

BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET

CABINET

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

Thursday 12th March 2026

Present:

Councillor Kevin Guy	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	Deputy Council Leader (non-statutory) and Cabinet Member for Resources
Councillor Joel Hirst	Cabinet Member for Sustainable Transport Strategy
Councillor Lucy Hodge	Cabinet Member for Sustainable Transport Delivery
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 Communications and Community
Councillor Paul Roper	Cabinet Member for Economic and Cultural Sustainable Development
Councillor Sarah Warren	Deputy Council Leader (statutory) and Cabinet Member for Sustainable Bath and North East Somerset

80 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

81 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

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

82 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

83 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

84 TO ANNOUNCE ANY URGENT BUSINESS AGREED BY THE CHAIR

There was no urgent business.

85 QUESTIONS FROM PUBLIC AND COUNCILLORS

There were 10 questions from Councillors and 18 questions from members of the public.

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

86 STATEMENTS OR PETITIONS FROM PUBLIC OR COUNCILLORS

There were no statements from the public or councillors.

87 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS CABINET MEETING - 12TH FEBRUARY 2026

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 12th February 2026 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

88 CONSIDERATION OF SINGLE MEMBER ITEMS REQUISITIONED TO CABINET

No single member items were requisitioned to Cabinet.

89 MATTERS REFERRED BY POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY BODIES

No matters were referred by Policy Development and Scrutiny Panels.

90 SINGLE MEMBER CABINET DECISIONS TAKEN SINCE PREVIOUS CABINET MEETING

The Cabinet agreed to note the report.

91 HERITAGE SERVICES BUSINESS PLAN 2026 - 2031

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

- The Heritage Services Team continues to demonstrate strong leadership and entrepreneurial management of the Council's key cultural assets.
- Council assets include the Roman Baths, Victoria Art Gallery, Bath Records Office, Clore Learning Centre, and the World Heritage Centre.
- The Victoria Art Gallery recorded 60,000 visitors in the past year.
- The Pump Room Restaurant received a Tripadvisor Travellers' Choice Award, placing it in the top 10% of restaurants worldwide.
- The Roman Baths was awarded Tripadvisor's 2025 'Best of the Best', ranked 7th among UK attractions.
- Heritage Services continues to deliver excellent financial returns.
- The income generated reduces residents' annual Council Tax bills by approximately £160. This has supported B&NES in maintaining the second-lowest Council Tax rates in the South West.

- The expected 2026/27 surplus of £13.261m is driven by steady visitor growth, investment in staff, prudent management, and innovation.
- Business planning has accounted for known risks but predates the recent escalation in Middle East conflicts.
- The war involving Iran and wider regional instability may impact global and domestic travel, potentially influencing future visitor numbers.
- Heritage Services has launched a pioneering Sustainability Action Plan, which is among the first of its kind for UK museums.
- The Plan outlines steps to cut greenhouse gas emissions over three years and develop a pathway to net zero. This supports the Council's broader climate and ecological priorities.
- Bath holds a world-class fashion collection, and the Council is delivering a new, internationally significant fashion museum, set to open in 2030.
- Expected benefits include:
 - Job creation
 - Community outreach
 - Economic growth
 - Stronger university and stakeholder partnerships
 - Longer visitor stays and reduced day-trip pressure on the city.
- New cultural infrastructure follows the model of landmark UK museums (e.g., Hepworth, Lowry, V&A Dundee) and is expected to drive civic pride and local economic development.

Cllr Manda Rigby seconded the motion and made the following points:

- The council has a responsibility to conserve and enhance heritage assets for the community's benefit.
- Heritage is not elitist and it has an ability to broaden horizons, bring diverse communities together, and address inequalities. It must be accessible to all residents, particularly those facing disadvantage. Heritage Services is leveraging the global profile of the Roman Baths to expand access, opportunities, and learning.
- The Roman Baths Youth Forum provides young people aged 16–25 with exposure to careers in heritage, archaeology, and museums. It aims to build skills, confidence, and pathways to higher education and entry-level roles.
- The Bath Carers Centre has a long-standing collaboration offering respite and wellbeing activities for both adult and young carers (5–17).
- A partnership with Blind Veterans UK was launched in 2025, delivering adapted creative and wellbeing activities, with programming shaped by participant feedback.
- B&NES Children's Services offers structured work experience placements for care-experienced young people.
- There are plans to introduce £1 tickets for visitors receiving Universal Credit, Pension Credit, or Employment and Support Allowance to remove cost barriers.
- There is an ongoing commitment to the free Discovery Card for B&NES residents, with enhancements planned to increase benefits.
- The Heritage Services Team has demonstrated expertise in delivering a refreshed offer each year and maintaining a responsive, community-focused business plan.

Cllr Sarah Warren highlighted the Sustainability Action Plan which is incorporated into the business plan. She emphasised the need to protect historic sites while

urgently responding to climate change, one of the greatest risks to heritage assets. It highlights a roadmap to halve direct operational emissions by March 2028, building on initiatives such as installing heat pumps at the Roman Baths and the World Heritage Centre, which have already saved 38 tonnes of CO₂e. Over the next three years, the council will expand low-carbon technologies, upgrade energy-intensive systems, improve building management, and pursue zero waste to landfill, alongside developing a full Climate Change Risk Assessment and Adaptation Plan. Staff are being trained in Climate Literacy, and partners in retail and catering are being supported on their journey to net zero. This demonstrates that sustainability and exceptional visitor experience can go hand in hand.

