

PARISH LIAISON MEETING

Minutes of the Meeting held

Wednesday, 18th September, 2024, 6.30 pm

In attendance:

Cllr Karen Walker – Chair of B&NES Council (Chair)
Cllr Paul Beazley-Long – South Stoke Parish Council
Cherry Bennett – Director of People & Change, B&NES
Cllr Dave Biddleston – B&NES Councillor (Keynsham South)
Mandy Bishop – Chief Operating Officer, B&NES
Cllr Bruce Clarke – Priston Parish Council
George Clutton – Radstock Town Council (Clerk)
Carla Cooper - Head of Young People's Prevention Services, B&NES
Rachael Cove – Youth Justice Service
Tracy Curtis - Senior Manager, Health Safety & Wellbeing, B&NES
Geoff Davis – Clerk to South Stoke Parish Council and Monkton Combe Parish Council
Dave Dixon – Community Engagement Manager, B&NES
Cllr Dawn Drury – Keynsham Town Council (Clerk) and Compton Dando Parish Council
Andrew Dunn – Team Manager, Parking Services, B&NES
Jean Fossaceco – Clerk of Shoscombe Parish Council
Paul Garrod - Team Manager, Traffic Management & Network, B&NES
Cllr Fiona Gourley – B&NES Councillor (Bathavon South)
Sue Grimes – Publow with Pensford Parish Council
Cllr Dave Harding - B&NES Councillor (Chew Valley)
Mark Hayward – Community Engagement Officer, B&NES
Chief Inspector Scott Hill – Avon and Somerset Police
Cllr Ron Hopkins – Westfield Parish Council
Samantha Jones – Inclusive Communities Manager, B&NES
Cllr Matt McCabe – B&NES Cabinet Member (Bathavon South)
Richard Maccabee – Batheaston Parish Council (Clerk) and B&NES ALCA Chair
Cllr Hal MacFie – Keynsham Town Council and B&NES Councillor (Keynsham East North)
Cllr Natasha Morgan – Chew Magna Parish Council
Inspector Jon Nash – Avon and Somerset Police
Jocelyn Nicholls – Priston Parish Council (Clerk)
Cllr David Orme – Dunkerton and Tunley Parish Council
Sam Plummer - Operational Manager - Youth Connect South West
Cllr Sam Ross – Farmborough Parish Council and B&NES Councillor (Clutton and Farmborough)
Cllr Shaun Stephenson-McGall – Timsbury Parish Council and B&NES Councillor (Timsbury)
Sergeant Rob Turner – Avon and Somerset Police
Cllr Andy Wait – Keynsham Town Council and B&NES Councillor (Keynsham East)
Alison Wells – Community Engagement Officer (B&NES)

8 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Vice-Chair of Council welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies for absence had been received from:

Parish and Town Councils:

Midsomer Norton Town Council

Saltford Parish Council

Stowey Sutton Parish Council

B&NES:

Cllr Alex Beaumont

Cllr Eleanor Jackson

Cllr Ruth Malloy

Cllr Robin Moss

9 RURAL AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Parish representatives were given the following information from Dick Whittington (West of England Rural Network (WERN) and Alison Ward (Middlemarch):

1. The West of England Rural Network (WERN) had been awarded funding from DEFRA to support Rural Affordable Housing projects in Bath and North East Somerset; South Gloucestershire and North Somerset.
2. WERN had appointed an organisation (Middlemarch) to provide support to communities that were interested in taking this forward.
3. The funding was time limited and so WERN/Middlemarch were keen to find out the level of interest in affordable rural housing schemes.
4. A Webinar with more details was being organised for Wednesday 9 October at 7pm and details would be shared with the parish councils.

10 B&NES AVON LOCAL COUNCIL'S ASSOCIATION (ALCA) UPDATE

Richard Maccabee, Chair of B&NES Avon Local Councils Association (ALCA) advised representatives that the Annual General Meeting would be taking place on Tuesday 24 September and invited all to attend. He also advised that the ALCA AGM would be taking place on Saturday 5 October and that both meetings would be held online.

11 UPDATES FROM BATH & NORTH EAST SOMERSET COUNCIL

Mandy Bishop, Chief Operating Officer, Bath and North East Somerset Council advised Parish Council representatives:

1. A copy of the parish toolkit was available at the meeting and could also be found on the Council's website.

2. The Council's Events Team would run a briefing session on organising events for any interested Parish Councils.
3. It was noted that there was a request for a session on the Local Plan and this would come back to a future meeting.

