

Council

Date: Thursday 14th May 2026

Time: 6.30 pm

Venue: Council Chamber - Guildhall, Bath

To: All Members of the Council

Dear Member

You are invited to attend a meeting of the **Council** on **Thursday 14th May 2026** in **Council Chamber - Guildhall, Bath**.

The agenda is set out overleaf.

Yours sincerely



Jo Morrison
Democratic Services Manager
for Chief Executive

NOTES:

1. **Inspection of Papers:** Papers are available for inspection as follows:

Council's website: <https://democracy.bathnes.gov.uk/ieDocHome.aspx?bcr=1>

2. **Details of decisions taken at this meeting** can be found in the minutes which will be circulated with the agenda for the next meeting. In the meantime, details can be obtained by contacting as above.

3. **Recording at Meetings:-**

The Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 now allows filming and recording by anyone attending a meeting. This is not within the Council's control. Some of our meetings are webcast. At the start of the meeting, the Chair will confirm if all or part of the meeting is to be filmed. If you would prefer not to be filmed for the webcast, please make yourself known to the camera operators. We request that those filming/recording meetings avoid filming public seating areas, children, vulnerable people etc; however, the Council cannot guarantee this will happen.

The Council will broadcast the images and sounds live via the internet www.bathnes.gov.uk/webcast. The Council may also use the images/sound recordings on its social media site or share with other organisations, such as broadcasters.

4. **Public Speaking at Meetings**

The Council has a scheme to encourage the public to make their views known at meetings. They may make a statement relevant to what the meeting has power to do. They may also present a petition or a deputation on behalf of a group.

Advance notice is required not less than two full working days before the meeting. This means that for meetings held on Thursdays notice must be received in Democratic Services by 5.00pm the previous Monday.

The Council now has a maximum time limit for this, so any requests to speak cannot be guaranteed if the list is full.

Further details of the scheme can be found at:

<https://democracy.bathnes.gov.uk/ecCatDisplay.aspx?sch=doc&cat=12942>

5. **Emergency Evacuation Procedure**

When the continuous alarm sounds, you must evacuate the building by one of the designated exits and proceed to the named assembly point. The designated exits are signposted. Arrangements are in place for the safe evacuation of disabled people.

6. **Supplementary information for meetings**

Additional information and Protocols and procedures relating to meetings

<https://democracy.bathnes.gov.uk/ecCatDisplay.aspx?sch=doc&cat=13505>

Council - Thursday 14th May 2026

at 6.30 pm in the Council Chamber - Guildhall, Bath

A G E N D A

1. EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

The Chair will draw attention to the emergency evacuation procedure as set out under Note 5.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

3. ELECTION OF CHAIR 2026/27

4. APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIR 2026/27

5. MINUTES - 19TH MARCH 2026 (Pages 5 - 14)

To be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair

6. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

At this point in the meeting declarations of interest are received from Members in any of the agenda items under consideration at the meeting. Members are asked to complete the green interest forms circulated to groups in their pre-meetings (which will be announced at the Council Meeting) to indicate:

(a) The agenda item number in which they have an interest to declare.

(b) The nature of their interest.

(c) Whether their interest is **a disclosable pecuniary interest** or an **other interest**, (as defined in Part 4.4 Appendix B of the Code of Conduct and Rules for Registration of Interests)

Any Member who needs to clarify any matters relating to the declaration of interests is recommended to seek advice from the Council's Monitoring Officer or a member of his staff before the meeting to expedite dealing with the item during the meeting.

7. ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE CHAIR OF THE COUNCIL OR FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

These are matters of information for Members of the Council. No decisions will be required arising from the announcements.

8. TO ANNOUNCE ANY URGENT BUSINESS AGREED BY THE CHAIR

If there is any urgent business arising since the formal agenda was published, the Chair will announce this and give reasons why it has been agreed for consideration at this meeting. In making this decision, the Chair will, where practicable, have consulted with the Leaders of the Political Groups. Any documentation on urgent business will be

circulated at the meeting, if not made available previously.

9. APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES AND PANELS, AND OTHER ASSOCIATED ANNUAL BUSINESS (Pages 15 - 70)
10. EXPANSION OF WECA (Pages 71 - 146)
11. REVISION OF PARISH CHARTER (Pages 147 - 214)
12. QUESTIONS, STATEMENTS AND PETITIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

The Democratic Services Manager will announce any submissions received. The Council will be invited to decide what action it wishes to take, if any, on the matters raised in these submissions. As the questions received and the answers given will be circulated in written form there is no requirement for them to be read out at the meeting. The questions and answers will be published with the draft minutes.

13. QUESTIONS, STATEMENTS AND PETITIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

The Democratic Services Manager will announce any submissions received. The Council will be invited to decide what action it wishes to take, if any, on the matters raised in these submissions. As the questions received and the answers given will be circulated in written form there is no requirement for them to be read out at the meeting. The questions and answers will be published with the draft minutes.

The Committee Administrator for this meeting is Jo Morrison who can be contacted on 01225 394358.

BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET COUNCIL

MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING

Thursday 19th March 2026

Present:- **Councillors** Michael Auton, Tim Ball, Alex Beaumont, David Biddleston, Colin Blackburn, Alison Born, Anna Box, Stuart Bridge, Paul Crossley, Chris Dando, Jess David, Mark Elliott, Fiona Gourley, Kevin Guy, Alan Hale, Ian Halsall, David Harding, Liz Hardman, Gavin Heathcote, Steve Hedges, Saskia Heijltjes, Joel Hirst, Lucy Hodge, Duncan Hounsell, Shaun Hughes, Dr Eleanor Jackson, Grant Johnson, Samantha Kelly, George Leach, Hal MacFie, Ruth Malloy, Lesley Mansell, Paul May, Matt McCabe, Simon McCombe, Sarah Moore, Robin Moss, Michelle O'Doherty, Manda Rigby, Paul Roper, Sam Ross, Onkar Saini, Toby Simon, Shaun Stephenson-McGall, George Tomlin, Malcolm Treby, Karen Walker, Chris Warren, Sarah Warren, Tim Warren CBE, Andy Wait and Joanna Wright

Apologies for absence: **Councillors** Sarah Evans, Oli Henman, John Leach, Ann Morgan, Bharat Pankhania, June Player and Dine Romero

63 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

The Chair drew attention to the emergency evacuation procedure, as set out on the agenda.

64 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

65 MINUTES - 24TH FEBRUARY 2026

On a motion from Councillor Matt McCabe, seconded by Councillor Karen Walker, it was

RESOLVED that the minutes of 24th February 2026 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

66 ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE CHAIR OF THE COUNCIL OR FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

The Chair made the customary announcements regarding microphones and webcasting.

At the Chair's request, a video was shown about the Councillors' corporate parent role and pledge to children in care. Further information is available from the below link;

[Our pledge to children in care and care experienced young people | Bath and North East Somerset Council](#)

67 TO ANNOUNCE ANY URGENT BUSINESS AGREED BY THE CHAIR

There were no items of urgent business.

68 QUESTIONS, STATEMENTS AND PETITIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

Statements were made by the following members of the public;

Professor Penny Hay made a statement entitled “Playing outside, learning everywhere: the importance of outdoor play for children, families and communities’. A copy of which is available on the Minute book and attached to the online record. Councillor Gavin Heathcote asked Penny how these aims could be achieved. Penny explained it was a collaborative process with cultural, creative and educational input and invited Councillors to see this in action on 12th June at the Forest of Imagination event.

Alla Chaikovska read a statement from Adam Jukes who had not been able to attend. Adam’s statement was also in support of the Green Group motion on the agenda. A copy of his statement is available on the Minute book and attached to the online record.

Gillian Ford addressed Council, as a Foster Carer, expressing deep concern that the changes taking place in Children’s Services might result in reduced support structures and ultimately Foster Carers leaving the service. Councillor Joanna Wright asked if families and Foster Carers had been consulted, to which Gillian replied that they had not. Councillor Robin Moss, a member of the Fostering Panel, asked if Gillian considered it important for Foster Carers to be listened to, to which Gillian replied that it was imperative and that any change must be careful and based on views from those within the Service. Councillor Kevin Guy asked if Gillian would like to meet the Cabinet Member and relevant officers, to which Gillian replied that she would.

Jodie Brown, also a Foster Carer, made a statement expressing similar concerns and highlighting the great relationships between Foster Carers and Social Workers. A copy of the statement is available on the Minute book and attached to the online record. Jodie commented that, if staff are driven out, this will impact children and families so the proposals need to be reconsidered. Councillor Robin Moss asked Jodie if she agreed that the process should be paused and re-started in a considered manner. Jodie agreed this was vital and that children and Foster Carers need to be consulted. Councillor Joanna Wright referred to a government target for 10,000 more Foster Carers and asked if Jodie thought these proposals would encourage more Foster Carers, to which Jodie replied that she didn’t think so. Councillor Kevin Guy asked if Jodie would like to meet the Cabinet Member and relevant officers, to which Jodie replied that she would.

The Chair thanked the speakers for their statements which were referred to the relevant Cabinet Members.

69 AVON PENSION FUND - LGPS POOLING OF INVESTMENTS

The Council considered a report about Avon Pension Fund pooling of investments.

On a motion from Councillor Toby Simon, seconded by Councillor George Leach, it was unanimously

RESOLVED that the Council in its capacity as Administering Authority for APF, the Council agrees to:

1. Implement required changes to investment pooling through the following arrangements;
 - i. APF becoming a shareholder in the new LPPI Holdings Ltd;
 - ii. APF's assets will be transferred to LPPI Holdings' subsidiary, LPPI Ltd, an FCA regulated investment company which will be operated in accordance with the shareholder agreement.
2. Delegate to the Director of Assurance, Risk and Pensions, in consultation with the Chair of the Avon Pension Fund Committee, the powers to undertake tasks to progress these required changes to investment pooling, and to take such decisions deemed necessary to promote the interests of the Council and the Avon Pension Fund with respect to pooling. This will, without limitation, include agreeing and authorising financial expenditure or investment that may be required consequential upon the Council's participation in LPPI and agreeing, authorising, and signing documentation and contracts on behalf of the Council in its role as Administering Authority of the Avon Pension Fund. This delegation is valid for 6 months and remains in force until 19 September 2026.
3. That subject to the above, all such matters shall be carried out with the aim of achieving the target date for APF joining LPPI and moving its assets of 1 April 2026, and subject to such intermediate steps and timescales as may be considered appropriate and necessary by the Director of Assurance, Risk & Pensions, in consultation with the Chair of the Avon Pension Fund Committee.

70 CHARITABLE TRUST BOARD ANNUAL REPORT

The Council considered a report updating them on activity of the Charitable Trust Board for 2025/25.

On a motion from Councillor Sarah Warren, seconded by Councillor Samantha Kelly, it was unanimously

RESOLVED to note the Annual Report of the Charitable Trust Board for 2024/25.

71 DESIGNATION OF CHAIR & VICE CHAIR DESIGNATE

The purpose of this report was to invite the Council to indicate a Councillor as Chair of the Council (Designate) and Vice-Chair (Designate) for the next Council Year beginning in May 2026. The Council, at its Annual Meeting in May 2026, will still be required formally to elect Councillors to these roles for the forthcoming Council Year.

On a motion from Councillor Kevin Guy, seconded by Councillor Robin Moss, it was unanimously

RESOLVED

1. That, for forward planning purposes, the Council names Councillor Shaun Stephenson McGall to be treated as Chair of the Council (Designate) and Councillor Dine Romero as Vice Chair of the Council (Designate) for the 2026/27 Council Year.

72 MOTION FROM THE GREEN GROUP - ENABLING OUTDOOR PLAY AND COMMUNITY BELONGING

The Council considered a motion from the Green Group calling for measures to enable outdoor play and community belonging.

On a motion from Councillor Saskia Heijltjes, seconded by Councillor Joanna Wright, it was

RESOLVED that

Council:

1. Recognises the vital role that physical activity and outdoor play have in supporting the health, wellbeing, and development of children and young people across Bath and North East Somerset.¹
2. Notes the work undertaken by the charity Playing Out. Play streets (or 'playing out' sessions) are neighbour-led temporary road closures on quiet, residential streets, creating a safe space for children to play freely together on their doorstep. Playing Out also champions School Streets, to provide children with more opportunities for outdoor play at the beginning and end of school days.²
3. Notes research published in the British Medical Journal identified a mental health crisis in young people before COVID19, with the pandemic exacerbating these issues and widening inequalities. Playing out can help children and young people build emotional resilience by creating strong ties to their local community and developing both social skills and a sense of belonging.³
4. Is concerned that 2022/2023 data from Sport England reveals that 39% of BANES' children are failing to meet the Chief Medical Officers' recommended 60 minutes of daily exercise. Council notes that outdoor play in England has declined by 50% in a generation, with traffic, fear of crime, and unwelcoming public spaces contributing to this drop.⁴

¹ <https://www.pediatricnursing.org/article/S0882-5963%2817%2930185-9/abstract>

² <https://playingout.net/play-streets/impact-overview/>

³ <https://acamh.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/jcv2.12008>

⁴ <https://sportengland-production-files.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/2025-12/Active%20Lives%20Children%20and%20Young%20People%20Survey%20->

5. Acknowledges that the BANES Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy (2023-2030) aims to put in place the best conditions for people of all ages to live healthy and fulfilling lives including enabling and encouraging proactive engagement in health promoting activity at all ages for good quality of life.⁵
6. Believes play sufficiency is an important part of supporting Bath and North East Somerset's children, leading to better outcomes for their health, wellbeing and education.
7. Notes that play provision within Bath and North East Somerset sits across departments and there is no one or team responsible for play provision.