Cllr Mark Elliott spoke about the new Fashion Museum. He stated that producing a world class museum in which to house the collection is a cultural imperative. This will require capital funding and is not part of the council's operational budget. The improvements to the public realm outside and around the new museum will cost £7m, which the council intends to fund through a bid to WECA. The outline business case was approved by WECA in January, and the first £1.75m has been approved.

The renovation of the building, converting it into a space worthy of an internationally important collection will cost £39m. Again £5.5m is intended to come from WECA funding, £8m from the National Lottery, £5-6m from grants, trusts, high-net worth individual donations, and other public fundraising, and £20m from B&NES Treasury funding. However, of that £20m from B&NES treasury, £17m will be "service supported borrowing" – i.e. the costs of the borrowing will be paid for by the Fashion Museum itself once it is up and running – leaving just £3m of "corporate supported borrowing" where the finance is supported by operational budgets. The total cost is steady at £54m. This figure has remained the same for the last two years and the council has a strong grip on the project. It will create a major new cultural and heritage asset for the people of Bath and North East Somerset of international importance.

Cllr Matt McCabe thanked the staff working in the Heritage Services Team for their great enthusiasm and knowledge.

RESOLVED (unanimously):

To approve the Heritage Services Business Plan 2026-2031.

92 CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

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

- Culture includes arts, libraries, museums, heritage sites, music, theatre, festivals, landscapes, natural spaces, and major sporting events.
- Culture is not elitist or ideological; it builds community cohesion, belonging, pride, and opens opportunities, particularly for disadvantaged groups.
- The administration aims to ensure that cultural enrichment reaches disadvantaged young people, young carers, families in poverty, and communities in deprived areas.
- The new Fashion Museum is one of the UK's most significant cultural projects over the next five years.

- There will be continued investment in social value programmes at the Roman Baths and Victoria Art Gallery.
- The Discovery Care scheme is expanding, and we now have over 60,000 active cards.
- Libraries remain protected as inclusive cultural hubs, despite cuts in other local authorities.
- The Council provides indirect support for external cultural organisations such as capacity building, expertise and funding bids rather than direct grants.
- Long-term austerity pressures and past decision have reduced local cultural capacity.
- Culture is a key component of place-shaping and is one of the Council's priorities in the Corporate Strategy.
- B&NES lacks an up-to-date cultural strategy, limiting access to external funding from organisations like WECA and Arts Council England.
- The Cultural Development Plan is a two-year foundation aiming to:
 - Re-orientate the Council's cultural approach across departments.
 - Rebuild relationships with the cultural sector.
 - Make it easier for cultural activity to take place.
 - Continue evolving cultural delivery through Heritage Services, Libraries, and the Regeneration Team.
 - The time-limited approach reflects the need to rebuild trust, understand sector challenges, and prepare for a longer-term strategy.
- Adoption of the plan sets a clear path for supporting culture.

Cllr Mark Elliott seconded the motion and made the following points:

- Culture is described as fundamental to identity, not a luxury, and a powerful lever for improving wellbeing, aspiration, community strength, and economic vitality.
- Culture must be embedded across the Corporate Strategy, Economic Strategy, and Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy as a tool for reducing inequalities and building cohesive communities.
- The district's creative and visitor economies will benefit significantly from:
 - The new Fashion Museum Bath as a world-class flagship project
 - Continuing investment in the Roman Baths
 - The strength of the filming and events sector.
- The strategy commits to enabling cultural activity across the whole district, not only in Bath—responding to community feedback from places such as Keynsham, Somer Valley, Twerton, and Radstock. The Plan includes actions to simplify processes, remove barriers, and work collaboratively with partners to allow culture to thrive locally.

RESOLVED (unanimously):

To approve the Cultural Development Plan 2025-2027.

93 CORPORATE ESTATE ASSET MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK 2026-2031

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

- The Asset Management Framework is a new and significant advancement.
- The Framework consolidates three core components and is the umbrella document that draws together the three key strands for delivery:
 - Asset Management Policy
 - Asset Management Strategy
 - Asset Management Action Plan
- The council holds over 900 land and building assets valued at £328m. The estate also generates revenue of £4.7m a year.
- A new Concerto computer-aided facilities management system has been implemented, enabling:
 - Centralised asset data for the first time
 - Improved management information and decision-making
 - Integration of data since May last year, with go-live in January
- By 2031, the framework aims to deliver:
 - A safe, compliant, right-sized estate aligned to modern, inclusive service delivery
 - Reduced office floorspace and creation of co-location hubs
 - A reduced maintenance backlog
 - Progress toward net-zero carbon, including reduced energy intensity, Energy Performance Certificate alignment, heat decarbonisation, and renewable power
 - Clearer communication through scrutiny, Key Performance Indicators, and annual reporting
- The project is recognised as being complex and challenging, but significant progress has been made, with long-term organisational benefits expected.

Cllr Sarah Warren seconded the motion and made the following points:

- The framework supports the council's ambition for 30% of land to be managed positively for nature by 2030 and enhances opportunities for biodiversity net gain.
- The council has already achieved a 52% reduction in estate carbon emissions since 2016 and is progressing toward net-zero operations by 2030.
- Planned actions to reach net zero include:
 - Fabric-first retrofits of buildings
 - Installation of heat pumps, solar generation, and battery storage
 - Grid capacity planning
 - Fleet decarbonisation
 - Expansion of local renewable energy generation

By 2030, the council aims for:

- Energy Performance Certificate B or better across non-domestic assets
- More than 60% of heat decarbonised
- More than 50% of electricity matched by renewables
- Reduced water consumption and waste
- Ecological emergency commitments include:
 - Increasing land and waterways managed positively for nature
 - Improving abundance and distribution of key species

- Enhancing public access and engagement with nature
- Creating meadows, pollinator corridors, and supporting tree canopy targets

Progress will be monitored through key performance indicators to ensure delivery remains on track.

