

## **BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET**

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

Thursday 27th November 2025

Present:- **Councillors** Andy Wait, John Leach, Saskia Heijltjes, Karen Walker, Duncan Hounsell and Ruth Malloy (in place of Anna Box)

Apologies for absence: Councillors: Grant Johnson and Alex Beaumont

#### **169 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

#### **170 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE**

The Chair drew attention to the emergency evacuation procedure.

#### **171 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS**

Councillor Anna Box gave her apologies and is substituted by Councillor Ruth Malloy.

Councillor Alex Beaumont gave his apologies.

Councillor Grant Johnson gave his apologies.

The Chair welcomed Councillor Duncan Hounsell who has now joined the Panel.

#### **172 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were none.

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

There was none.

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

**David Redwell (Southwest Transport Network)** made a statement in which he raised concerns regarding bus service funding, the need for increased levy to maintain services, and the importance of public transport for climate emergency objectives. He urged the panel to address funding issues in upcoming budget discussions.

**Tim Wallace (Locksbrook Road Resident)** made a statement on the Bath Recycling Centre relocation, highlighting concerns about the safety of the proposed raised gantry system, lack of published safety analysis, and potential reduction in service capacity. Noted local traffic congestion issues.

Councillor Hounsell stated that this is not a regulatory body and that the decision has been made and discussed at a Planning meeting including health and safety issues. Mr Wallace stated that he did not recall health and safety issues being discussed.

The Chair thanked the speakers.

## **175 MINUTES**

Minutes to be signed at the next meeting following a correction.

## **176 BATH RECYCLING CENTRE AND LOCKSBROOK RD REFURBISHMENT PROJECTS**

Councillor Mark Elliott, Cabinet Member for Resources, introduced the report.

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

Councillor Heijltjes asked about the Environment Agency Permit and how long a flood risk permit would take. The Cabinet Member responded that he did not believe it would be delayed but would come back with exact timing. Demolition at Midland Road will proceed in phases to avoid disruption – September 2026 is a deliverable date.

Councillor Hounsell asked if there will be staff onsite to help people regarding the health and safety issues. The Cabinet Member explained that the new site will be well-staffed, with compliance to all health and safety requirements.

Councillor Leach asked about the concerns raised about a reduction in the range of items accepted (from 31 to 9 categories). The Cabinet Member clarified that while some items (e.g., gas bottles, rubble, soil) will not be accepted, these represent a small proportion of total tonnage. Hazardous waste will be managed at a nearby facility. 80% of the tonnage from Midland Road will go to the new site.

Councillor Heijltjes asked about active travel. The Cabinet Member stated that the new site will offer improved access for walking and cycling compared to Midland Road.

Councillor Leach asked about potential congestion on roads around the site and what would be done if the monitoring showed an issue. The Cabinet Member stated that traffic queuing will be monitored for four months post-opening. The booking system can be adjusted if congestion arises, with minimal expected impact on overall capacity.

Councillor Walker stated that the Midsomer Norton site works well and is closed one day per week, are there any plans to do the same. The Cabinet Member stated that opening times are under review and may change as needed.

Councillor Heijltjes asked how the road safety issues would be addressed. The Cabinet Member explained that road safety at the junction with Upper Bristol Road is being addressed, with some works planned. Main entry and exit will aim to minimise impact on local businesses and residents.

Councillor Wait asked about traffic build up mentioned in the public statement. The Cabinet Member could not comment on a specific case but indicated ongoing efforts to mitigate any issues.

Councillor Wait congratulated the team on achieving a 70% biodiversity net gain.

The Chair thanked the Cabinet Member and officers.

## **177 SCHOOL STREETS**

Councillor Lucy Hodge, Cabinet Member for Cabinet Member for Sustainable Transport Delivery, introduced the report.

Panel members made the following points and asked the following questions

Councillor Leach stated that this was a wonderful thing to bring forward and ask how many schools were invited and how many came back. The Cabinet Member reported that all schools were invited to express interest; 18 responded. Reasons for not proceeding included technical challenges and lack of readiness. Clarification was sought on whether secondary schools were included; officers to confirm. The Cabinet Member reported that 9 of the 18 schools are outside Bath.