Council resolves to:

1. Invite the appropriate Policy Development and Scrutiny panel(s) to consider adding the issue of play provision to their workplan(s).
2. Suggest that PDS work could include reviewing existing plans and strategies, identifying any gaps, and considering how Council could enable more children in Bath and North East Somerset to play more of the time.

[Notes;

1. *Councillors in favour (48); - Councillors Michael Auton, Tim Ball, Alex Beaumont, David Biddleston, Colin Blackburn, Alison Born, Anna Box, Stuart Bridge, Paul Crossley, Chris Dando, Jess David, Mark Elliott, Fiona Gourley, Kevin Guy, Alan Hale, Ian Halsall, Dave Harding, Liz Hardman, Steve Hedges, Saskia Heijltjes, Joel Hirst, Lucy Hodge, Duncan Hounsell, Shaun Hughes, Eleanor Jackson, Grant Johnson, Samantha Kelly, George Leach, Hal MacFie, Ruth Malloy, Lesley Mansell, Paul May, Matt McCabe, Simon McCombe, Sarah Moore, Robin Moss, Michelle O'Doherty, Manda Rigby, Sam Ross, Onkar Saini, Toby Simon, Shaun Stephenson-McGall, George Tomlin, Malcolm Treby, Andy Wait, Sarah Warren, Tim Warren, Joanna Wright.*

Councillors against (2); - Councillors Chris Warren, Gavin Heathcote

Councillors abstaining (1): - Councillor Karen Walker]

73 MOTION FROM THE LABOUR GROUP - EVOLVING DISCOVERY CARDS - MODERNISATION AND EFFICIENCY FOR RESIDENTS AND TOURISTS

This motion was ruled out of order so not taken.

74 MOTION FROM THE LIBERAL DEMOCRAT GROUP - NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

The Council considered a motion from the Liberal Democrat Group on the National Planning Policy Framework.

On a motion from Councillor Sarah Warren, seconded by Councillor Matt McCabe, it was

[%20academic%20year%202024-25%20report-.pdf?VersionId=02ctNYq5CXJAG4naDr4BlmM_a406a.5y](#)

⁵ <https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/document-and-policy-library/joint-health-and-wellbeing-strategy>

RESOLVED that

Council notes:

1. The recent Government consultation on proposed reforms to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which are intended to support the Government's growth and house building targets.
2. These reforms will limit local planning authorities' ability to set high environmental standards for new homes, banning councils from setting policies that go further than national building regulations, particularly in the areas of Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) and Net Zero Construction policy.
3. B&NES Council has been an ambitious early adopter of BNG and Net Zero Construction policies via the Local Plan Partial Update of 2023 and is already achieving 'Net Zero in operation' and 10% BNG standards for new build.
4. B&NES has recently consulted on increasing our ambition for climate and nature through updated local development management policies as part of the Local Plan Options consultation.

Council believes:

5. The proposed NPPF changes will be a step backwards and will downgrade recently established standards to support nature recovery and tackle climate change.
6. Government should not prevent councils from going further and faster in response to the Climate and Nature Emergency.
7. Building to higher standards has been shown to be technically, legally and financially viable.
8. New homes must be fit for the future. If 1.5m homes are to be built in England, these must be energy-efficient homes, which deliver lower energy bills for residents and which contribute to statutory, national Net Zero targets.
9. Sustainable, climate resilient homes are good for public health by addressing air quality, over-heating, damp and cold, energy efficiency (tackling fuel poverty), and supporting active lifestyles.
10. Measures to embed nature-friendly design features, such as 'swift bricks' and sustainable drainage systems, stronger protections for habitats of high environmental value and integration of Local Nature Recovery Strategies into planning decisions, are welcome.
11. Local knowledge, local policy-making and local decision-making are essential to a robust and fair planning system.

Council therefore:

12. Objects to the proposed NPPF changes regarding BNG and Net Zero Construction.
13. Calls on the Government to empower councils to protect and restore nature and to set ambitious energy and sustainability standards for new developments, through local plans processes.
14. Endorses the letter, coordinated by the Town and Country Planning Association (TCPA) and signed by over 60 local authorities, businesses and NGOs including B&NES, on this issue.
15. Requests that the Leader write to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government on this matter.

[Notes;

1. *The above successful resolution was carried with the following votes;*

Councillors in favour (46): Michael Auton, Tim Ball, Alex Beaumont, Dave Biddleston, Colin Blackburn, Anna Box, Stuart Bridge, Paul Crossley, Chris Dando, Jess David, Mark Elliott, Fiona Gourley, Kevin Guy, Ian Halsall, Dave Harding, Steve Hedges, Saskia Heijltjes, Joel Hirst, Lucy Hodge, Duncan Hounsell, Shaun Hughes, Eleanor Jackson, Grant Johnson, Samantha Kelly, George Leach, Hal MacFie, Ruth Malloy, Lesley Mansell, Paul May, Matt McCabe, Simon McCombe, Sarah Moore, Robin Moss, Michelle O'Doherty, Paul Roper, Sam Ross, Onkar Saini, Toby Simon, Shaun Stephenson-McGall, George Tomlin, Malcolm Treby, Andy Wait, Karen Walker, Sarah Warren, Tim Warren, Joanna Wright

Councillors against (2): - Gavin Heathcote, Chris Warren

Councillors abstaining (1): - Liz Hardman]

75 MOTION FROM THE INDEPENDENT & CONSERVATIVE GROUPS - ENVIRONMENTALLY RESPONSIBLE CAMPAIGN PRACTICES

The Council considered a motion from the Independent and Conservative groups regarding environmentally responsible campaign leafletting, moved by Councillor Shaun Hughes and seconded by Councillor Tim Warren.

Following a vote, this motion was

NOT CARRIED

Council believes:

- Bath & North East Somerset has declared a Climate Emergency and adopted a Climate Emergency Strategy, committing the Local Authority to reducing avoidable paper consumption and minimising environmental impact.
- During the run-up to Local Elections, there is significant investment in printed campaign materials. This can lead to the production of large quantities of

leaflets, contributing to substantial paper use and associated environmental impacts.

- Traditional campaign models are reliant on large-scale paper distribution and do not align with the Council's agreed environmental priorities or the commitments outlined in the Climate Emergency Strategy.
- Although hybrid communication approaches have been adopted, the use of printed leaflets remains high within current campaigning practices.
- The distribution of large volumes of printed leaflets also generates additional recycling waste, increases the workload for waste collection crews, and contributes to avoidable litter-picking pressures across the area.
- Reducing unnecessary printed material is consistent with the Council's wider objective of supporting and creating sustainable communities.

Council notes that:

- Digital communication is an essential and effective tool for modern political campaigning, offering targeted, cost-efficient, and rapid engagement with residents.
- Printed materials may still play a role in reaching residents who are digitally excluded or for whom physical communication is more accessible.
- Recycled paper still requires substantial energy and processing resources to produce printed leaflets.
- Environmental guidance consistently identifies reduction as the most important stage in the reduce–reuse–recycle hierarchy, as preventing waste is more effective than managing it after production.
- Campaigning strategies that rely heavily on paper leafleting are outdated and inconsistent with the Council's climate objectives.

Council therefore:

1. Reaffirms its commitment to the Bath & North East Somerset Climate Emergency Policy by actively encouraging reductions in unnecessary paper consumption.
2. Agrees that all political Group Leaders should write to their Local Party requesting that it minimise paper use in party-political campaigning and limit the total number of physical leaflets they distribute to no more than two per year.

[Notes;

1. *The above resolution was lost on a named vote;*

Councillors in favour (5): - Alex Beaumont, Colin Blackburn, Alan Hale, Shaun Hughes, Tim Warren

Councillors against (45): - Councillors Michael Auton, Tim Ball, Dave Biddleston, Alison Born, Anna Box, Stuart Bridge, Paul Crossley, Chris Dando, Jess David, Mark Elliott, Fiona Gourley, Kevin Guy, Ian Halsall, Dave Harding, Liz Hardman, Steve Hedges, Saskia Heijltjes, Joel Hirst, Lucy Hodge, Duncan Hounsell, Eleanor Jackson, Grant Johnson, Samantha Kelly, George Leach, Hal MacFie, Ruth Malloy, Paul May, Matt McCabe, Simon McCombe, Sarah Moore, Robin Moss, Michelle O'Doherty, Manda Rigby, Dine Romero, Paul Roper, Sam Ross, Onkar Saini, Toby Simon, Shaun Stephenson-McGall, George Tomlin, Malcolm Treby, Andy Wait, Karen Walker, Sarah Warren, Joanna Wright.

Councillors abstaining (2): - Councillors Gavin Heathcote, Chris Warren]

76 QUESTIONS, STATEMENTS AND PETITIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

Statements were made by the following Councillors;

Councillor Shaun Hughes made a statement to Council about parking charges in Midsomer Norton. A full copy of the statement is available online and on the Minute book. He presented data from the last year which he maintained demonstrated that the parking service was running at a loss. He also described the negative effect on local businesses. He called for public feedback to be taken on board and a common-sense approach to now be taken. Councillor Eleanor Jackson asked if the same parallel could be made in Radstock and Keynsham, to which Councillor Hughes replied that he wasn't sure about the situation in Keynsham, but it was definitely a similar situation in Radstock. Councillor Karen Walker asked if Councillor Hughes had consulted residents, to which he responded that he regularly spoke with business owners and residents on this topic.

Councillor Joanna Wright made a statement about Councillors' corporate parenting responsibilities in relation to the staff restructure in Children's Services. A full copy of the statement is available online and on the Minute book. Councillor Kevin Guy asked Councillor Wright what she considered fairer consultation looked like, to which she replied with an account of a staff member of 35 years facing redundancy who had not been offered training for the qualification she now needed to fill the new role.

Councillor Sam Ross made a statement about rural bus services, a copy of which is available online and on the Minute book. She drew attention to various services that were being cut and the impact of this. Councillor Kevin Guy asked if Councillor Ross was aware that buses were the responsibility of WECA, to which she replied that she was aware, but it seemed that these issues were never taken up with WECA and as Councillor Guy was WECA Deputy Mayor, there was perhaps an opportunity to do so. Councillor Eleanor Jackson asked what could be done to preserve cross border community bus services and Councillor Ross replied that it would be good if there was cross-party consideration of these issues.

Councillor Gavin Heathcote spoke to Council about Sunday 15th March being Mother's Day and also the date for the Bath Half Marathon. He highlighted the serious travel disruption this had caused and queried why the Half Marathon had been held on this day. He explained that there were no clear diversion routes and traffic management was inadequate, creating chaos, and called for these issues to be considered in scheduling future events.

The Chair thanked the Councillors for their statements which were referred to the relevant Cabinet Members.

The meeting ended at 8.35 pm

Chair

Date Confirmed and Signed

Prepared by Democratic Services

Bath & North East Somerset Council	
MEETING:	Council
MEETING DATE:	15th May 2026
TITLE:	Appointment of Committees and Panels and other Annual Business
WARD:	ALL
AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM	
<p>List of attachments to this report:</p> <p>Appendix 1 – Terms of Reference of Panels, Committees and other bodies in the Council’s Constitution</p> <p>Appendix 2 – Proposed political proportionality table</p> <p>Appendix 3 – Member Advocates – Annual Activity report</p>	

1 THE ISSUE

- 1.1 This report invites the Council to consider its non-executive and regulatory Committee arrangements for the Council Year May 2026 to May 2027 and associated annual business.
- 1.2 The Council is also required to formally undertake a statutory review of the political proportionality arrangements (as triggered under section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989) in respect of bodies that are required to be politically proportionate, following the recent change in political group membership.