RESOLVED (unanimously):

- (1) To approve the Asset Management Framework 2026-2031 suite of documents, including the Asset Management Policy, Asset Management Strategy and Asset Management Action Plan, attached at Appendix 1 of the report.
- (2) To delegate authority to the Head of Corporate Estate and Director of Capital and Housing to implement the Framework and Action Plan in accordance with the Council's Constitution and Scheme of Delegations to Officers of the Council, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Economic and Cultural Sustainable Development, as defined.

The meeting ended at 7.15 pm

Chair _____

Date Confirmed and Signed _____

Prepared by Democratic Services

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CABINET MEETING – 12th March 2026

**STATEMENTS FROM PUBLIC
AND COUNCILLORS**

1. None

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS - COUNCILLORS

M	01	Question from:	Cllr Joanna Wright
<p>The Council recently organised an event “Community Resilience Day” and ward councillors are now expected to get involved with the community resilience plan, see https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/plan-emergency</p> <p>How do councillors without a parish get involved in this work?</p>			
Answer from:			Cllr Manda Rigby
<p><i>The council has delivered three Community Resilience Days to date. The first two were held in North East Somerset, and last year’s event took place within Bath, focusing specifically on individual ward areas.</i></p> <p><i>As an Emergency Management Team, we have statutory duties under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, which include warning and informing the public and sharing relevant information. Our Community Resilience Days support this duty, alongside our ongoing communication with parish and town councils.</i></p> <p><i>Through this work, in non-parishes areas we are working with ward councillors.</i></p>			
M	02	Question from:	Cllr Joanna Wright
<p>Cllr Kevin Guy said in response to a cabinet question in November 2025: “We encourage Councillors to get in contact as soon as they can if they wish to submit any comments on the recently closed Travel Plan consultation.” with regards to the University of Bath travel plan consultation.</p> <p>Were all councillors emailed to invite them to comment on the University of Bath’s travel plans?</p>			

Answer from:		Cllr Joel Hirst
<p><i>The Council through its Movement Strategy has indicated the importance of travel plans to help make quality places, provide good travel choices, and reduce congestion. The Council will bring forward more work on this in future years.</i></p> <p><i>The Council is actively engaging with the University of Bath following the University's consultation on its travel plan and parking arrangements.</i></p> <p><i>Not all councillors were emailed to invite comment on this. However, if Councillors wish to submit their comments on the recently closed travel plan consultation, they should get in contact with the Cabinet Member so that officers can collate this feedback into a response to the university.</i></p>		
M	03	Question from:
		Cllr Joanna Wright
<p>With regard to the retention of emails held by Councillors, how has the Council decided the Retention Policy and what is the maximum length to meet legal data protection duties?</p>		
Answer from:		Cllr Mark Elliott
<p><i>The retention policy allows members to retain emails for five years before they are automatically deleted, aligned to a single elected term. This is based on benchmarking with other authorities and best practice in the local government sector.</i></p> <p><i>The policy has been introduced to support compliance with good standards of information governance and GDPR.</i></p> <p><i>Retaining emails indefinitely makes it harder for the council to meet statutory deadlines for freedom of information requests, risks disclosing out of date or inaccurate data and could breach GDPR if it involves retaining personal data longer than is necessary.</i></p> <p><i>The original proposal was for automatic deletion after 3 years in line with the policy for officers, but this has been increased to 5 years for councillors in order to cover at least one electoral cycle.</i></p>		

M	04	Question from:	Cllr Saskia Heijltjes
<p>How is the Council working with the University of Bath following their consultation on travel and use of parking with a proposed Park & Ride site at the University of Bath for Bath Rugby events in the city of Bath?</p>			
Answer from:			Cllrs Joel Hirst and Manda Rigby
<p><i>The Council is actively engaging with the University of Bath following the University's consultation on its travel plan and parking arrangements.</i></p> <p><i>Officers from the Council's Transport Strategy and Strategic Transport Projects teams have met with university representatives to review the consultation outcomes and to understand the feasibility work undertaken to date.</i></p> <p><i>Bath Rugby's use of the University of Bath as a location for matchday parking, with spectators then using the University's bus services to travel into Bath, aligns with the Council's wider transport and parking strategy for the city.</i></p> <p><i>The University has made private arrangements with Bath Rugby to allow spectators to park on campus and use bus services to reach the city centre on matchdays. The Council is monitoring these developments to ensure that any future activity remains consistent with citywide transport objectives, including reducing congestion and supporting sustainable travel options.</i></p> <p><i>The Council will continue to work collaboratively with the University of Bath, Bath Rugby, and other partners as proposals develop and further operational detail becomes available.</i></p>			
M	05	Question from:	Cllr Saskia Heijltjes
<p>Once the University of Bath's travel plan is finalised, it is unlikely to be revised in the short term. The council refers to working with universities in the draft Movement Strategy, but this will not be possible once the University's travel plan is finalised.</p> <p>How, if at all, has the council worked with the University of Bath on their draft travel plan?</p>			