Cherry Bennett, Director of People and Change, Bath and North East Somerset Council advised Parish Council representatives about the Debate Not Hate campaign:

1. At the B&NES Council meeting on 14 March 2024, Councillors unanimously agreed a motion to support the national Debate not Hate campaign.
2. As a result, Councillors and Officers were working on how to bring this to life to support Councillors, including Parish Councillors and also officers.
3. There had been training sessions and a comms campaign.

Dawn Drury reported that Keynsham Town Council had signed up to the Civility and Respect Pledge and recommended that other Parish Councils consider signing up to demonstrate commitment to standing up to poor behaviour across the sector and to driving through positive changes which support civil and respectful conduct.

<https://www.nalc.gov.uk/our-work/civility-and-respect-project>

Chief Inspector Scott Hill and Samantha Jones (Inclusive Communities Manager, B&NES) gave a presentation on policing priorities and the Community Safety Partnership and highlighted the two priorities owned by Council, police and the police and crime commissioner:

1. Protecting the most vulnerable from harm
2. Strengthen and improve local communities to improve outcomes for local people.

They welcomed further discussion and questions during the World Café Session.

12 WORLD CAFE SESSION ON COMMUNITY SAFETY

A 'World Café' style session was held to give Parish/Town Councils the opportunity to meet officers. The topics chosen were issues that ALCA and Parish representatives requested.

Table 1: Children and Young People

Officers

Department/Service	Officer/Councillor
Education and Children, Young People's Prevention Service	Carla Cooper - Head of Young People's Prevention Services, B&NES Rachael Cove - Deputy Team Manager, Children's Services & Education, B&NES Sophia McKenzie – Violence Reduction Unit Co-ordinator
Youth Connect	Sam Plummer - Operational Manager - Youth Connect South West
Democratic Services	Corrina Haskins – Democratic Services Officer, B&NES

Questions

Where could Parish Councils go for help advice if they were concerned about a young person involved in crime? There was a lot of advice on the Council's Website in relation to Early Help <https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/get-early-help> including how to download the Early Help app. The Youth Justice page was another resource: <https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/youth-justice> Other options included speaking to Youth Connect <https://www.youthconnectsouthwest.org.uk/> . If there was a concern about a child at risk, this should be reported either through the Council's website or the Safeguarding Partnership website <https://bcssp.org.uk/>

What if Parish/Ward Councillors had concerns about a child missing school? There was a Council service for children missing in education as well as the Early Help resources. In areas where there was a Youth Worker, they could also help.

Did Parish Council's have a responsibility for health and wellbeing? It was noted that some, but not all Parish Councils had a Child Protection Policy.

How could Parish Council's get more information about the scale of the problem in their area relating to young people and crime/anti social behaviour? Youth Connect could provide anonymised local information.

How could Youth Connect help Parish Councils? Youth Connect provided a range of chargeable services to support young people including targeted support, recreational activities and alternative education. The service also worked with other organisations such as Project 28.

Table 2 – Community Issues

Officers

Department/Service	Officer/Councillor
Inclusive Communities, People and Change	Samantha Jones – Inclusive Communities Manager, B&NES Lores Savine - Community Safety Officer, B&NES Sam's team includes Community Safety and Equalities.
Avon and Somerset Police	Inspector Jon Nash – Avon and Somerset Police Chief Inspector Scott Hill – Avon and Somerset Police
Community Engagement	Alison Wells – Community Engagement Officer, B&NES

Parish Group 1

Q1: How do you identify people involved with human trafficking?

A1: We sometimes get referrals from other Council staff such as social workers. We had a recent case highlighted to us in this way. When people are trafficked, they pay a bond which they rarely, if ever, pay off so get into financial difficulty. For example, in areas of the UK where there is flower picking, workers are charged high prices for the rubber bands that secure the flowers. The Council's Public Protection Team

have also helped in identifying cases. Nail bars are examples of businesses where trafficked people may be working. The Council can undertake unannounced visits due to the presence of sharps and chemicals. We also receive a lot of intelligence via the community. There is advice on what to look out for on the [Avon and Somerset Police website](#), as well as the ability to report concerns online. We refer the cases to the Home Office. The person is safeguarded while the situation is investigated but they can be refused the right to stay and repatriated.

Q2: Is there a cost to the Council?