2 RECOMMENDATION

Council is asked to:

- 2.1 Approve the structure for non-executive and regulatory decision making and Policy Development & Scrutiny working (set out in Appendix 1);
- 2.2 Accordingly, appoint those bodies with membership, terms of reference and delegated powers as set out in the Constitution;
- 2.3 Approve the allocation of seats on those Committees and Panels (such seats to be filled in accordance with the nominations made by the political groups), as set out in Appendix 2, noting the changes that are required as set out in paragraph 3.4;

- 2.4 Appoint to chair each committee and panel those Councillors nominated by the political group allocated chairing rights;
- 2.5 Authorise the Monitoring Officer to fill any casual vacancies in membership of all the bodies constituted and vacancy in the office of Chair of such bodies in accordance with the wishes of the political groups;
- 2.6 Determine the bodies on which co-opted and independent members are to have seats, as either voting or non-voting members and appoint such members accordingly (Appendix 1);
- 2.7 Confirm the continuing B&NES membership on Avon Fire Authority of Councillors Paul May, Onkar Saini and Robin Moss;
- 2.8 Note the arrangements for the conduct of Cabinet business, as set out in section 5 and any updates announced at the meeting;
- 2.9 Note that no special urgent executive decisions have been taken in the last municipal year;
- 2.10 Note the activity of the Member Advocates, as set out in Appendix 3 and confirm the appointments for the 2026/27 municipal year;
- 2.11 Instruct the Monitoring Officer, in consultation with Group Leaders, to make appointments on non-executive outside bodies and note that the Leader or Cabinet Members will do so for executive outside bodies, where such vacancies arise;
- 2.12 Note the calendar of meeting dates that has been prepared up to May 2027 which is available on the Council's website;
- 2.13 Note that regulations came into force from 11th May 2026 to give Councillors access to the Local Government Pension Scheme on an opt-in basis as set out in Section 7;
- 2.14 In light of the above, authorise the Monitoring Officer to amend the Member Allowances scheme to include appropriate reference to Members being eligible to join the Local Government Pension Scheme subject to the legislation being made; and
- 2.15 Authorise the Monitoring Officer to make and publicise any amendment to the Council's Constitution required, or take any other necessary action, as a result of decisions taken at this meeting on this and other reports within the agenda, or otherwise as required by law.

3 APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES AND PANELS AND THEIR CHAIRS AND MEMBERS

- 3.1 The Council's Constitution sets out the approved non-executive and regulatory decision-making structure and the Council's overview and scrutiny arrangements (known as Policy Development & Scrutiny). The size, terms of reference and delegated powers of those bodies are set out in the Constitution and attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

- 3.2 Since the last Council meeting, there has been a change in political group membership, so a review of political proportionality is triggered. A revised structure is attached at Appendix 2. [It shows when a seat is allocated to a particular group, but they have offered it to another group to fill. This offer can be withdrawn at any time and the seat allocation remains with the political group listed in the table.]
- 3.3 A revised proportionality table was agreed at the February 2026 Council meeting, with the proviso that the actual place changes needed to achieve the new totals would be considered by the political groups concerned and notified in due course. **These are still awaited.**
- 3.4 In addition to putting into effect the above changes, the latest group number changes now require further consideration to achieve the newly revised totals ("TOTAL PLACES" row, first page of proportionality table). The changes required are;
- a) The Labour group need to lose two places from any of the bodies in the top table (of the appended proportionality table);
 - b) The Liberal Democrat group need to lose one place from any of the bodies in the top table;
 - c) The Independent group are entitled to one additional place;
 - d) Cllr Grant Johnson, as an unaligned councillor, is entitled to one place;
 - e) Cllr Bharat Pankhania, as an unaligned councillor, is entitled to one place.

Proportionality rules

- 3.5 The law gives detailed guidance on the principles to be applied in calculating the allocation of seats on Committees and Sub-Committees but the basic principles are:-
- a) not all the seats on the body shall be allocated to one particular party;
 - b) the majority of the seats on the body shall be allocated to a particular political group if the number of persons belonging to that group is a majority of the Authority's membership;
 - c) Subject to paragraphs (a) and (b) above, the number of seats on the ordinary Committees of the Authority which are allocated to a political group shall bear the same proportion to the total of all the seats on the ordinary Committees of that Authority as is borne by the number of members of that group to the membership of that Authority;
 - d) subject to paragraphs (a) to (c) above, the number of seats on the body which are allocated to each political group bears the same proportion to the number of all the seats on that body as is borne by the number of members of that group to the membership of the Authority.
 - e) Notwithstanding (a) to (d) above the Act does not restrict the ability of the Council, or Committees where they are authorised by the Council, to decide on the size and number of seats on Committees and Sub-committees, and to

make the actual appointments. A Committee or Sub-committee must, however, comprise at least two voting members.

3.6 Should a political group fail to express its wishes in relation to such appointment within three weeks beginning with the date on which the proper officer gave due written notice, the Council has discretion to make such appointment to that seat as they think fit in accordance with regulation 15 of the same regulations. The seats could be left vacant for a period of time.

3.7 Section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 (the 1989 Act) details how and when appointments to ordinary committees must be allocated, as applying only to those members who are part of a political group. [The Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990 Regulation 8 defines political groups as two or more members of the authority who wish to be treated as a political group by giving notice to the Proper Officer].

3.8 The law also deals with the allocation of committee places to members who do not belong to any political group formally recognised by the Council. It indicates that, where there are members of the Council who do not belong to a political group, a proportion of seats on each body to which appointments are made, equal to the proportion of authority members who do not belong to a political group, will be allocated to the Member(s) concerned.

3.9 There are currently two 'unaligned' councillors.

3.10 The following bodies are not required to be politically proportionate; Area Committees, Health and Wellbeing Board, the Cabinet and any Licensing Committee or Sub-Committee appointed by the Licensing Act 2003.

3.11 Political groups have appointed members to the bodies listed in Appendix 1 and as Chairs of the Policy Development and Scrutiny Panels and the regulatory, non-executive committees. Unless otherwise advised by the political groups, these appointments continue for the 4 year term.

4 CABINET WORKING & REPORT OF SPECIAL URGENT DECISIONS

4.1 Council is reminded that the arrangements for the discharge of executive (Cabinet) functions are the sole responsibility of the Leader of Council.

4.2 The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 require any decisions taken by the Cabinet or single Cabinet Member under special urgency provisions in the previous year to be reported to Council (Constitution rule 3.5.16 refers). This Council has decided that will happen on an annual basis.

4.3 There were no such decisions taken in the last year.

5 MEMBER ADVOCATES

5.1 The Council has appointed a number of Member Advocates to champion the needs of a particular interest;

<https://democracy.bathnes.gov.uk/documents/s86515/Member%20Advocates.pdf>

5.2 The scheme requires a brief annual report to Council about the work the Advocate has done in their role in the preceding year. A summary of these is attached at Appendix 3.

6 APPOINTMENTS ON OUTSIDE BODIES

6.1 Currently, appointments are made by full Council (through delegation to the Monitoring Officer in consultation with Group Leaders) for Council functions, and by the Leader for Cabinet ones.

7 MEMBER ALLOWANCES SCHEME – LOCAL GOVERNMENT PENSION SCHEME

7.1 The government has taken steps to give elected councillors in England access to the Local Government Pension Scheme through the Local Government Pension Scheme (Elected Member Pensions) Regulations 2026.

7.2 Information will be provided to Members about the process for opting into the Avon Pension Fund and benefits of joining, as soon as it's available.

8 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 As the announcement from the Government regarding Members' access to LGPS was not confirmed until 24th February, no specific budget for this was included within the Council's 2026/27 budget approved at February Council. This will be managed in 2026/27 through existing budgets including the growth for 2026/27 pay inflation. If required, a call can be made on the corporate contingency and/or specific pay related earmarked reserves.

8.2 This will then be built into the budget on an ongoing basis for 2027/28 onwards using information from the current year, with respect to take up, to model the actual cost increase.

9 RISK MANAGEMENT

9.1 No risk assessment related to the issue and recommendations has been undertaken as the Council needs to put in place the arrangements contained in this report.

10 EQUALITIES

10.1 Not applicable.

11 ADVICE SOUGHT AND CONSULTATION

11.1 The Council's Chief Executive, Monitoring Officer (Head of Legal and Democratic Services), Section 151 Officer and Director of People & Change have had the opportunity to input to this report and have cleared it for publication.

11.2 Group Leaders have been consulted on relevant aspects of this report.

Contact person	Jo Morrison, Democratic Services Manager (ext 4358)
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Background papers	The Council's Constitution
Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format	

APPENDIX 1 - TERMS OF REFERENCE OF COMMITTEES, PANELS AND BODIES [Extract of Constitution]

2.7 ALICE PARK TRUST SUB-COMMITTEE

2.7.1 Committee Scope

The Sub-Committee shall discharge the Council's functions as sole corporate trustee in respect of the Alice Park Trust, the site and its resources in accordance with Trust's objects and the duties it owes pursuant to the Charities legislation.

To report to the Charitable Trust Board on an annual basis detailing the work undertaken by the Trust in the preceding year and confirming to the Board that the Trust has complied with the objects of the charity and the Charities Legislation.

Appointed by: The Charitable Trust Board

2.7.2 Functions

To discharge the Council's role as Corporate Trustee for the Alice Park Trust, in line with Charities Commission guidance. The objects of the Alice Park Trust are for use as a public park and children's recreation ground.

To agree the Trust's annual budget and business plan.

To approve the use of any reserves.

To agree the Trust's annual accounts.

To receive and respond to the audit findings relating to the annual accounts.

To receive reports on the effective day to day management and financial performance of the Trust.

To allow interested parties to give their view on the performance and direction of the Trust.

2.7.3 Composition

3 Councillors from the membership of the Charitable Trust Board (excluding the lead Cabinet Member) and the 2 Ward Members (voting) for Lambridge plus 2 non-voting independent members.

The Sub-Committee may co-opt other non-voting members as appropriate.

2.7.4 Quorum

3 voting Members.

2.7.5 Substitution

Substitute Members are permitted in line with [Council Procedure Rule 3.1.4](#).

2.8 AUDIT COMMITTEE

2.8.1 Committee Scope

The Audit Committee is responsible for the Council's powers and duties relating to the annual accounts, audit plans, the Annual Governance Statement, risk management arrangements and the other key financial governance procedures.

2.8.2 Functions

1. To approve on behalf of the Council its Annual Accounts, as prepared in accordance with the statutory requirements and guidance.
2. To scrutinise the Treasury Management Strategy and policies, monitor proposed changes and receive treasury management update / outturn reports to monitor compliance.
3. To review and note on behalf of the Council the audited accounts of Council owned companies, in accordance with Council company governance arrangements, statutory requirements and guidance.
4. To monitor the effectiveness of the Council's system of internal control, including arrangements for financial management, ensuring value for money, supporting standards and ethics and managing the authority's exposure to the risks of fraud and corruption. This includes periodically reviewing key financial governance rules / procedures including Financial Regulations, Contract Standing Orders, Anti-Fraud & Corruption Strategy and related policies.
5. To note the External Auditors' Audit Plan and to monitor its delivery and effectiveness during the year, and support effective relationships with the external auditor and other review agencies.
6. To approve the Internal Audit Plan within the budget agreed by the Council and to monitor its delivery and effectiveness (including the implementation of audit recommendations).
7. To consider, prior to signature by the Leader of the Council and Chief Executive, the Annual Governance Statement (including the list of significant issues for action in the ensuing year), as prepared in

accordance with the statutory requirements and guidance; and to monitor progress on the significant issues and actions identified in the Statement.

8. To review periodically the Council's risk management arrangements, make recommendations and monitor progress on improvements.
9. To consider the Auditor's Annual Report from the External Auditor and to monitor progress on accepted recommendations.
10. To monitor and promote good corporate governance within the Council and in its dealings with partner bodies and contractors, including review of the [Council's Code of Corporate Governance](#) and in any such other ways as the Committee may consider expedient (within the budget agreed by the Council).
11. To consider and make recommendations of any other matters relating to corporate governance which are properly referred to the Committee or which come to its attention e.g. the procurement of External Audit Services, monitoring the governance of Council owned companies.
12. To discharge its responsibilities, the Committee and individual members of the Committee can meet privately and separately with the external auditor and / or Chief Audit Executive and have the right to call on any other officer.
13. To make an annual report to Council on the work [and findings] of the Committee, including (if necessary) any measures necessary to improve the effectiveness of the Committee.

In all of the above, the Committee will, as appropriate, wish to develop effective liaison with the following:

- a) the Standards Committee of the Council with regard to matters of ethical governance;
- b) the relevant Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel(s) - to complement but not to duplicate the exercise of their legitimate role in checking compliance with Council processes and policies and in reviewing policies and practice;
- c) relevant Cabinet Members, in particular the Leader and the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Resources, whose portfolios include executive functions related to the matters covered by these terms of reference
- d) the Council when developing the Council's Code of Corporate Governance

2.8.3 Composition

The size of the Panel will be determined by Council. Appointments will be made having regard to rules on political proportionality – as set out in the

[proportionality table](#). There will also be one independent non-voting co-opted member.