Answer from:		Cllr Joel Hirst
<p><i>The council has been actively engaged with the University of Bath throughout the development of its draft travel plan.</i></p> <p><i>This engagement has enabled the council to provide early feedback, highlight alignment with wider transport objectives, and ensure that emerging plans take account of citywide priorities such as reducing congestion, encouraging sustainable travel, and supporting effective management of parking and movement across Bath.</i></p> <p><i>While the University's travel plan will ultimately be finalised by the institution itself, the Council's involvement to date reflects the collaborative approach set out in the draft Movement Strategy. The Council will continue to work constructively with the University as proposals move toward implementation and as operational details are confirmed.</i></p>		
M	06	Question from:
		Cllr Saskia Heijltjes
<p>B&NES hosted a Climate and Nature Network Forum in the Guildhall on 18 November 2025. Why were councillors not made aware of this event by the council?</p>		
Answer from:		Cllr Sarah Warren
<p><i>The BANES CANN Forum event was open to all including Councillors, with a focus on community organisations and businesses. The council endeavoured to share the event as widely as possible to encourage a diverse range of attendees from across the community.</i></p> <p><i>The event was publicised through a range of public communication channels including, but not limited to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The interagency bulletin</i> • <i>Council E-connect (the weekly council e-news)</i> • <i>Social Media</i> • <i>Event Brite</i> 		

- *Promoting at public events such as the 3SG Fair*

Direct email communications were also shared with a number of contacts including:

- *Around 200 local organisations*
- *All Parish contacts, with a note to 'Please forward this to Councillors and relevant contacts within your Parishes'*
- *The Future Ambition Board Climate & Nature Group*
- *A calendar hold was sent to All Cabinet and the Chair of the Council*

M	07	Question from:	Cllr Liz Hardman
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Giving our local charity / voluntary sector certainty on contract 'efficiency' cuts of £10,000

- Many local voluntary and charitable organisations are extremely worried about the budget decision to cut £10,000 from “the top 25” B&NES contracts.
- Through scrutiny and engagement processes, they have been told that B&NES will work down the list beyond the top 25, until the £250,000 saving is met.
- Alongside national/international listed companies like Suez, Volker and HCRG, the list includes local charity/voluntary sector (not for profit) contractors like Southside, DHI, Bath & District CAB, Julian House, Youth Connect South West, Mentoring Plus and many more <https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/RS.S.02%20-%20Contract%20Management.pdf>.

- When will the administration confirm to the public and the anxious contractors which contracts — including those with local voluntary and not-for-profit organisations — will have the £10,000 reduction applied?

- On what grounds did the Cabinet members for Adults and Children’s care feel the local voluntary sector should go through another round of contract cuts, following the B&NES budget-mandated processes they endured 2 years ago?

Answer from:		Cllrs Mark Elliott and Alison Born
<p><i>This proposal does not cut the value of the council's existing contracts. Any reductions in spend will come from better management and enforcement of agreed contract terms.</i></p> <p><i>Examples of actions we can take to improve contract management include closer checking of invoices to ensure we do not overpay, challenging cost uplifts above contractual levels, finding ways to reduce or avoid buying additional or off-contract services and only paying for what is delivered.</i></p> <p><i>We are still assessing our data and will need to analyse our end of year position and future contract position in all areas to determine the best way to allocate this saving, but we expect to spread it over a limited number of our largest contracts after quarter one. Applying a £250,000 saving across 25 or more contracts represents an average saving of £10,000 against contracts generally worth several millions.</i></p> <p><i>Clearly this requires some care to ensure we have understood where contracts are funded by capital or ring-fenced grants and a sense check against existing savings to ensure we are not double counting. Officers have engaged with 3SG as the local representative body for the VCS and committed to discuss the outcome of this process as it becomes clear.</i></p>		
M	08	Question from: Cllr Liz Hardman
<p><u>Honouring full council's unanimous decision to improve B&NES' poor levels of public toilet service</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • B&NES' contract with Healthmatic for 16 public toilets is a 15-year contract worth £339,000 a year [https://procontract.due-north.com/ContractsRegister/ViewContractDetails?contractId=9e7daaa3-6dc1-e811-80ef-005056b64545]. • It, too, is one of the 'top 25' contracts that are targeted for £10,000 savings in the budget [https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/RS.S.02%20-%20Contract%20Management.pdf]. • It's a crude measurement, but that works out a just over £21,000 (£21,175.5) per loo a year – so a £10,000 contract cut this year is almost 'half a loo', when we only have 16 to start with. It doesn't feel like nothing. - On what grounds did Cabinet members decide that a £10,000 cut to this current contract was appropriate, given last summer's 		

debate, vote, and widespread media coverage around B&NES' - and Bath city's – poor public toilet provision?

Answer from:

Cllr Mark Elliott

There is no proposal to cut the existing public convenience contract. The savings initiative relates to a drive to generate greater value from contract management across the organisation, with extremely modest targets for the top 25 contracts across the organisation with support from a contract management development programme.

A new strategy is being drafted for the management of our public conveniences that is targeting an enhancement to the service and increase in provision in the city. The new strategy will be adopted before the existing strategy expires at the end of 2026.

M

09

Question from:

Cllr Lesley Mansell

Twerton and Whiteway have been identified as one of the most “doubly disadvantaged” neighbourhoods in the country, selected for Pride in Place funding by the Labour Government, on the basis of high deprivation and weak social infrastructure.

The programme is explicit that decision-making must be led by local people, with a Neighbourhood Board that reflects residents, grassroots groups, workplace representatives, faith leaders and community organisations.

The government’s own guidance states that these boards must “put local people at the centre of defining their area’s future” and that neighbourhoods must decide priorities “based on extensive community engagement”. It also emphasises that this is “real devolution – the transfer of power and investment to where it belongs.”

