs Wall and move to Lower Boroughs Walls in May / June.
- Highway Maintenance
  - Delivery of the Capital programme during summer and autumn.
    - Significant programme of resurfacing across the area
- Parking
  - Public consultation on new parking charges to launch in June, with proactive comm to support.
  - Implementation of outcomes.
  - Progress continuing with implementation of Moving Traffic Enforcement.
  - More interviews being arranged for CEO applications, 6 candidates for 5 remaining posts.



- Response for Government's call for evidence on "Restricting the generation of surplus funds from traffic contraventions".
- Liveable Neighbourhoods delivery
  - Monitoring of Sydney Road scheme to continue
  - Progression of Lyme Gardens scheme proposals

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