2.8.4 Quorum

One quarter of the membership or 3 Councillor/voting Members of the Committee whichever is greater.

2.8.5 Substitution

Substitute Members are permitted in line with [Council Procedure Rule 3.1.4](#).

2.9 AVON PENSION FUND COMMITTEE

[Approved by the Avon Pension Fund Committee 27 June 2025]

2.9.1 Committee Scope

Bath and North East Somerset Council, in its role as administering authority, has executive responsibility for the Avon Pension Fund. The Council delegates its responsibility for administering the Fund to the Avon Pension Fund Committee which is the formal decision-making body for the Fund.

The Avon Pension Fund is a member of the Brunel Pension Partnership (Brunel). Brunel Pension Partnership Ltd (BPP Ltd) will be responsible for implementing the Fund's Investment Strategy. Most of the Fund's assets have transferred to portfolios offered by Brunel with only less liquid legacy assets remaining under direct management of the Fund. Once Avon's assets are held within a Brunel portfolio, the appointment, monitoring and deselection of managers will be the responsibility of BPP Ltd.

2.9.2 Functions and Duties

To discharge the responsibilities of Bath and North East Somerset Council in its role as lead authority for the administration of the Avon Pension Fund. These include determination of all Fund specific policies concerning the administration of the Fund, the investment strategy and the investing of Fund monies and the management of the Fund's solvency level. In addition, the Committee is responsible for all financial and regulatory aspects of the Fund. At all times, the Committee must discharge its responsibility in the best interest of the Avon Pension Fund.

The key duties in discharging this role are:

1. Having taken appropriate advice determining the following:
 - a. the investment strategy and strategic asset allocation

- b. the administration strategy
 - c. the funding strategy.
2. Monitoring the performance of the investment strategy, scheme administration, and external advisors.
 3. Ensuring that the investment strategy can be delivered by the portfolios offered by BPP Ltd. If not, agree alternative arrangements. In relation to Brunel Pension Partnership:
 - a. Monitoring the performance of BPP Ltd in delivering investment services to the Fund. Make representations to the Brunel Oversight Board on matters of concern regarding the service provided by BPP Ltd and the performance of its portfolios.
 - b. Monitoring the governance of Brunel Pension Partnership and making recommendations to the Brunel Oversight Board. Terminating the Service Agreement with BBP Ltd.
 4. Approving and monitoring compliance of statutory statements and policies required under the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations.
 5. Approving the annual budget and 3-year Service Plan and resource requirements to deliver the work plan.
 6. Approving variances to budget within a financial year.
 7. Approving the annual budget for the Pension Board subject to the approval of Pension Board’s work plan.
 8. Commissioning actuarial valuations in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations.
 9. Making representations to government and responding to consultations as appropriate concerning any proposed changes to the Local Government Pension Scheme.
 10. Nominating a representative (and named substitute) from the Committee to represent the Committee on the Oversight Board for Brunel Pension Partnership.

2.9.3 Delegations

In discharging its role, the Committee can delegate any of the above or implementation thereof to the Sub-Committee (referred to as the Investment Panel) or Officers. The current delegations are set out below.

2.9.4 Composition

Voting Members (14)	5 elected Members from B&NES (subject to the rules of political proportionality of the Council) 3 independent members
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	<p>1 elected Member nominated from each of Bristol City Council, North Somerset Council and South Gloucestershire Council</p> <p>1 nominated from the Higher and Further education bodies</p> <p>1 nominated from the Academy bodies</p> <p>1 nominated by the trades unions</p>
Non-voting members (3)	<p>1 nominated from the Parish Councils</p> <p>Up to 2 nominated from different Trades Unions</p>

The Council will nominate the Chair and Vice Chair of the Committee. The Vice Chair will be the Chair of Investment Panel.

2.9.5 Meetings

Meetings will be held at least quarterly. Meetings will be held in public, though the public may be excluded from individual items of business in accordance with the usual exemption procedures.

2.9.6 Quorum

The quorum of the Committee shall be 5 voting members who shall include at least 1 Member not from Bath and North East Somerset Council.

2.9.7 Substitution

Named substitutes to the Committee are allowed.

2.10 AVON PENSION FUND INVESTMENT PANEL

2.10.1 Committee Scope

The role of the Avon Pension Fund Committee Investment Panel shall be to consider, in detail matters relating to the investment of the assets within the strategic investment framework and performance of investment managers in achieving the Fund’s investment objectives.

2.10.2 Functions

The Investment Panel will:

1. Review strategic and emerging opportunities outside the strategic asset allocation and make recommendations to the Committee.
2. Review the performance of the investment and risk management strategies
3. Report matters of strategic importance to the Committee.

And have delegated authority for:

4. Monitoring the transition of assets to the Brunel portfolios and allocate assets to the relevant portfolio offered by Brunel
5. Approve and monitor tactical positions within strategic allocation ranges.
6. Approve allocations to emerging opportunities within the strategic allocations.
7. Approve commitments to Brunel's private market portfolios at each commitment cycle to maintain strategic allocations.
8. For the Risk Management Strategies monitor the outcome versus strategic objectives and consider whether any strategic changes are required to manage emerging risks.
9. For assets held outside Brunel:
 - a) Implement investment management arrangements in line with strategic policy.
 - b) Monitor investment managers' investment performance and make decision to terminate mandates on performance grounds.
10. Monitor the investment performance of the portfolios managed by BPP Ltd and report to Committee on investment matters with specific reference to strategy delivery.
11. Delegate specific decisions to Officers as appropriate.

2.10.3 Composition

The Panel shall comprise a maximum of 6 voting Members of the Avon Pension Fund Committee, of which 3 shall be Bath and North East Somerset Councillors and 3 shall be the independent members of the Committee. (The membership shall include the Chair of the Committee and /or the Vice- Chair).

Note: The appointment of Bath and North East Somerset Councillors to the Panel is subject to the rules of political proportionality of the Council.

Members shall be appointed to the Panel for a period of four years in line with the Avon Pension Fund Committee.

The Council will nominate the Chair of the Panel.

2.10.4 Panel Meetings

Though called a "Panel", it is an ordinary sub-committee of the Committee. Accordingly, meetings must be held in public, though the public may be excluded from individual items of business in accordance with the usual exemption procedures.

The Panel shall meet at least quarterly ahead of the Committee meeting on dates agreed by Members of the Panel.

2.10.5 Quorum

The quorum of the Panel shall comprise 3 Members, who shall include at least one Member who is not a Bath & North East Somerset Councillor.

2.10.6 Substitution

Substitutes for the Panel must be Members of Committee or their named Committee substitute.

2.10.7 Minutes

Minutes of Panel meetings (whether or not approved by the Panel) shall appear as an item on the next agenda of the meeting of the Committee that follows a meeting of the Panel.

2.11 BRUNEL OVERSIGHT BOARD REPRESENTATIVE

2.11.1 Committee Scope

Brunel Oversight Board (the Board) is the primary governance body within the Brunel Pension Partnership. Each Fund within the partnership has a representative on the Board and this representative represents the Committee when discharging its duties.

2.11.2 Functions

Acting for the administering authorities in their capacity as shareholders in BPP Ltd., the Board has responsibility for ensuring that BPP Ltd delivers the services required to achieve investment pooling across the Brunel Pension Partnership.

Subject to the terms of reference for the Board and the applicable shareholder documentation, the Board's role is to consider and address relevant matters on behalf of the administering authorities. These include the monitoring and strategic oversight functions necessary to its role, as well as acting as a conduit and focus of shareholder requirements and views.

Consistent with this role, the Board's duties include reviewing and discussing any matter which it considers appropriate in relation to BPP Ltd including BPP Ltd.'s services, performance, operations, governance, strategy, financing and management.

The main duties of the Board Representative are:

1. To represent the Committee and Shareholder on the Brunel Oversight Board.
2. To ensure that the Committee's views are communicated to the Board and BPP Ltd.
3. To ensure the Fund's and shareholder's interests are protected within Brunel in line with the legal framework within which Brunel operates.
4. To report back to the Committee and Shareholder all relevant issues discussed by the Board and recommendations to the Brunel Client Group and/or the Shareholders.
5. To seek the consensus view of the Committee for Shareholder and Board matters where necessary.
6. To raise issues with the Board at the request of Committee Members, the shareholder representative or Head of Pensions.

2.12 BRUNEL PENSION PARTNERSHIP WORKING GROUP

2.12.1 Committee Scope

This is a group of Committee Members whose role is to consider in greater detail any issues arising from Brunel Pension Partnership with Officers, for example Reserve Matters, papers to be discussed at BOB. This will not include routine investment matters which are monitored by the Investment Panel.

2.12.2 Functions

With regard to any matters arising from Brunel Pension Partnership where the Avon Pension Fund have an interest:

- a) to consider each matter that will be brought to the Pension Committee and / or Shareholder representative for decisions in due course
- b) to provide guidance to the Pension Committee and / or Shareholder Representative in relation to each matter when they are being considered
- c) to provide guidance to the BOB representative as required
- d) to make recommendations to the Pension Committee regarding general oversight of the pool, as considered appropriate.

2.12.3 Composition

This group will consist of:

- a) the BOB Representative,
- b) named BOB substitute
- c) the Chair and/or Vice Chair if not the BOB representative /substitute
- d) an independent committee member.
- e) Head of Pensions
- f) Group Manager, Funding, Investments and Risk

2.12.4 Quorum

The Working Group shall be quorate if three Members are in attendance, with at least 2 that are not fund officers. The Head of Pensions shall chair the Working Group.

2.12.5 Meeting Arrangements

The Working Group shall meet as and when required as determined by the Head of Pensions. Meetings may be via telephone conference.

Key discussions and action points from the Working Group will be recorded and the committee will be updated at the next committee meeting.

2.13 OFFICER DELEGATIONS AVON PENSION FUND

In addition to the responsibilities listed in the Council's scheme of delegation, some additional responsibilities for functions specifically related to pension fund activities and the authorisation of transactions have been delegated to officers by the Pension Fund Committee. These are set out in the Fund's Scheme of Delegation and include the following:

1. Implementation and day to day monitoring of the administration, investment and funding strategies and related policies.
2. Implementing investments in emerging opportunities within strategic allocations, either to be managed outside Brunel or instruct allocation to Brunel portfolio.
3. Implementing investment management arrangements in line with the strategic policy as follows:
 - a. For assets managed outside Brunel, this includes the setting of mandate parameters and the appointment of managers, in consultation with the Investment Panel.

- b. For assets managed within Brunel, deciding and instructing the allocation to each Brunel portfolio.
4. Implement the strategic risk management objectives of the Fund and take necessary action to ensure delivery of strategic outcomes. Ongoing consideration of these issues will be undertaken by the Funding and Risk Management Group (see section 6) who will report decisions and ongoing considerations to the Investment Panel.
5. Rebalancing the investment assets to target strategic allocations, when deemed prudent to do so, taking account of tactical allocations approved by the Investment Panel.
6. Representing the Fund on the Brunel Client Group to develop Brunel investment strategies and policies which effectively support the interests of the Fund.
7. Commissioning Elective Services from BPP Ltd and issuing instructions as permitted by the Brunel Service Agreement to BPP Ltd.
8. The appointment of specialist advisors to support the Committee and Officers in discharging their functions.
9. Determining policies that support the investment and funding strategies having taken expert advice.
10. In consultation with the Chair of the Committee, the Head of Pensions will approve the draft Statement of Accounts and Annual Report for audit.
11. Authorising expenditure from the Fund in accordance with the annual budget.
12. Admitting new admitted bodies into the Fund subject to them meeting Fund policy.
13. The Director – Financial Services, Assurance & Pensions has authority to dismiss investment managers, advisors and 3rd party providers if urgent action is required (does not refer to performance failures but to their inability to fulfil their contractual obligations or a material failing of the company).
14. The Director – Financial Services, Assurance & Pensions has authority to suspend policy (in consultation with the Chairs of Committee and Panel) in times of extreme market volatility where protection of capital is paramount.
15. Under its wider delegated powers, the Director – Financial Services, Assurance & Pensions has delegated authority to effectively manage the liabilities of the Fund including the recovery of debt.
16. Exercising the discretions specified in the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations in connection with deciding entitlement to pension benefits or the award or distribution thereof.
17. Decisions regarding the Local Impact Portfolio Framework are delegated to The Head of Pensions in conjunction with the working group. The Working Group will consist of at least 3 Panel members

including the Chair of the Panel and 1 independent member, plus the Head of Pensions, Group Manager Investments and the Investments Manager. The formal decision is taken by the Head of Pensions as an Officer Decision Report via the democratic reporting processes within Bath and North East Somerset Council.