Given this, and the scale of the £20 million investment over 10 years:

How will Bath and North East Somerset council ensure that the Neighbourhood Board for Twerton and Whiteway is genuinely resident-led that it:

- reflects the demographics and lived experience of Twerton and Whiteway, including renters, young people, Black and disabled residents, and other minoritised groups

- is based on resident participation models
- has a transparent selection process
- inclusive representation
- clear decision-making power

so that the £20 million is directed according to the priorities, identified through extensive community engagement, as required by the Pride in Place Programme, and ensures that priorities align with the three-core objectives:

- stronger communities
- thriving places and
- empowerment

and these are not skewed by pre-existing council agendas?

Answer from:

Cllr Paul Roper

The Council has recently launched the Twerton & Whiteway Pride in Place regeneration programme in line with detailed government guidelines and with support from the UK Government's Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government team. This community-led programme is being progressed in line with the government guidance and requirements you mention.

Pride in Place is bringing up to £20 million of funding to Twerton and Whiteway to help improve opportunities for everyone over the next ten years. The programme is community-led and puts decision making in hands of local people. Any member of the local community can get involved and play a part.

At the start of the programme the Council is required to act as the accountable body. The accountable body is responsible to the funder. This means that initially the Council will take responsibility for the legal and financial management of the grant.

The Council is also required to lead the recruitment process for an independent Chairperson.

Following the recruitment process, the Council will support the Chairperson to appoint the Board. In line with national guidance the Board should have a broad range of voices and perspectives and reflect the community it will serve. The majority (51%) should live or work within

Twerton and Whiteway, other positions may be filled by community representatives.

The Council will also coordinate the first stage of community engagement in partnership with local stakeholders.

Initial stage work has included contacting all residents and organisations in the Twerton and Whiteway area to inform them of the upcoming project, connecting with a wide range of local stakeholders – including businesses, charities, community groups, schools etc. A new webpage has been set up; the Council team are hosting initial community engagement activities to explain in-person more about the programme and opportunities for local people to be involved.

The recruitment advertisement for the Chairperson and a call out for expressions of interest for Neighbourhood Board Members are currently live.

Full details and FAQ about the programme are included on our website <https://bathnesplaces.co.uk/prideinplace/>

M

10

Question from:

Cllr Dr Eleanor Jackson

Just when you think that there will never be a bus, after 40 minutes wait, three turn up at once, an all to frequent occurrence in Radstock Victoria Hall stop. Similarly, one has campaigned for 12 years to get improvements to the service, but now we have several cabinet members with responsibilities for public transport and a Leader of the Council who is vice chair of WECA.

Could we have a simple explanation of who is responsible for what exactly and how decisions are taken? The new 175 service seems to be running in a silo from Bath to the Sulis hospital on the Peasedown bypass instead of interfacing with the community services such as the 2V, the 174 (Wells First bus), the 424 and other subsidised routes. Surely residents of Westfield-Radstock should not have to find a driver, friend or taxi.

What happened to the replacement but faster RUH hospital flyer bus I suggested?

Answer from:

Cllr Sarah Warren

For clarity, the West of England Combined Authority (WECA) is the statutory Transport Authority for Bath and North East Somerset. WECA is therefore responsible for planning and funding bus services, including decisions on routes, timetables and how services connect across

the wider network.

The 175 service is a commercial route, and decisions about its operation and its integration with other services rest with the operator and WECA. Similarly, any proposal for a revised or faster RUH link would be a matter for WECA to consider.

We understand residents' concerns about bus reliability and connectivity, and we continue to raise these issues with WECA on behalf of communities across B&NES. However, detailed operational decisions lie with the Transport Authority, who are best placed to respond to the specific service matters you have highlighted.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS - PUBLIC

P	01	Question from:	Kathy Beadle
Please can you provide data on Civil Enforcement Officers (CEO) visits in Larkhall Square for the last 2 years?			
Answer from:			Cllr Joel Hirst
<p><i>The council are committed to robust parking enforcement and in the 2026/27 budget has made provision for additional parking enforcement.</i></p> <p><i>Civil Enforcement Officers (CEO) have recorded 74 visits to the single location of Larkhall Square in this period with motorist compliance observed or achieved on each occasion. It should be noted that this data is not representative of CEO attendance in the wider Larkhall Square vicinity.</i></p> <p><i>Requests for CEO visit and enforcement data are available upon request and options are being considered to increase public access to this information.</i></p>			
P	02	Question from:	Kathy Beadle
Bath Artists' Studios is losing their current lease this year and are in desperate need for new premises. How is the council helping them to find a suitable new space in time?			

Answer from:	Cllr Paul Roper	
<p><i>Bath Artists' Studios is not a tenant of the Council; they are currently renting space at Comfortable Place from a third party. However, the Council has been informed by Bath Artists' Studios that the lease on their site is currently due to end in spring 2027.</i></p> <p><i>The Council's Sustainable Communities team has met with and is working across service to work with Bath Artists' Studios to look at alternative sites, potential meanwhile use options and to explore different business models to retain this important asset in the city.</i></p>		
P 03	Question from:	Kathy Beadle
<p>How much has B&NES spent on advertising the Park and Ride services between 1/1/2024 and 30/3/2026? Please include a breakdown of what it was spent on.</p>		
Answer from:	Cllr Manda Rigby	
<p><i>Between 1 January 2024 and 30 March 2026, Bath & North East Somerset Council undertook a programme of activity to promote the Park & Ride services, ensuring residents, visitors and commuters were aware of the options available to support sustainable travel into Bath.</i></p> <p><i>During this period, the Council spent £24,266.06 on advertising and promotional activity. The breakdown is as follows:</i></p> <p><i>Bath & North East Somerset Council Expenditure</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>· Salary costs (staff time): £3,600.06</i> <i>· Graphic design and leaflet distribution: £10,807.00</i> <i>· Bus advertisements: £4,974.00</i> <i>· Radio / DAX digital audio advertising: £4,885.00</i> <p><i>Total: £24,266.06</i></p>		