Councillor Walker asked about exemptions for people such as grandparents who live outside the area. The officer explained that exemptions for residents, blue badge holders, and pupils with specific needs are included. Schools can issue permits for individual circumstances (e.g., carers, temporary injuries).

Councillor Heijltjes asked why this is coming to the Panel when the decision was made 2 weeks ago. The Chair stated that the Panel had the opportunity to input previously and it can be difficult to get the sequence right regarding items. He did not believe the Panel had many objections to this item. The Cabinet Member stated that the process had been followed and work is being shared.

Councillor Heijltjes stated that she had concerns about reliance on school staff and volunteers to manage barriers. Officers acknowledged this and noted that camera enforcement (ANPR) is an aspiration for future phases, subject to funding.

Councillor Hounsell asked about the reliability of future funding. The Cabinet Member explained that the current tranche is funded through one-off capital and grant allocations. There is no secured funding for expansion, but future opportunities are being explored. Initial costs are higher due to setup and development; future schemes may be less expensive, but camera enforcement could increase costs.

Councillor Hounsell asked how it would work when a school is on a residential road. The officer explained that residents and eligible users will receive permits for display. Emergency vehicles and blue badge holders will have access. Officers are also considering the impact on surrounding streets and may introduce additional parking restrictions if needed.

Councillor Heijltjes asked about integration with Liveable Neighbourhood Schemes. She stated that school streets could have been part of the programme to make better use of funds. She gave an example of Charmouth Road. The Cabinet Member stated that parents are positive. The officer stated that extending the school street further along Charmouth Road would mean stewards would be at the junction with the main road. The main aim of school streets is safety outside of the school gates.

The Cabinet Member stated that the schools taking this forward have been asked for this resource for a while. The team are taking a nuanced approach. The programme will be monitored, with a view to reporting back after a term of operation.

The Chair stated that this was exciting and innovative and making schools safer. He asked that this be reported back to Panel next Autumn. He thanked the Cabinet Member and officer.

## **178 GREENER PLACES PLAN FOR BANES**

Councillor Oli Henman, Cabinet Project Lead for Climate Change, introduced the report.

Panel members made the following points and asked the following questions

Councillor Heijltjes asked about access to play spaces emphasising the importance of safe, high-quality, and accessible play spaces for children, beyond just distance and area metrics. The Cabinet Project Lead stated that Sydney Gardens play area is now more accessible due to the Liveable Neighbourhood Scheme. The officer stated that high quality environments attract people which leads to natural surveillance.

Councillor Wait stated that there have been over 1000 new houses in Keynsham on the greenbelt since 2011 but no improvement to the woodland area. The Cabinet Project Lead agreed with the link of green spaces with new housing. He mentioned Keynsham Riverside.

Councillor Wait asked about the white area in the middle of the map shown. The Cabinet Project Lead stated that the vast majority of BANES has access but we are trying to bring in as many parts as possible.

Councillor Wait stated that he was unsure what benefit a green flag is to a park. The lack of Green Flag parks in some areas was noted; officers will liaise with the parks department to address this.

Councillor Hounsell stated that it was an excellent report. He was conscious of the Local Plan which would likely produce change in BANES – more people would be living in North East Somerset than Bath. He stated that Saltford Parish Council are pushing for land development and that he was reassured that this is the beginning.

Councillor Heijltjes asked if food growing is covered. The Cabinet Project Lead explained that the plan links with the council's food strategy to support community food growing initiatives.

Councillor Walker asked if landowners are approached. The Cabinet Project Lead explained that planning policy and Section 106 agreements are used to secure green spaces in new developments, with ongoing efforts to encourage private landowners and developers to prioritise nature.

Councillor Ruth Malloy asked about Future of Bathscape. The officer explained that the Bathscape programme will continue under the new Landscape City initiative, with ongoing funding bids and integration of green and blue infrastructure.

The Chair asked for a report back in the future and thanked the Cabinet Project Lead and Officer.

## **179 PANEL WORKPLAN**

The Panel noted the future workplan and the following suggestions for future items:

- Draft Air Quality Strategy scheduled for January.
- Budget proposals relevant to the panel to be considered in January.
- Flood risk management and emergency planning to be considered in March.
- Local Plan options report update expected in May.
- RPZ Strategy requested

The meeting ended at 12.00 pm

Chair(person) .....

Date Confirmed and Signed .....

**Prepared by Democratic Services**