2.14 FUNDING AND RISK MANAGEMENT GROUP

2.14.1 Committee Scope

The Funding and Risk Management Group (FRMG) is a group of Avon Pension Fund officers and specialist advisors whose role is to consider in greater detail all strategic and operational aspects of the Risk Management Strategies.

2.14.2 Functions

In addition, it has specific delegated authority as follows:

1. Agree the operational structures to meet the strategic objectives determined by the Avon Pension Committee
2. Make changes to the structures as needed to ensure strategic outcomes continue to be achieved or to manage emerging risk
3. Implement the strategies including
 - i. Counterparty selection
 - ii. Trigger frameworks
 - iii. Collateral arrangements
 - iv. Setting benchmarks
4. Determine the framework for monitoring the strategies and reporting to Panel & Committee

2.14.3 Composition

The Group will consist of the following:

From the Avon Pension Fund:

- Head of Pensions
- Group Manager, Funding, Investments and Risk
- Investment Manager
- Senior Investments Officer
- Other Fund Officers as required (for example Funding Manager, Governance & Risk Advisor)

Advisors

- Investment Consultant or deputy
- Risk Consultant or deputy
- Scheme Actuary or deputy
- Investment Manager as required

2.14.4 Quorum

FRMG shall be quorate if the following are in attendance:

- 2 Pension Fund Officers one of which must be the Head of Pensions or Group Manager, Funding, Investments and Risk
- Risk Consultant or deputy
- Investment Consultant or Scheme Actuary

2.14.5 Meeting Arrangements

FRMG will meet as and when required as determined by the Head of Pensions/Group Manager, Funding, Investments and Risk, but at a minimum quarterly. Meetings will be virtual/ by telephone conference.

Meetings will be chaired by the Head of Pensions or Group Manager, Funding, Investments and Risk. Key discussion and action points will be recorded, and minutes will be circulated to the Investment Panel. The group will also update the Panel at the following meeting.

2.15 CHARITABLE TRUST BOARD

2.15.1 Committee Scope

The purpose of the Charitable Trust Board is to facilitate the management of the charitable trusts for which the Council is the sole trustee; independently, in accordance with their governing documents and in the best interests of the charity.

2.15.2 Functions

In respect of the charities listed in Schedule 1 the Charitable Trust Board shall have the following powers delegated to it.

The Role of the Board is to exercise the powers delegated to it for the management of the trust, namely;

- to manage the charity in pursuit of the charitable purposes,

- to manage the finances of the charity and ensure its solvency,
- to ensure the charity acts within the governing documents,
- to ensure the charity deals with their regulatory and public accountability obligations, and
- to identify and manage potential conflicts of interest.

In respect of the charities listed in Schedule 2 the Charitable Trust Board shall investigate the governing documents of each charity and recommend to Council the inclusion of any Charity suitable for incorporation into Schedule 1 and until such time as the Council decides to delegate its functions in respect of such Trust to the Charitable Trust Board it shall advise the Council as trustee on;

- the strategic direction of those Trusts,
- the financial resources needed to operate those Trusts;

The Charitable Trust Board shall, in respect of all Trusts, ensure compliance with the Charity Commission's registration and reporting requirements and periodically consider if Trust's assets could be consolidated and more efficiently /effectively used in conjunction with another Trust. Where appropriate it should consult on consolidation proposals with the Charity Commission and interested parties and make any recommendations for consolidation in its annual report to Council.

Decisions about requests for works to be undertaken, or events to be approved that fall outside of the Charitable Trust Board cycle shall be delegated to the Chair of the Trust Board in consultation with the Lead Officer.

Urgent works required under health and safety legislation shall be delegated to the Lead Officer to action promptly.

The Board shall have the power to create a sub-committee for each charity listed in Schedule 1 to ensure that each charity shall be separately administered. Each sub- committee shall consist of at least 3 Councillors and co-opted voting members consisting of the ward Councillor(s) for the area where any land subject to the Trust is situated and any other non-voting members who may be able to assist it in its work. The Trust Board and each sub-committee shall undertake its duties through meetings as required and will meet at least twice annually.

In any meeting, the affairs of each Trust will be considered separately and in relation to the purpose and governing document of each Trust.

Each sub-committee will report annually to the Trust Board after submitting any annual report to the Charity Commissioners and the Trust Board shall thereafter provide an annual report to Council on the financial standing of each Trust and update the Council on the work undertaken by each Trust in the preceding year

2.15.3 Composition

- Five Councillors (to include the Cabinet Member responsible for Neighbourhood Services and at least one Councillor who is not a Member of the controlling group but whose appointment is determined by the controlling group), and
- One independent person with suitable skills, experience or interests to be appointed by the Board from applicants who wish to be considered following advertisement of the role.

The Board will elect a Chair and Vice Chair.

2.15.4 Quorum

Quorum will be three Councillors. Decisions will be by a majority of the Councillors present.

2.15.5 Substitution

Substitute Members are permitted in line with [Council Procedure Rule 3.1.4](#).

2.15.6 Support Arrangements

Support for the Board and sub-committees as necessary will be provided through the relevant Council sections. Lead advisors will be identified for each Charitable Trust in Schedule 1.

<p align="center">Schedule 1 Charitable Trust for which the Council is sole trustee</p>	<p align="center">Schedule 2 Charitable Trusts for which the Council is responsible</p>
<p>The Alice Park Free Fields (Rainbow Woods)</p>	<p>Weston Recreation Ground 4, The Circus Firs Field Beechen Cliff Backstones Innox Park Post Office Museum</p>

2.16 CHILDREN, ADULTS, HEALTH & WELLBEING POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

2.16.1 Committee Scope

To undertake a system of checks and balances to monitor and review the activity of the Cabinet and to assist with policy development in respect of the functions set out below.

2.16.2 Functions

The Panel remit is:

- Health Scrutiny including Healthwatch and Community Safety
- Public Health
- Integrated Commissioning including, Mental Health & Substances, Children, Better Care Fund, Learning disability, Transformation
- Safeguarding Outcomes
- Care Outcomes including Corporate Parenting
- Inclusion (SEND)
- Prevention (CYP)
- Safeguarding Children & Young People
- Safeguarding of Adults & Quality Assurance including Data Protection & Complaints
- Service Development
- Health, Safety & Wellbeing
- Education Transformation including Virtual Schools, School Improvement and Music
- Delegated Committee for the statutory health scrutiny function under the Health & Social Care Act 2012
- Delegated Crime & Disorder Panel
- Delegated Curriculum Complaints Panel

In addition to General Terms of Reference:

Further to the **Police and Justice Act 2006** (and associated regulations), the designated Crime and Disorder Panel in relation to responsible authorities (or co-operating bodies or persons) may:

- a. review the decisions and performance at least once per year
- b. with reasonable notice, require the attendance of an officer or employee to answer questions, and more recently to include the new Police and Crime Commissioner
- c. require a response in writing to reports and recommendations of the Panel within 28 days, or as soon as reasonably possible

Further to the **Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007** (and associated regulations), the designated Health Scrutiny Committee may:

- a. receive referrals from the Local Healthwatch and acknowledge receipt,

- b. decide which if any of its powers are exercisable in relation to the matter and whether to exercise them (either by Council or by the delegated Committee), and
- c. keep the referrer informed of the Committee's actions and decisions in relation to the matter.

Health Scrutiny - The Health and Social Care Act 2012 requires local authorities with social services responsibilities to have in place arrangements to scrutinise health services. This function is bestowed on the local authority's Full Council but can be delegated however the Full Council sees fit. In Bath & North East Somerset Council, the function is delegated to the Scrutiny Panel with responsibility for health. Councillors on this Panel therefore have a role, as representatives of the public, to hold to account local Health organisations when they are making big decisions about the future of health care provision in Bath & North East Somerset.

Provisions of the Health Scrutiny Regulations

- The council's overview and scrutiny body can scrutinise any NHS Commissioning Board, Clinical Commissioning Group or NHS body that provides services for people in the council's area.
- Local NHS bodies must provide any information the council reasonably requires (excluding information about individuals), and NHS staff can be required to attend and provide information.
- Scrutiny reports can be made to the council and to NHS bodies. If requested, the NHS body must respond within 28 days.
- NHS bodies must consult the designated health scrutiny function of the council about proposals for substantial development or variation of NHS services in the area. Health overview and scrutiny committees and other interested parties can write to request (via a call-in request form) that the Secretary of State consider calling in a proposal if the local authority is not satisfied of the merits for change or if it considers there has been inadequate consultation on the proposals. DHSC expects requests only to be used in exceptional situations where local resolution has not been reached.
- Councils can set up joint health scrutiny committees with one or more other councils. Councils can delegate aspects of this role to another council's overview and scrutiny body. Joint Health Scrutiny Committees also have the power to directly refer a matter to the Secretary of State for Health.
- County councils can co-opt neighbouring authority council members onto their scrutiny committees dealing with health scrutiny, either for an indefinite time or for a particular project.
- Following any health overview & scrutiny topic undertaken, the Committee will make a report with recommendations to NHS bodies

and B&NES Council. Such reports will also be copied to key stakeholders including local MPs, Healthwatch, Clinical Commissioning Groups and/or the NHS Commissioning Board.

2.16.3 Composition

The size of the Panel will be determined by Council. Appointments will be made having regard to rules on political proportionality – as set out in the [proportionality table](#).

2.16.4 Quorum

One quarter of the membership or 3 Councillor/voting Members of the Committee whichever is greater.

2.16.5 Substitution

Substitute Members are permitted in line with [Council Procedure Rule 3.1.4](#)

2.17 CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND SUSTAINABILITY POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

2.17.1 Committee Scope

To undertake a system of checks and balances to monitor and review the activity of the Cabinet and to assist with policy development in respect of the functions set out below.

2.17.2 Functions

The Panel remit is:

- Tackling Climate Emergency¹
- Natural Environment & Green Infrastructure
- Planning Policy, including Conservation and Enforcement
- Building Control & Public Protection including Health & Environment
- Housing, including Strategy, Enabling & Development, Standards & Improvement and Homelessness Policy
- WECA (Housing & Transport)
- Transport & Parking

¹ Whilst this Panel will have primary responsibility for climate change issues, tackling the climate emergency will need consideration by all Panels.

- Highways & Traffic
- Neighbourhoods including Environmental Services
- Waste
- Development & Management
- Designated Flood Risk Management Panel

2.17.3 Composition

The size of the Panel will be determined by Council. Appointments will be made having regard to rules on political proportionality – as set out in the [proportionality table](#).

2.17.4 Quorum

One quarter of the membership or 3 Councillor/voting Members of the Committee whichever is greater.

2.17.5 Substitution

Substitute Members are permitted in line with [Council Procedure Rule 3.1.4](#).

2.18 CORPORATE POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

2.18.1 Committee Scope

To undertake a system of checks and balances to monitor and review the activity of the Cabinet and to assist with policy development in respect of the functions set out below.

2.18.2 Functions

The Panel remit is:

- Democratic & Legal Services including Registration and Electoral Services
- Corporate Finance
- Procurement & Commissioning
- Pensions & Financial Administration
- Management Accounts
- Human Resources & Organisation Development
- Strategy, Engagement & Marketing Including Equalities
- Business Support, Programmes & Performance
- Digital & Customer Services

- Commercial Including Audit & Assurance²
- Property Investment including Estates
- Construction Maintenance & FM
- Heritage, including Tourism & Arts
- Growth & Enterprise including Regeneration, Employment & Skills, Business Growth, Bath Enterprise Area
- WECA (Skills & Business)

2.18.3 Composition

The size of the Panel will be determined by Council. Appointments will be made having regard to rules on political proportionality – as set out in the [proportionality table](#).

2.18.4 Quorum

One quarter of the membership or 3 Councillor/voting Members of the Committee whichever is greater.

2.18.5 Substitution

Substitute Members are permitted in line with [Council Procedure Rule 3.1.4](#).

2.19 EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE

2.19.1 Committee Scope

The committee fulfils a number of functions relating to the Council's role as an employer.

2.19.2 Functions

To exercise all powers and duties of the Council under section 112 of the Local Government Act, 1972 relating to its role as an employer, except those reserved to the Restructuring Implementation Committee.

To hear staff appeals requiring Member level involvement, under accepted national or Council schemes of conditions of service.

To conduct investigatory hearings requiring Member level involvement under accepted national or Council schemes of conditions of service,

² While it is appropriate for scrutiny to pay due regard to the authority's financial position, this will need to happen in the context of the formal audit role which is undertaken by the Council's Corporate Audit Committee

including those relating to disciplinary, capability, grievance and redundancy matters for all staff, including teachers.

To determine on behalf of the Council its powers and duties as an employer relating to pensions.