For transparency, the West of England Combined Authority (WECA) also delivered regional promotional activity over the same period. This activity was funded by WECA using Bus Grant from the Department for Transport, aligned to commitments in their Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP). WECA's expenditure was:

WECA Expenditure

- Creative development: £4,425.00
- Paid media campaign: £29,990.00

WECA total £34,415

These activities collectively supported greater awareness of Park & Ride as a convenient and lower-carbon travel option for accessing Bath.

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

P	04	Question from:	Benazir Jatoi
<p>All councillors were invited to attend an event titled Ukraine War: 4 Years on - Remembrance & Solidarity on 24 February. The event was organised by the council's resettlement team and included light refreshments. Will the resettlement team also be organising events to commemorate the genocide in Gaza?</p>			
Answer from:			Cllr Kevin Guy
<p><i>The Resettlement Team is tasked with supporting only certain government humanitarian and resettlement schemes. This includes the Afghan Resettlement scheme, the UK Resettlement Scheme (mainly Syrian arrivals) and the Homes For Ukraine scheme. Since 2022 the Homes For Ukraine scheme has supported over 400 Ukrainians to come to the area, hosted by local residents. The 4th anniversary event gave an opportunity for those who had taken part in this scheme (Ukrainian guests and hosts) to come together. The event was funded with ringfenced funds from South West Councils and central government. The Resettlement Team does not have a remit or funding available to support initiatives relating to other world events or humanitarian crises. However, the council does hold an annual event to mark Holocaust Memorial Day on 27th January each year, where the victims of</i></p>			

the Holocaust and subsequent UN recognised genocides are all remembered.

P 05

Question from:

Benazir Jatoi

Does B&NES Council list Accredited Municipal Investments in the Treasury Management Strategy?

Answer from:

Cllr Mark Elliott

After discussing with the Council's Treasury management Advisors, Arlingclose, accredited municipal investments have been interpreted to refer to regulated investment products that allow individuals (retail investors) to invest directly in local council projects, the most common example being Local Climate Bonds in the UK.

The Council's Borrowing Strategy, contained within Section 2 of the 2026/27 Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2026/27 which was approved by Council on 24th February 2026, allows the Council to borrow from retail investors via a regulated peer-to-peer platform (Appendix 1- paragraph 2.4). However, as you will see from Appendix 4 to the Treasury Management Performance Report to 31st December 2025 (Quarter 3) presented to Cabinet on 12th February 2026, that the Council does not currently have any of this type of borrowing.

The Council's Investment Strategy, contained within Section 3 of the 2026/27 Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2026/27, allows the Council to invest in other local authorities for up to 5 years (Appendix 1 – paragraph 3.4). As set out in this appendix, currently the only investment the Council has with another local authority is £5m in a fixed deposit, rather than an accredited municipal investment, as can be seen in Appendix 2 - Charts 1 & 1a of the Treasury Management Performance Report to 31st December 2025.

P 06

Question from:

Benazir Jatoi

Recently, Cllr Wright asked a question to the West of England Combined Authority Metro Mayor asking - "Relevant Councillors within the B&NES administration are working with WECA to improve bus services throughout the West of England, including what we have been told is the "emerging bus situation".

Councillors who do not sit in the administration's party regularly ask questions about buses but fail to get any information or briefing on the important issue of buses that impacts all residents.

How will the WECA Mayor and WECA Deputy Mayor ensure that all councillors are part of the bus conversation and given details of the “emerging bus situation”?

The response from the Metro Mayor was: The combined authority works closely with the constituent councils on all bus-related matters. Engagement with members takes place through informal briefings with transport leads and will shortly include the Transport Advisory Board. Leaders are also involved in discussions as issues move to our committee and the cross-party scrutiny committee for further discussion.

Please can you explain how B&NES will be working with B&NES Cllrs to disseminate WECA bus decisions via the Transport Advisory Board and ensure that issues and concerns with regard to local services are passed back from B&NES to the WECA Transport Advisory Board?

Answer from:

Cllr Sarah Warren

The new Transport Advisory Board provides a formal structure for engagement between WECA and the Unitary Authorities on transport matters, including buses. B&NES has members on the Board, and the Board is chaired by the Leader of B&NES. The Board's advice will be fed into the WECA Committee through the Transport Advisory Board Chair.

Relevant B&NES officers and the Cabinet Lead continue to request All Councillor Bus Briefings from WECA officers, who as officers of the Transport Authority hold the information needed to brief members. B&NES also continues to press WECA for the establishment of a Bus Passenger Forum. In the meantime, B&NES councillors are aware that queries or concerns about bus services can be raised directly with transport.operations@westofengland-ca.gov.uk, and that copying the B&NES Cabinet Lead allows her to advocate on their behalf.

P 07

Question from:

Anne Coghlan

What data does B&NES hold on river sewage spillage on all local rivers?