A2: Yes in terms of the officer time involved. It can take a year to get a decision and people can disappear in the meantime. It's not unusual for the traffickers to try and reclaim them. [The Salvation Army](#) has the national contract for looking after victims of modern slavery.

Comment 1: The CCTV is not working in our community. We know there is drug taking/dealing taking place but the Police cannot get footage. It would be useful to see some collaboration between the Police and Council/s to get this addressed.

Response1: If the Police have data in terms of reports of activity, they can include this in future funding opportunities.

The Police and Council work closely together. An example is violence against women and girls which we would like to highlight. There is a [Street Safe app](#), which the public can use to anonymously pinpoint on a map any location where they have felt unsafe. This can help highlight where interventions need to be put in place. [Project Vigilant](#) allows Police Officers to identify possible predatory behaviour during nights out, which could indicate someone seeking to commit a sexual offence. In BANES, this is currently focussed on Bath but could be widened if there are issues in other parts of the area. [Walk and Talks](#) invite women aged 18 and over to meet with female Police Officers and PCSOs to show them areas in which they feel vulnerable or unsafe in their local communities.

Q3: What if there is a concern about getting in a taxi?

A3: If there is any breach in the standards to which taxi drivers need to adhere, they will be brought in for review and their licence can be revoked. There is also a Forum for taxi drivers where they are reminded about their responsibilities. Any concerns need to be [reported to the Council](#).

Parish Group 2

Comment 2: We experience a lot of issues with vehicles in our village – speeding; rat-running; dangerous driving etc. We do get a Police Officer on a bike with a speed camera and 68mph has been recorded in a 20mph zone. The Police website has said that the [Community SpeedWatch](#) scheme is being reviewed for a very long time now. The Council will only put money in to engineering out speed if there are a certain number of crashes – we shouldn't have to wait for people to be killed or injured to see action.

There was discussion about the Council's Community Safety resources – limited staffing and a budget solely for domestic abuse and homicide. Sometimes external funding can be attracted but data is required to support funding bids.

Q4: Why don't you recruit more Specials?

A4: Specials would not be equipped to deal with traffic issues you have raised. It sounds as though you are getting support from the Police in terms of speeding – our response has to be proportionate but speeds of 68mph in a 20mph zone are unacceptable. We do have to be cautious in chasing people that may be under the influence etc. You may not see us following up on incidents but there may well be activity taking place in the background.

Comment 3: It is very frustrating. The Parish Council has bought cameras that are ready to be mounted. There have been trials in Bathford but the Police Head Office are refusing to take the data as they do not have the resource to send letters. Parishes want to play their part and record data but the Police cannot take any action.

Response 3: Is the Police Traffic Team aware?

It was confirmed that they are.

Parish Group 3

Comment 4: We did have a lot of anti-social behaviour but the Police and Crime Commissioner came, we had a good meeting and more policing was generated as a result. This seems to have solved this issue but we are experiencing shoplifting now.

Response 4: We now have a Sergeant in post, which is making a difference – they are doing a good job. We often receive feedback that there are not enough police on the streets. However, if we carry out the same patrols in hi viz, the presence is more noticeable. We have also undertaken some hot spot patrols, over and above the usual neighbourhood beats.

Comment 5: The Town Council has a youth hub 3 times a week, outreach once a week and music studios – this has helped to create some diversionary activities.

Comment 6: Re shoplifting, some WECA funding has been granted to support retailers. The Bath BID also came to speak to them about how to set up a radio link system.

Q5: We would like to have closer links with our beat team, especially the PCSO, on lower level issues. However, we don't know who it is. It would good if they came and introduced themselves to their local Parishes. I wonder how many others don't know who their local Police contacts are? I know they have surgeries but is having coffee with older members of the community a good use of their time?

A5: You can identify your local beat team via the [Avon and Somerset Police website](#). Just start typing your address in the box on the home page to access a range of information. The Police do have a role to play in addressing the perception of crime too and spending time with vulnerable members of the community can assist in this. All PCSOs and Beat Managers should attend their Parish Council

meetings if they are invited and are on duty. Parishes can provide useful intelligence and links. If they are not on duty, they should send a brief report.

Parish Group 4

Comment 7: I would like to thank the Police for the PCSOs – they are regularly out and about in our community, making friends with everyone. However, residents still tell us that they would like more officers on the beat and involved with youth work.

Q6: Do you have an update on the promise from the new Police and Crime Commissioner on more funding for policing?