2.19.3 Composition

The Committee when meeting to consider ordinary business, or as a hearing, will comprise 3 Members having regard to the rules on political proportionality. A chair will be elected at each hearing.

2.19.4 Quorum

3 Members.

2.19.5 Competency

Members shall not sit on the Employment Committee until they have received the necessary training.

2.19.6 Substitution

Substitute Members are permitted in line with [Council Procedure Rule 3.1.4](#) provided they have received the necessary training.

2.20 HEALTH & WELLBEING BOARD

2.20.1 Background

Health and Wellbeing Boards were required to be established in all local authorities under the Health and Social Care Act 2012 as a key mechanism for driving joined up working at a local level.

Health and Wellbeing Boards are committees of the local authority.

The legislative framework for Health and Wellbeing Boards is within the Health and Social Care Act 2012 and the Health and Care Act 2022.

2.20.2 Vision

Together we will address inequalities in Bath and North East Somerset so people have the best start in life, live well and age well in caring, compassionate communities, and in places that make it easier to live physically and emotionally healthy lives

BaNES local authority works with local partners, in partnership with Swindon and Wiltshire as part of the Integrated Care System and with other local

authority partners in the West of England Combined Authority to ensure that those services that are shared across a wider population meet the requirements.

2.20.3 Functions

The Board must undertake the following statutory functions:

- Prepare and publish a Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy (JHWS) for B&NES, setting the vision for desired population level outcomes, strategic direction and high-level priorities for system partners to operationalise, to meet needs identified in the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA), referred to locally as the Strategic Evidence Base.
- Prepare and publish a JSNA (Joint Strategic Evidence Base) of current and future health, care and wellbeing needs of the population and ensure this informs the B&NES JHWS and the B&NES, Swindon and Wiltshire (BSW) Integrated Care Strategy.
- Encourage integrated working between health and social care commissioners, and the use of the Health and Care Act 2022 and the NHS Act 2006 flexibilities to increase joint commissioning, pooled and aligned budgets (where appropriate), to support the effective delivery of the JHWS.
- Work within the Health and Social Care Act 2008 which established the Care Quality Commission as the regulator of all health and adult social care services. It also set out the powers and duties of the regulators, as well as representing the modernisation and integration of health and social care.
- Encourage closer working in planning, commissioning and delivery of services to improve the health and wellbeing of the population of B&NES and reduce health inequalities.
- Prepare and publish a Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment for pharmaceutical services in B&NES.
- Receive and respond to the draft/revised joint forward plan of the BSW Integrated Care Board.
- Be the accountable partnership for the Better Care Fund.

Achieving the vision and fulfilment of the statutory functions will be supported by the following actions. The Board will:

- Be visible and influential, strategic in discussion, championing the improvement of health and wellbeing and reduction in inequalities as important issues. It will influence organisations and partnerships both within and external to the B&NES locality and wider Integrated Care System in reflecting this in their strategic, operational and commissioning plans.

- Develop strong links with and influence developments in wider services that impact on health and wellbeing including planning, transport, housing, environment, economic development, education and community safety in order to address the wider determinants of health, wellbeing and inequalities, and ensure a focus on mental well-being in conjunction with good physical health.
- Ask partners to show how they embed and deliver meaningful action against the priorities in the Health and Wellbeing Strategy.
- Periodically refresh the Health and Wellbeing Strategy in line with evidence from the Joint Strategic Evidence Base.
- Hold itself to account for implementation of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy, monitoring progress and ensuring action is taken to improve outcomes when monitoring or performance indicators show that plans are not working.
- Ensure there are effective and sufficient mechanisms and resource to communicate, engage on and co-produce Health and Wellbeing Strategy priorities with local people and stakeholders, working closely with the Third Sector.
- Consider the Integrated Care Partnership's Integrated Care Strategy when preparing or revising its Health and Wellbeing Strategy; and be active participants in the development of the Integrated Care Strategy.
- Consider whether the ICB's joint forward plan has given due regard to the Health and Wellbeing Strategy.
- Strengthen its attention on community resilience and on identifying and building on community assets.
- Work closely with the B&NES Healthwatch and Third Sector partners to ensure appropriate engagement, involvement and feedback with residents, patients and service users.
- Listen to issues brought to Board meetings through the public speaking standing agenda item.
- Encourage partners presenting agenda items to share how they have involved local people and service users in their proposals or plans.
- Encourage partners to consider sufficient resourcing, both fiscal and human, of the prevention and inequality agendas.
- Seek to secure collaboration in the system to reduce duplication and make best use of available resources.
- Receive a copy of the ICB's joint capital resource plan outlining planned capital resource use, so to help align local priorities and provide consistency with strategic aims and plans.
- Provide strategic oversight and direction to ensure that the approaches adopted for health and wellbeing services are aligned with the aspirations of local partners to operate in a sustainable manner and to address the climate emergency.

- Produce an annual report presented to Cabinet/full Council outlining achievements of the Board in respect of the improvement of health and wellbeing, a reduction of health inequalities for the population of B&NES and influencing Council priorities on the wider determinants of health, dependent on resourcing.

Responsibility for the scrutiny of health and wellbeing will continue to lie with the Council's Policy Development and Scrutiny Panels.

2.20.4 Scope

The Board's scope shall be set out within the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

The Health and Wellbeing Board may consider services beyond health and social care enabling the Board to look more broadly at factors affecting the health and wellbeing of the B&NES population.

2.20.5 Accountability

Those stakeholders with statutory responsibilities will retain responsibility for meeting their individual duties and responsibilities.

The Board will establish on-going and short lived sub-groups as needed that will report to it. Subgroups established will reflect the priorities of the Health and Wellbeing Board such as children and young people, JSNA, updating the Health and Wellbeing Strategy etc.

Accountability for safeguarding lies with the B&NES Community Safety and Safeguarding Partnership (BCSSP).

PROCEDURE

2.20.6 Membership

The Membership of the Board is:

- B&NES Council x 7 (Cabinet Member for Adult Services, Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Chief Executive, Director of Adult Social Care, Director of Children & Education, Director of Public Health and Prevention, Executive Director - Sustainable Communities)
- B&NES Swindon and Wiltshire Integrated Care Board x 2 (ICB Executive Place Director, nominated ICB Officer)
- Healthwatch B&NES x 1
- Avon and Somerset Police x 1
- Avon Fire and Rescue x 1

- Housing provider representative x 1
- Higher and further education representative x 5 to include university research academics
- Health and social care provider and Third Sector representatives x 7 (acute care, community care, primary care, mental health services, and Third sector)
- NHS England x 1

The Board will be chaired by a Cabinet Member nominated by the Leader of the Council and supported by a Vice Chair agreed by the Board.

The Council will provide secretariat support to the Chairperson in setting dates for meetings, preparing agendas, and minuting meetings

In the event of a vote on a substantive matter, the quorum for the meeting will be:

- 3 members of the Council
- 1 member of the Integrated Care Board
- 1 member of Healthwatch B&NES
- 1 health and social care provider or Third Sector representative
- 1 member from either of Avon and Somerset Police or Avon Fire and Rescue
- 1 member from either Higher and Further Education or Housing

Board members may nominate a named substitute from an appropriate member of their organisation or service.

2.20.7 Wider engagement

By working together the Health and Wellbeing Board will proactively embed good public and patient engagement within the day-to-day business of the Board through adhering to the following principles:

- Taking responsibility for good public engagement
- Clarity about purpose
- Harnessing a range of engagement methods
- Engaging with everyone
- Committed to cultural change
- Providing access to information
- In partnership with Healthwatch B&NES and 3SG
- Feeding back engagement results
- Evaluating engagement

The Board will seek to engage all stakeholders (including key health and social care providers) on the JHWS and commissioning plans.

The Council's policy development and scrutiny function offers an opportunity for broader engagement on key issues.

2.20.8 Business management

The Board is a statutory committee of the Council and will be treated as if it were a committee appointed by the Council under section 102 of the Local Government Act 1972.

The Board will act in accordance with the Council's committee procedures.

Formal Board meetings shall be held in public. The Board may resolve to hold closed sessions in accordance with the Access to Information rules.

The Board will develop a work programme framed by the HWS which will guide its work.

The Board will meet at least 5 times per year in public as a minimum, with the flexibility for development sessions and agenda planning meetings held in private.

2.21 INDEPENDENT PERSON PANEL

The Independent Person Panel is an advisory committee appointed by the authority under section 102(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 for the purpose of advising on matters relating to the dismissal of officers designated as the Head of Paid Service, the Chief Finance Officer and the Monitoring Officer (the "Statutory Officers") in accordance with Schedule 3 to the Local Authorities (Standing orders) (England) Regulations 2001 as amended.

The Independent Panel will:

- a) hear, consider, ask questions and comment in respect of Statutory Officer discipline that could lead to dismissal; and
- b) make a report and recommendation to Full Council in accordance with the Council's policies and Employment Procedure Rules

The quorum is 2 Independent Persons (minimum).

The panel will operate in accordance with the following procedure

rules:

- a) The Employment Procedure Rules and Council Procedure Rules will apply to this Panel.
- b) The Independent Person Panel may meet concurrently with the Restructuring Implementation Committee where a hearing or meeting could result in a recommendation to Council for dismissal of a Statutory Officer; or meet separately.
- c) All of the Council's Independent Persons appointed pursuant to section 28 (7) Localism Act 2011 shall be invited to attend and, if at the relevant time there are fewer than two such persons who are able to attend, then the Independent Persons appointed by another neighbouring Council shall be invited to attend.
- d) The Panel shall be appointed from those Independent Persons who have accepted an invitation to be considered for appointment in the following priority order:
 - An Independent Person who has been appointed by the Council and who is a local government elector in the Council's area;
 - Any other Independent Person who has been appointed by the Council;
 - An Independent Person who has been appointed by another local authority or local authorities.
- e) Independent Persons must have undertaken appropriate training.
- f) The Panel shall have access to external legal and professional advice as necessary, via the Monitoring Officer.

2.22 INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL

2.22.1 Preamble:

The Members' Allowances Independent Remuneration Panel is established in accordance with the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003. This requires local authorities to establish and maintain an independent remuneration panel which will broadly have the functions of

providing the local authority with recommendations on its remuneration scheme and the amounts to be paid.

2.22.2 Objects:

1. To make recommendations to the Council on the appropriate form and level of remunerations (as required) for
 - all Councillors (i.e. the basic allowance);
 - special responsibility allowances;
 - childcare and dependent carer's allowances for Councillors;
 - travel and subsistence allowances;
 - conference and meetings allowances.

In providing such advice, the Panel will have regard to:

- the roles which Councillors are expected to fulfil and the differing roles and responsibilities of particular Councillors;
 - the current method of local administration;
 - practice amongst other local authorities in the UK;
 - the current statutory framework for the remuneration of Councillors and the scope which the Council has to establish and vary its own arrangements, and any commentary on that (from the Audit Commission, Local Government Association, Local Government Management Board and other interested parties).
 - the previous recommendations and decisions taken by the Council in respect of the last review.
2. To make recommendations to the Avon Pension Fund (if requested) on the level of remuneration of the Chair and Members.
 3. To make recommendations to the Council (if requested) on any other issues.
 4. To make recommendations to any parish council (if requested) on allowances schemes.

2.22.3 Frequency of Meetings

The Panel will meet as and when necessary, to meet the obligations set out above.

2.22.5 Membership and chairing

The Panel will comprise 4 independent members and the Chair of the Panel will be appointed by the Panel.

2.22.6 Remit of the Panel

The Panel is an independent body and should not be seen to be influenced by the Council. All Members will be expected to assist the Panel with their deliberations. In recognition of the work the Panel will be required to undertake, administrative support will be provided by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services.

Information provide to the Panel will be dealt with on a confidential basis unless otherwise agreed and the Panel will ensure their confidentiality is maintained.

2.22.7 Conditions of Office

The members of the Panel agree to comply with the Bath & North East Somerset Code of Conduct for Members.

The Council will have the right to remove particular members from the Panel in special circumstances such as:

- a. Becoming disqualified from serving on the Panel for any of the reasons set out in the person specification
- b. Persistent non-attendance
- c. Breach of confidentiality
- d. Any conduct that brings the Panel into disrepute and/or prejudices its impartiality or its effective operation.

2.22.8 Indemnity

The members of the Panel will be indemnified by the Council for their work on the Panel.

2.23 LICENSING COMMITTEE

2.23.1 Committee Scope

The Licensing Committee is a statutory committee of the Council appointed to discharge the local authority's licensing functions, except the approval of licensing policies, the setting up of the Committee and the resolution not to issue casino licences.

Licensing policies shall be the responsibility of the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Community Services except where there is a statutory requirement for Full Council to determine policies.

The setting up of a Licensing Committee shall be the responsibility of Full Council and its members shall operate in accordance with the [Good Practice guide](#) approved by Council.