Answer from:		Cllr Sarah Warren
<p><i>The Council is a member of the Bristol Avon Catchment Partnership (BACP), which includes Bristol Avon Rivers Trust, Environment Agency, Natural England, Wessex Water and many other partners. We do not hold data on river sewage, this can be accessed through the Rivers Trust website https://theriverstrust.org/sewage-map and Environment Agency and Wessex Water websites. The Partnership is working together to improve water quality of rivers within B&NES area</i></p>		
P	08	Question from: Anne Coghlan
<p>In October 2025, the number 6, 7 and 6A buses were diverted from Camden Road and the whole of Fairfield Park while work to the main gas pipe at the crossroad between Camden Road and Eastbourne Avenue occurred. It was supposed to take place from Saturday 25th October until Sunday 2nd November.</p> <p>The work did not start until the Monday which meant buses could have run the first weekend. It is likely that the contractors must have known this beforehand. The work was not then completed due to the old gas main being rediscovered, so work finished on Friday 31st October 2025.</p> <p>Who in the council should be informed when the work schedule changes to start or when work finishes early, so that the bus company can resume services and local residents can use local sustainable transport services?</p>		
Answer from:		Cllr Lucy Hodge
<p><i>When a request is received to close a road for utility works or similar, and which requires the suspension of a bus stop(s), the onus is on the applicant to advise the council if their programme changes for any reason. The council's bus stop suspension application form includes the following:</i></p> <p><i>By submitting this form, you accept that:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The information provided will be shared with bus operators and others where necessary.</i> • <i>This bus stop suspension application does not replace the Bath and North East Somerset Permit scheme for roadworks (a</i> 		

separate Permit is needed).

- You must keep us informed of any changes to work programmes.

The permit which was issued by the council allowed the works in question to run from the 25th October to the 2nd of November, giving the contractor 9 days to complete the work. The contractor is responsible for updating the works permit system, and they did update their permit to reflect the later start date of the 27th October. However, we can find no record of the contractor updating us directly. The contractor subsequently added a 'works stop' to the permit system for the 2nd November.

Unfortunately, we do not have the capacity to monitor works on site or the permit system for changes of this nature, but this apparent anomaly with works finishing on site on the 25th will be raised with the contractor. I will also ask for this matter to be investigated further, as it might be possible to introduce a procedure or information which helps to avoid similar situations occurring in the future. The information on our bus stop suspension application forms will also be reviewed to put more emphasis on contractors advising us of any changes to their work programmes.

P 09

Question from:

Anne Coghlan

What working relationship does B&NES Council have with the Environment Agency (EA), as future sustainable active travel crossings could require the support and the involvement of the EA to deliver these active travel routes in the region?

Answer from:

Cllr Sarah Warren

We have a close working relationship with the EA and work with them across various services including Planning, Transport, Highways and PlaceShaping. They are members of our WaterSpace Partnership (along with Canal & Rivers Trust and Wessex Water which considers matters along the River Avon).

P 10

Question from:

Ross Turmel

With more Residents' Parking Zones being rolled out across Bath, how many planning applications are being requested to create parking on people's properties? Urban front gardens offer a wealth of benefits, in terms of biodiversity, flood resilience and cooling.

What is our response to these planning applications and how does this tie in with our Green Places Plan?

Answer from:

Cllrs Sarah Warren and Matt McCabe

There were 32 planning applications for parking in the last 12-month period in Bath of which 17 were permitted. Many of these are for parking that is included within an overall development proposal such as an extension to the property.

Some parking applications do not require planning permission as they constitute permitted development. For those developments we have no records as they fall outside of planning controls. There are various criteria covering whether development is permitted or not so that assessment can be complex.

The main legislation is set out within schedule 2, part 2, class B of the General Permitted development Order which states that the following is permitted:

The formation, laying out and construction of a means of access to a highway which is not a trunk road or a classified road, where that access is required in connection with development permitted by any Class in this Schedule (other than by Class A of this Part). (Note there is other criteria that apply)

Notwithstanding the above an Article 4 direction in the Bath Conservation Area removes some of the permitted rights, consequently the removal of boundary walls (which is otherwise permitted) does need planning permission in the Bath Conservation Area.

The [Greener Places Plan](#) sets out the council's commitment to deliver greener places to ensure Bath and North East Somerset has a more sustainable, nature rich and climate resilient future.

P 11

Question from:

Ross Turmel

In cabinet questions from February 2025, Cllr Sarah Warren said: "B&NES Council is actively working with a national charity market specialist, to support policy development and demand assessment for car clubs." Car clubs are mentioned once in the Movement Strategy and weren't included in the levers. Could we please have an update on the car club project?

Answer from:		Cllr Lucy Hodge
<i>The procurement of the service provider is currently underway, with a planned tender exercise expected to take place in late spring or early summer 2026. Subject to a successful procurement process, implementation is anticipated for early autumn 2026. This will not only support the city of Bath but also look at wider rural communities. A rural pilot trial is currently anticipated to take place in late spring 2026.</i>		
P	12	Question from:
		Ross Turmel
Local Authorities can choose to use Selective Licensing Schemes that regulate Landlords. The revenue created can only be used within Housing or enforcement on Landlords. How does B&NES use this Selective Licensing Scheme for Landlords in B&NES?		
Answer from:		Cllr Matt McCabe
<i>The Council does not operate a Selective Licensing Scheme within the district.</i>		
P	13	Question from:
		Barbara Gordon
What is the size of the land that has been disposed of behind 4-7 Marlborough Buildings in Bath and what price has the Council asked for this site?		
Answer from:		Cllr Paul Roper
<i>The land comprises of 0.083 of an acre / 0.033 of a hectare. The asking price was offers in excess of £15,000 ex VAT.</i>		