A6: It is also a national pledge but we do not have details locally yet.

Q7: Do you know the timescale?

A7: Locally, the Police and Crime Commissioner has yet to finish [the consultation](#) on what the priorities should be. (The closing date is 21 October).

Comment 8: As far as Parishes are concerned, it's all about speeding traffic and lack of enforcement.

Comment 9: I have eight Parishes in my Ward and they would say the same.

Comment 10: We are having issues with motorbikes on pedestrian lanes and paths but the Police are unable to chase them.

Response 10: We can but the response needs to be proportionate. In terms of Roads Policing, we have six units covering the whole Avon and Somerset force area. It is a centralised department and Almondsbury is our nearest unit. We can sometimes design out crime by installing items such as gates. (There was then discussion on how this can impact those with wheelchairs, pushchairs etc).

Comment 11: A Ward Councillor colleague has been contacted three times by females experiencing domestic abuse. I would not know what to do if I was approached.

Response 11: It needs to be [reported to the Police](#). All Council frontline staff should also be able to do a risk assessment and refer to appropriate support. [Southside](#) are the experts locally. Police colleagues will also refer here. There is safeguarding advice on the [Bath & North East Somerset Community Safety & Safeguarding Partnership website](#). You can also contact the Council's [Community Safety Team](#).

Comment 12: Many Parishes have newsletters so do send us information on this that we can promote.

Q8: We have three shoots taking place in our village involving both game and clay. We've had a complaint from a resident about clay and shot landing in their garden. We also understand that the activity is disturbing animals, including horses. We don't know how to help resolve things. What are the rules?

A: You can make an enquiry to the Police's Firearms Licensing Department [via the website](#).

Online Resources

You can report a variety of crimes and incidents to [Avon and Somerset Police via their website](#).

You can also look at crime statistics for your area on the [Police.uk website](#).

Table 3 Vehicles and Roads

Officers

Department/Service	Officer/Councillor
Parking Services, Place Management	Andrew Dunn – Team Manager – Parking Services, B&NES
Traffic Management & Network, Place Management	Paul Garrod - Team Manager - Traffic Management & Network
Avon and Somerset Police	Sgt Rob Turner
Community Engagement	Mark Hayward – Community Engagement Officer

Parish Group 1

Comment 1: The online form for the recent parking charges consultation did not allow the Parish to say what they wanted to say. The form was poorly designed and lacked the space for free text responses.

Response 1: We received over 20,000 responses which indicates that many people did find it possible to make the points they needed to.

Q1: The documents for the parking consultation implied that the reason for the proposed changes is to reduce pollution levels. What research was carried out on pollution reduction before this document was put together? It feels like these changes are purely for revenue gain.

A1: Lowering pollution is a broader aim but any gain in reductions is a good thing. Costs for running our parking services need to be covered, therefore charges have to be explored.

Comment 2: It is felt that higher parking charges will deter people from using local shopping areas in the way they have done in the past.

Response 2: Parking charges in areas outside of Bath remain relatively low and car parks are busy – Ashton Way in Keynsham is a good example. We are working our way through the consultation feedback and once this has been analysed, a report will be made available.

Q2: In Chew Magna there are trees on privately owned land that pose a danger to the public as they are adjacent to public highway. We have asked for action to be taken but would like clarification on the process the Council has to deal with such matters. Notices are served but enforcement does not seem to be taking place. How long will this carry on before it gets resolved?

A2: The Council only has limited enforcement resources but we do have the powers to act and charge the landowner where necessary. It can be difficult to take enforcement action but we do assess the risks and act where possible.

Action: Paul Garrod to follow up with the Clerk.

Q3: Would it be possible to have a traffic assessment for routes through the Chew Valley to Bristol Airport?

A3: We will follow up with you directly

Action: Paul Garrod to follow up with the Ward Councillor

Q4: Would it be possible to have an traffic flow for the trading estate near Tesco's in Westfield.

A4: We will follow up with you directly.

Action: Paul Garrod to follow up with the Parish Council.

Parish Group 2

Q5: What is the situation with the road in Monkton Combe?

A5: We will follow up with you directly

Action: Paul Garrod to follow up with the Ward Councillor

Q6: The A36 closure near the Hope and Anchor Pub on Tucking Mill Lane towards Freshford has led to drivers using threatening behaviour and being abusive. There have also been incidents where cars have slipped off the road. More signage would be welcome. A local count of cars between 8:30am and 9:30am showed 250 vehicles using this stretch of road.