2.23.2 Functions

1. At the request of the Council, to review the Council's licensing policies at any time within the statutory period under the Licensing Act 2003 and Gambling Act 2005 and to make recommendations to the Council for change, after the prescribed consultation has been completed.
2. To carry out all of the Council's licensing functions as covered in the Licensing Act 2003 and the Gambling Act 2005, excluding the making of licensing policies, the setting up of a Licensing Committee and the resolution not to issue casino licences (these being functions of the Council).
3. To determine individual licence applications which fall outside Officer delegations, or which are referred by Officers for Member attention, in relation to the issue and renewal of all registrations, licences, permits, consents etc. in relation to the enactments listed below and all such enactments as may fall within the remit of the Committee.
4. To determine appeals against decisions made by the Proper Officer under the Marriages and Civil Partnerships (Approved Premises) Regulations 2005.
5. To establish one or more Sub-Committees and, subject to statutorily prescribed exceptions, to delegate any of its functions to such Sub Committee(s).
6. Subject to statutorily prescribed exceptions, to delegate any of its functions to an Officer of the authority.

2.23.3 Composition

The size of the Committee will be determined by Council. Appointments will be made having regard to rules on political proportionality – as set out in the [proportionality table](#).

2.23.4 Quorum

One quarter of the membership or 3 Councillor/voting Members of the Committee whichever is greater.

2.23.5 Competency

Members of the Licensing Committee shall not sit on the Licensing Committee until they have attended training.

2.23.6 Substitutions

Substitute Members are permitted in line with [Council Procedure Rules](#) and having received licensing training.

2.24 LICENSING SUB-COMMITTEE

2.24.1 Committee Scope

This Licensing Sub-Committee shall hear and determine all licence applications as set out in the Bath and North East Somerset Council [Statement of Licensing Policy](#)

2.24.2 Functions

The Licensing Sub Committee has appointed by the Licensing Committee to discharge the Council's licensing functions.

2.24.3 Composition

Licensing Sub-Committee shall consist of 3 Members in accordance with political proportionality.

2.24.4 Quorum

The quorum shall be three.

2.24.5 Substitutions

Substitutes for the Licensing Sub Committee will be drawn from the membership of the Licensing Committee. Any Member of the Licensing Committee substituting at a Licensing Sub-Committee meeting will do so in accordance with the wishes of the political group arranging the substitution.

A substitute will substitute for the entirety of the meeting.

2.25 PARISH LIAISON MEETING

2.25.1 Committee Scope

Parish Liaison is a partnership meeting between Bath & North East Somerset Council and the parishes within its district to facilitate the way in which they work together to serve the people of Bath and North East Somerset.

The [Parish Charter](#) is the framework within which the Parish Liaison meetings operate and support the implementation of the Charter's key principles of:

- Respecting and valuing each other
- Strengthening relationships
- Providing practical support

- Making the best of our skills and resources

2.25.2 Functions

The Parish Liaison meeting does not have any decision-making powers but can advise and make representations to Bath & North East Somerset Council.

2.25.3 Composition

Membership of the Parish Liaison meeting is limited to elected representatives of Bath & North East Somerset Council and representatives of the parishes within the district.

Bath & North East Somerset Council will appoint representatives to the Parish Liaison meetings in such numbers as it decides.

The parishes will each be entitled to send their nominated representative (usually the Chair of the Council) and their Clerk to the meetings. Additional parish representatives may attend subject to notification to Democratic Services prior to the meeting and the subsequent approval of the Chair of the meeting.

The Avon Local Councils Association for Bath and North East Somerset will be entitled to send representation to the meetings in their own right.

Officers of Bath & North East Somerset Council will attend meetings as necessary to advise and assist discussion.

2.25.4 Meetings

There will normally be three meetings per year, held in open session.

Meetings will usually be held in the evening for no longer than three hours.

There is an option for one of these meetings to be 'conference style' for networking and to provide training; updates; briefing and presentations on good practice from parishes. Where appropriate these will also be provided at other meetings in the cycle.

The meetings will be chaired by an agreed, elected representative of Bath & North East Somerset Council. The meeting Chair shall act independently and work on behalf of the Parish Liaison meeting for the wider benefit.

The Parish Liaison meeting is not a statutory meeting of the Council.

The general public may attend Parish Liaison meetings as observers but have no automatic right to speak or make statements. The Chair may exercise their discretion if a member of the public has given notice prior to

the meeting date that they wish to raise an item of general interest and relevance to the membership.

Agendas and papers for meetings will be circulated a minimum of seven calendar days before a meeting. A record of each meeting will be taken.

2.25.5 Conduct at Meetings

The Parish Liaison meeting recognises that the Council and parishes have a common purpose to promote the wellbeing of Bath and North East Somerset; and serve the same residents. While the meeting relies on open discussions there is a need to respect and value each other's views and opinions.

Attendees will:

- Engage positively in discussions
- Working together on finding solutions
- Sharing good practice
- Help strengthen relationships

All those attending Parish Liaison meetings shall be accorded the same degree of respect, dignity and consideration by all other attendees, irrespective of people's protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation and with regard to equalities legislation.

2.25.6 Agenda Setting

Parish Liaison will convene a sub-group for the purpose of setting the agendas for Parish Liaison as well as monitoring the Parish Charter. The sub-group will consist of representatives from the Council, parishes and Avon Local Councils' Association for Bath and North East Somerset.

Agenda items of relevance for discussion at Parish Liaison meetings will be those:

- That are strategic or legislative issues
- That have direct impact on all, or a significant number of parishes
- That support an effective working partnership between tiers of local government
- That relate to the Parish Charter
- Where a collective view from parishes would be helpful

Items that are not relevant for Parish Liaison will be those:

- That relate to a single, or small number of parishes, other than important items raised by a single parish or a small number of parishes that are agreed by the Parish Liaison agenda setting group which will be included on the agenda
- For which other, effective channels of communication exist
- That are day to day operational issues
- That need to be addressed immediately

The agenda items will take account of other local Forums' interests in discussions on topics and will avoid duplication where possible. Further information on protocols can be found in the Parish Toolkit.

The infrequency of Parish Liaison meetings means that it is not a practical forum through which to engage in routine enquiries and those that require immediate action.

2.25.7 Review

The Terms of Reference will be reviewed annually, and any agreed changes will be ratified at the Annual General Meetings of Bath & North East Somerset Council and Avon Local Councils' Association for Bath and North East Somerset, usually held in May.

2.25.8 Definition of terms

For the purposes of these Terms of Reference, the term 'parishes' relates to Town, Parish and Village Councils and Parish meetings.

2.26 PLANNING COMMITTEE

2.26.1 Committee Scope

The Committee will exercise the Council's functions as Local Planning Authority. The Committee will also discharge the Council's powers and duties in respect of public rights of way and commons registration. All of the Committee's decisions are subject to the applicable schemes of delegation, depending on the specific decision being taken. In addition, decisions of the Committee on planning matters are subject to the limit on delegations of functions as described below. With regard to planning decisions, the Committee will act in accordance with the planning policy framework for B&NES which includes National Planning Policy Guidance, the National Planning Policy Framework and in accordance with the [Council's Planning Code of Conduct](#).

2.26.2 Functions

The Committee has delegated authority to exercise the Council's functions as Local Planning Authority.

The Committee has delegated authority to exercise the Council's powers and duties in respect of public rights of way and commons registration.

The Committee has delegated authority to establish working practices and protocols for operation on a District-wide basis.

The Committee has delegated authority to exercise all the Council's powers and duties in respect of:

- (1) Modification Orders, Reclassification Orders and Public Path Orders where the matters are contentious.
- (2) Commons Registration (including Town and Village Greens) where the matters are contentious.

Note 1 – *The Assistant Director Highways and Transport and Team Manager - Highway Maintenance and Drainage have been delegated general as well as specific responsibility in respect of these functions.*

Note 2 – *For these purposes, 'contentious' is defined as an application which receives more than 12 objections or an application which has received an objection from either the affected parish/town council or one of the affected ward Members.*

Limitation on delegation of functions

The exercise of this delegated authority is subject to the Director with overall responsibility for planning, or the Head of Planning (or any of the other Managers specifically listed in the Planning Scheme of Delegation when standing in for the Head of Planning) being authorised, in exceptional circumstances, to refer any decision or determination of the Planning Committee which is clearly contrary to law or locally or nationally adopted planning policy and against officer advice, to a subsequent meeting of the Planning Committee. When such a decision or determination is referred, it shall be of no effect until the Committee has fully reconsidered the matter in the light of all the information originally before the Committee plus such additional information and advice as the Director or the Head of Planning (as the case may be) considers necessary. Further to such reconsideration, the Committee shall be entitled to make such decision or determination as it sees fit.

The [Planning scheme of delegation](#)

2.26.3 Composition

The size of the Committee will be determined by Council. Appointments will be made having regard to rules on political proportionality – as set out in the [proportionality table](#).

2.26.4 Quorum

One quarter of the membership or 3 Councillor/voting Members of the Committee whichever is greater.

2.26.5 Competency

Members of the Committee shall not sit on the Committee until they have attended training.

2.26.5 Substitution

Substitutions will be permitted at meetings of the Committee from among other Members of the Council having attended training.

A substitute will substitute for the entirety of the meeting.

2.26.6 Support arrangements

In exercising the above powers and duties, the Committee may also:

- establish such sub committees and working parties as are considered helpful in exercising the above functions.
- delegate any of its functions to a sub-committee and to delegate any of its non-policy making functions to Officers (see delegation scheme).
- To monitor service delivery and service trends and to make recommendations.
- To be a body of influence across its geographical area of responsibility and with the community in its area.
- To engage in consultation with the community and specifically with other bodies which have an interest in the span of responsibility of this Committee.
- To participate with others in joint initiatives on planning.

2.27 RE-STRUCTURING IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE

2.27.1 Committee Scope

To determine all necessary arrangements for implementing the indicative senior management structure.

2.27.2 Functions

To decide on numbers of 1st and 2nd Tier officers and the span of work responsibility allocations for those officers.

To determine appointments to or dismissal from the posts of Director and other JNC Officers reporting to the Chief Executive, or Head of Paid Service, subject to there being no objection to the appointment / dismissal being lodged by the Leader of the Council.

To recommend to the Council the appointment or dismissal of the Head of Paid Service, the Monitoring Officer and the Chief Financial Officer in accordance with the Statutory Officers Disciplinary process including the power to suspend a statutory officer and appoint external advisors as appropriate.

To take any disciplinary action short of dismissal in respect of a Statutory Officer in accordance with the Statutory Officers disciplinary process.

Approving any special severance cases for any employee above £20,000 up to a maximum of £100,000. Approving all voluntary redundancy and flexible retirement cases for any employee that are in excess of £100,000 on total costs including redundancy, pay in lieu of notice, holiday pay and pension costs.

Compulsory redundancy cases in excess of £100,000 do not require approval of the RIC, but a note will be shared at the next available meeting for information or communicated to RIC Members if no meeting is scheduled.

2.27.3 Composition

The size of the Committee will be determined by Council. Appointments will be made having regard to rules on political proportionality – as set out in the [proportionality table](#).

Non-voting attendance rights are in place for those Group Leaders not part of the voting membership.

2.28 STANDARDS COMMITTEE

2.28.1 Committee Scope

Promote and maintain high standards of conduct by Councillors; Parish Councillors; co-opted members and church and parent governor representatives.

Oversee the effectiveness of the Council's Constitutional arrangements from an ethical perspective and make recommendations to the Council on any desirable or necessary changes.

Recommend to the Council Codes of Conduct and Practice or Protocols for Members and/or employees of the Council, including planning issues and Arrangements for dealing with complaints.

Monitor and review such Codes and Protocols and the Register of Members interests

2.28.2 Functions

Consider and determine any allegations of misconduct against Members of the Council in accordance with the Codes and the Arrangements for dealing with complaints against Councillors

Grant dispensations to Councillors; Parish Councillors; co-opted members and church and parent governor representatives relating to disclosable pecuniary interests as set out in the Localism Act 2011.

Consider

- any application for exemption from political restrictions in respect of a post, by the holder of that post, and
- any application from any person for a direction requiring a post to be included in the list of politically restricted posts.

Consider any reports from the Council's Monitoring Officer regarding illegality, unlawfulness or maladministration and any report of the Local Government Ombudsman.

Consider and determine the Council's response to any internal or District Audit regulatory recommendations referred to the Committee by the Monitoring Officer.

Make representations to the Government, Local Government Association and other external bodies on matters relating to the general principles of conduct for Members and employees of the Council.

Make arrangements for training to Councillors; Parish Councillors; co-opted members and employees in connection with any matter within the terms of reference of the Committee.