P 14	Question from:	Barbara Gordon
<p>As the Council is clearly committed to not "losing our green spaces and the quality of life that makes our area special", it would seem contradictory that the site of land behind 4-7 Marlborough Building, sitting next to allotments, which have a long waiting list, has been considered for sale. Why was this land not turned into allotments?</p>		
Answer from:		Cllr Paul Roper
<p><i>The land is subject to a covenant binding the owner to only use the land as a garden or amenity land appurtenant to a residential dwelling and there is therefore no loss of green space.</i></p> <p><i>The land is not deemed appropriate as an additional allotment allocation for Ring Common allotments because:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>1/ The land does not abut the existing allotments.</i> <i>2/ The size, layout and topography of the land does not lend itself to allotment use.</i> <i>3/ The land is not serviced.</i> <i>4/ The land is relatively heavily wooded and the clearing and felling of trees would be an issue. Without clearing the trees there would not be enough natural light for an allotment use.</i> <i>5/ The land is enclosed by a stone wall requiring repairs, including the section along the adopted highway, Cow Lane and the buyer of the land is responsible for these costs. The boundary wall costs, and the cost of creating the allotments, if carried by the Council could be considered as proportionally not appropriate to justify the land use as a Council allotment.</i> <i>6/ The Council is seeking additional allotment allocations elsewhere and the cost of creating a separate standalone allotment use on this land may be better directed towards additional and more appropriate sites.</i> <p><i>The Council published and posted an Open Space Notice notifying the public of the intention of the Council to dispose of the land and no comments were received in connection with the existing allotments or an allotment use for the land.</i></p> <p><i>In addition, a Surplus Property Notice was circulated to Service departments within the Council and there were no submissions of interest received.</i></p>		

P	15	Question from:	Barbara Gordon
Can the duration for parking in the New Oriel Hall car park be changed from 4 hours to overnight if using the EV charger?			
Answer from:			Cllr Joel Hirst
<p><i>The political priorities of the administration are to support more sustainable travel choices and respond robustly to the climate emergency.</i></p> <p><i>Short-stay parking controls play an important role in supporting parking turnover at locations where parking spaces and charging facilities are limited, helping to sustain the viability of local businesses and access to charging facilities.</i></p> <p><i>However, the council recognises the challenge posed by the current overnight parking restrictions for members of the local community seeking to use EV chargers at New Oriel Hall car park, especially when nearby amenities and businesses are closed. The council is committed to reviewing the legal order which determines the EV charging restriction at this site.</i></p>			
P	16	Question from:	Michael Coffey
How will the B&NES Movement strategy tie in with the WECA Transport vision?			
Answer from:			Cllr Joel Hirst
<p><i>The Movement Strategy for Bath aligns closely with the West of England Combined Authority (WECA) Transport Vision by advancing shared goals around reducing car dependency, prioritising sustainable travel, and creating a more connected, low carbon transport network. The Movement Strategy emphasises shifting travel behaviour toward walking, wheeling, cycling and improved public transport, supporting the regional ambition for a well-connected, inclusive and low carbon network as set out in WECA's Transport Vision (and Joint Local Transport Plan 4), which aims to make sustainable modes the natural choice for everyday journeys. The Movement Strategy's focus on managing traffic, improving bus reliability, and rebalancing street space</i></p>			

complements WECA's vision for reducing congestion and enhancing air quality across the region.

The strategies also align structurally: B&NES is a constituent authority of WECA, which holds responsibility for regional transport policy, major route networks, and funding through mechanisms such as the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) and emerging Transport for City Regions (TCR) funding. WECA's 2026 Transport Vision provides a regional framework into which the Movement Strategy will feed, ensuring that Bath's local interventions both benefit from and contribute to wider regional connectivity and decarbonisation objectives. In this way, B&NES' Movement Strategy functions as the local delivery mechanism for WECA's broader strategic direction, aligning Bath's 2035 transport vision through the Movement Strategy with the long term regional goals for a greener, more efficient, and more accessible transport system.

P 17

Question from:

Michael Coffey

The University of Bath posted on Instagram during the Council's recent consultation on changes to parking charges based on vehicle size:

<https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/preliminary-consultation-parking-charges-2026-27>

They put in the caption that the proposal included lower charges for smaller cars. How many occupants of HMOs are exempt from council tax because they are full-time students and hold a parking permit for a Residents Parking Zone?

How is the Council working with the University of Bath and Bath Spa University to discourage students from owning a car?

Answer from:

Cllr Joel Hirst

B&NES Council regularly engages with the two universities and the RUH Hospital through the Anchor Institutions role within the Transport Strategy team.

A resident's status as a student, or whether a property is an HMO, does not in itself have an impact on a property's entitlement to residents' parking permits, and therefore this data is not available.

P 18	Question from:	Michael Coffey
<p>On the 28th November 2025 a BANES press release says:</p> <p>“Two companies were fined a total of £190k for unauthorised Grade I listed building works following council prosecution. Bath & North East Somerset Council has successfully prosecuted two companies for carrying out unauthorised works to a Grade I listed building in Bath which affected its character as a building of special architectural or historic interest. Knight Frank LLP and Emery Brothers Ltd were fined £120,000 and £70,000 respectively, plus costs, following sentencing at Yeovil Magistrates’ Court on 18 November 2025, after being found guilty on 15 October 2025 of offences under Sections 7 and 9 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.”</p> <p>Does the Council prosecute itself?</p>		
Answer from:		Cllr Matt McCabe
<p><i>No, councils do not prosecute themselves.</i></p>		