A6: There are additional means that can be used to assist with this situation, particularly additional yellow road signage that can discourage drivers from using the road as a diverted route.

Action: Paul Garrod agreed to look into additional signage and the Police will notify local PCSO's to encourage greater presence.

Q7: Is it possible to have double yellow line enforcement at sites in Peasedown St John, including for an ongoing issue at the school?

A7: It is difficult to have a reactionary enforcement policy. It is better if we can be provided with times and locations where difficulties are occurring. We can then target these places more effectively. It is important to note that there are some exceptions to enforcing parking on double yellow lines eg loading and unloading and/or alighting from vehicles.

Action: Andy Dunn to follow up with the Ward Councillor

Q8: The A39 at Farmborough proves challenging where the speeds change from 40 mph to 30 mph and then back again. Motorists are ignoring the different speed limits and this includes trucks and motorbikes driving

dangerously. The situation is discouraging parents from walking with their children to school.

A8: The Police are able to deploy the speed bike as well as other options to enforce on this stretch of road.

Parish Group 3

Q8: How is parking on double yellow lines enforced? We have issues in Publow on summer days with visitors and dog walkers parking inconsiderately. It also poses difficulties for emergency vehicles getting through.

A8: The Police can arrange to have vehicles removed when they become obstructions. Residents and Parishes are also able to report parking issues using the [BANES Fix My Street](#) or by directly emailing parking@bathnes.gov.uk

Action: Andy Dunn to follow up with the Parish Council

Q9: We are experiencing issues with people parking in front of dropped kerbs creating difficulties for residents.

A9: The Police can take action against people who park in a way that obstructs residents from leaving their driveways.

Comment 3: There is a number of visitors to Warleigh Weir in summer, with vehicles blocking access for residents.

Response 3: On days where good weather is predicted, additional patrols are put in place to deal with these issues.

Parish Group 4

Q10: What is the point of speed limits when there is lack of enforcement?

A10: There are limits on enforcement due to staffing levels. A targeted approach is taken to where and when enforcement can take place. There has also been a drop in the number of active Community Speed Watch groups since COVID-19.

However, where these groups are active, the reports made back to the Police result in letters being sent to the drivers exceeding speed limits. The Police will also visit repeat offenders.

The Police have a [Road Safety Fund](#) open at certain times of the year. This allows Parishes to apply for road safety signage to assist with speeding issues.

Comment 4: We have requested speed checks on the Wellsway in Keynsham but been told it's not possible because of the bends in the road.

Response 4: There are stretches of roads nearby that could be used for checking speed, even if it is a bit further away from the areas experiencing the most speeding.

Q11: Can drivers park in disabled bays if they do not have a blue badge?

A11: If the bay is simply marked out then it is an advisory parking space and other users can park there. However, if it is coupled with signage on a post or wall nearby that states it is a recognised disabled parking bay, then only a blue badge holder can use the space.

Table 4 – Debate Not Hate

Department/Service	Officer/Councillor
People and Change - Resources	Cherry Bennett – Director of People & Change, B&NES Tracy Curtis - Senior Manager, Health Safety & Wellbeing, B&NES
Community Engagement	Dave Dixon – Corporate Engagement Manager

Each group was asked if they had experienced any issues. The feedback suggested that some Parishes had experienced issues internally, rather than from members of the public. However, there was acknowledgement of social media posts about Councillors. Some also have vexatious complainants.

The costs involved in the turnover of Parish Council staff was discussed. It was noted that few Parishes have direct access to HR but that there is a suite of information available from ALCA.

Some Parishes in Bath and North East Somerset have already signed the NALC Civility and Respect Pledge.

Action: It was agreed to make information about the campaigns available with some parishes offering to publicise as appropriate.

Online Resources

[NALC Civility and Respect](#)

[LGA Debate Not Hate](#)

13 CHAIR'S CLOSING REMARKS

The Chair of the Council closed the meeting and thanked everyone for attending.

14 DATES OF FUTURE PARISH LIAISON MEETINGS

- Wednesday 19 March 2025 – venue to be confirmed
- Wednesday 16 July 2025 – Community Space, Keynsham
- Wednesday 15 October 2025 – Community Space, Keynsham

The meeting ended at 8.30 pm

Chair(person)

Date Confirmed and Signed

Prepared by Democratic Services