Liaise with the District Auditor and the Local Government Ombudsman in connection with any matter within the committee's terms of reference;

Recommend to the Council from time to time as necessary the appointment of Independent Members to the Committee following open advertisement, short listing and interview.

2.28.3 Composition

- 5 x elected Members (voting)
- 3 x independent members - one of whom will chair the Committee (non-voting)
- 3 x Parish representatives (non-voting)
- The Independent Persons will be invited to attend the meeting and provide relevant comment.

Elected member appointments will be made having regard to rules on political proportionality – as set out in the [proportionality table](#).

2.28.4 Quorum

For ordinary business, the quorum is 3 Members, plus one independent member. When considering parish matters, the quorum shall include at least one parish representative.

For considering individual cases, the quorum shall be 5 Members, including at least one independent member, and if a parish matter, at least one parish representative.

No more than one Cabinet Member may be appointed to the Committee. The Leader of the Council may not be a member of the Committee. In no circumstances may a Cabinet Member chair a meeting of the Standards Committee.

2.28.5 Substitution

Substitute Members are permitted in line with [Council Procedure Rule 3.1.4](#).

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POLITICAL PROPORTIONALITY TABLE – DRAFT MAY 2026

Compulsory cumulative proportionality	No. on Cttee	Liberal Democrat	Labour	Independent	Independents for B&NES	Green	Conservative	Unaligned	Chair Allocation	Vice Chair Allocation	Co-opted members
		38	6	5	3	3	2	2			
		64%	10%	8%	5%	5%	3%	3%			
Corporate PD&S	9	6	1	1	1				LAB	LD	
Climate Emergency & Sustainability PD&S	9	6	1		1	1			LD	LAB	
Children, Adults, Health & Wellbeing PD&S	9	6	2		1	1*			LD	LAB	4
Planning Committee	10	7	1	1			1		LD	LD	
Audit Committee	5	3	1			1			LAB		1
Avon Pension Fund Committee	5	3	1			1			LD	LD	12 voting 3 non voting
Employment Committee	3	3							LD		
Standards Committee **	5	3		1			1		LD	LD	6 non voting
Restructuring Implementation Committee	5	3	1	1							Ind B&NES, Greens + Cons GLs non-voting places
CURRENT ALLOCATED PLACE (pre-changes)	60	40	8	4	3	3	2	0			
TOTAL PLACES (post changes)	60	38.6	6.1	5.1	3.1	3.1	2.0	2.0			

* Independents for B&NES Group offering their seat to the Green Group

** Standards cttee: current working practice is that the Chair is an independent member, unless Chair vote required

Compulsory individual proportionality	No. on Cttee	Liberal Democrat	Labour	Independent	Independents for B&NES	Green	Conservative		Chair Allocation	Vice Chair Allocation	Co-opted members
Licensing Sub-Committee	3	2+1***	(1)***	(1)***			(1)***		LD		
Optional proportionality											

Licensing Committee	11	8	1	1			1		LD		
Fixed memberships											
WECA Overview & Scrutiny Committee	2	2									
WECA Audit Committee	2	2									
Health & Wellbeing Board	2	2 (appropriate Cabinet Members)							Shared between CM & CCG Chair (or equivalent)		
Pensions Investment panel	3 (Chair & Vice of APF)	2	1								3
Charitable Trust Board	5	1 Cab Mem + 3	1								
Alice Park Trust	5	3				2 (Ward member)					2

CTB - 5 councillors (to include Cabinet member responsible for Community Services) plus at least 1 Councillor who is not a member of controlling group but appointed by controlling group, plus 3 others).

APT – 3 Councillors from the membership of the Charitable Trust Board (*excluding the Cab Member*) + the 2 Ward members for Lambridge as voting members + 2 co-opted non-voting members.

*** No other group prepared to fill the Licensing Sub place hence 3 LDs

MEMBER ADVOCATES – ANNUAL ACTIVITY REPORT 2025-26

Councillor Jess David – Member Advocate for Green Infrastructure and Nature Recovery

As Member Advocate for Green Infrastructure and Nature Recovery, I have continued to support the Council's environmental priorities through partnership working, community engagement, and practical local action. Key activity this year has included:

- Attending the B&NES Climate and Nature Network Forum in November, contributing to discussions on climate resilience, biodiversity, and green infrastructure priorities and meeting with local partners.
- Meeting with the Bath Allotment Association to view successful examples of the Water My Plot initiative and supporting a further bid for Neighbourhood CIL funding to expand this programme.
- Taking part in local conservation sessions with the Parks Department and Your Parks B&NES, helping to improve green spaces and strengthen community involvement. Worked with local Friends groups to carry out planting schemes and wider nature recovery initiatives in local parks and open spaces.
- Developing a community event as part of the Local Nature Festival (June 2026), helping to promote awareness and engagement with biodiversity and the natural environment.
- Continuing to advocate through correspondence and casework on environmental matters, including river health, biodiversity, and habitat protection.
- Attending and inputting to regular Climate and Nature team meetings.

Cllr Fiona Gourley – Member Advocate for Rural Communities

Public Transport

- Worked with Transport Cabinet Leads and B&NES Bus Team and attended WECA meetings to represent B&NES residents and to develop better strategies, policies and services. Advocated to restore regular and reliable public transport to underserved communities, particularly in rural areas.
- Spoke about impact of lack of rural transport on residents to Lib Dem Conference, WECA and B&NES Council and in local media.
- Aimed to represent all rural residents across B&NES by working cross-party with other councillors to understand issues and support campaigners.
- Met First Bus regularly and worked closely to find solutions to bus-related problems, including poor facilities in Bath Bus Station.
- Campaigned against bus funding reductions from Government via WECA, including launching bus petition and securing media coverage.

- Attended briefings on car clubs and EV charging and advocated to officers for better provision in rural areas.

Village Agents

- Advocated for Village Agents scheme to Cabinet during budget process; promoted Villages Agents in newsletters; spoke about the role of Village Agents at Parish Council meetings and to residents who might benefit from their service.

Local Plan

- Discussed Local Plan with all Parish Councils and at village meetings, presentations and with individual residents.
- Championed the needs of rural communities for appropriate local housing at Informal Cabinet, Council, Group meeting and lobbying of individual Cabinet leads.
- Supported residents concerned about changes in Local Plan relating to Somersetshire Coal Canal.

Other

- Supported rural businesses e.g. listing of Apple Tree as asset of Community Value in Shoscombe.

Councillor Kevin Guy – Member Advocate for Armed Forces and Veterans

In addition to the annual Remembrance Service, over the past year we have marked the annual flag raising in Parade Gardens in recognition of Armed Forces Day, the 80th anniversary of VJ Day, and celebrated the life of Bath resident and war veteran Stan Ford, who survived the D-Day landings, and who died at the age of 100.

Thank you to the City of Bath Armed Forces and Veterans Breakfast Club for the very generous donation of a new Armed Forces Day Flag. Club members gifted the flag to be used at our annual ceremony, marking the start of Armed Forces Week, on 22 June.

Councillor Alan Hale – Member Advocate for Safer Roads

Over the past year, I have actively fulfilled the role of Member Advocate for Safer Roads, providing support and advice to councillors on road safety matters.

I have worked constructively with the Ward Councillor to address concerns at a problematic junction, contributed to consultations on road layout changes and speed limit reviews, and strengthened engagement through meetings with my Cabinet Member.

I look forward to building on this progress through continued collaboration with the road safety team.

Councillor Ian Halsall – Member Advocate for Engagement with Students

Over the past year, I have continued working closely with the Student Community Partnership (SCP). We had a successful Moving In campaign which covered a wider area than it has previously, extending over 6 wards, and relaunched the British Heart Foundation recycling points as part of a successful Moving Out campaign.

The SCP has continued its excellent work to encourage good relationships between student and permanent residents (particularly around being good neighbour and providing guidance around waste and recycling services) and has continued important work with partners around river safety, evening personal safety and housing.

Councillor Liz Hardman – Member Advocate for Children Looked After

As Corporate Parents, we all have a duty to our children in care. However, I requested to become the advocate for Children Looked After so I could be more involved in improving their outcomes.

Part of my role as member advocate for Children Looked After is that I am a governor of the virtual school. Every CLA is a pupil at this virtual school. The children's attainment and progress are monitored very carefully as well as their attendance and behaviour. As a governor, I attend meetings three times a year. The outstanding virtual School Headteacher gives us a report on our CLA. The most recent report described how improved relations were between our local college and our CLA. One of the most important statistics is that for the past four years, not one CLA has been permanently excluded. This is down to the outstanding leadership of the virtual school Headteacher.

As a result of one of our Corporate Parents meeting, it was decided that a subgroup would be set up to meet with our care experienced young people to discuss issues with them face-to-face. This group has met twice and is made up of Jean Kelly, Director of Children's services, Jo Parker and Charlotte Egmore James, B&NES officers for Off the Record and CLA, Cllrs Dine Romero, Lesley Mansell, Joanna Wright and myself. The issues we discussed which were of importance to our care experienced young people were getting themselves onto Category A of Home Search when looking for accommodation. The other issue was help in getting a driving licence. These issues were resolved and reported to the most recent Corporate Parents meeting, where substantial progress has been made due to this subgroup.

As Chair of B&NES Council, I have been able to do more for our CLA. A new pledge video was produced by our young people stating what the duties of Corporate Parents were. At the Council meeting on March 19, I showed this video to the full

Council, reminding them of our duties as Corporate Parents and hoping more of our councillors would attend Corporate Parents meetings.

Finally again, as Chair, I unveiled one of the Sycamore saplings which had been donated to Alice Park. This sapling was dedicated to our CLA and care experienced young people . It was called the tree of life. Many of our CLA were invited to attend and it was wonderful to see how much it meant for them to have a tree named after them.

Councillor Saskia Heijltjes – Member Advocate for Active Travel – Bath

I have undertaken a range of activities to promote active travel in Bath including initiating a Dott e-scooter, e-bike and e-cargo bike demonstration for the Larkhall Festival in May 2026, and launching the first ever Bike Bus in BANES. I have also maintained engagement with strategic and policy processes by having regular meetings with cabinet members Cllrs Joel Hirst and Lucy Hodge and various officers.

On the infrastructure and advocacy side, I have submitted comments on various planning applications and highways projects to champion active travel provision, and raised numerous issues directly through Fix My Street to address problems on the ground. I also attended several online events on active travel and the Playing Out Conference in Bristol in March 2026, which provided valuable opportunities to connect with peers and draw on best practice from across the country.

Councillor Ruth Malloy – Member Advocate for Great Spa Towns of Europe and Twinning

Aix en Provence: Marian McNeir organised another successful ‘art & gardens’ visit to Aix in September 2025.

Alkmaar: 2025 was the 80th anniversary of our friendship link. The Mayor of Alkmaar visited in July 2025. bath-alkmaar.org.uk, and many organisations continue their exchanges.

Beppu: the monthly Japanese culture & language club continues to be popular. It was the first time the BBFA had taken part in the Bath Christmas Market, and it went very well.

Braunschweig: 2026 is the 55th anniversary of the official twinning agreement, but the first exchanges took place 75 years ago.

bath-braunschweigtwinningassociation.org.uk

Kaposvar: the civic link is still strong, and we hope that the twinning link will soon be revived at the local level.

Oleksandriya: the Friends of Oleksandriya (FoO) organised a 4th concert in the Abbey to commemorate Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022, as well as many other

fund-raising events. www.friendsofo.co.uk It's now possible to join the FoO as a member to show your support.

Summer 2025 **Boules inter-twinning association competition**, with teams from the BATA, BBTA and BAenPTA competing ; needless to say, the BAenPTA won!

Christmas Market 2025: BATA, BBFA and BAenPTA were represented (3 days each) during the final 9 days, at the new community chalet location in Milsom Street. All are very appreciative of this opportunity to promote Bath's international links to the wider public.

Twinning Forum: meetings were held on 24th July 2025 and on 5th February 2026.

European Local Links (European Movement UK): Marian McNeir (Oleksandriya, Ukraine), Liz Mills (BATA), and I attended occasional (mainly online) meetings during the year, to understand better how these partnerships can support our local communities more broadly.

Finally, **Chris Baker (Off the Wall Films)** has shown many international films, in the original languages, over the past year, in collaboration with several twinning/friendship organisations: his support is very much appreciated

Councillor Sarah Moore – Member Advocate for Accessibility

This year I have met with many groups to discuss accessibility issues; I have attended a number of meetings as well to discuss everyday issues that need to be addressed.

This year has seen a large increase in funding to improve our footpaths; however, I have written to the Cabinet Member responsible for Highways to request more is done to improve the dropped kerbs at junctions by installing more tactile paving and also making sure they are clear of obstructions, especially in our town centres.

I have also written to the Cabinet member responsible for our parks to request our policies are reviewed for play equipment renewal to ensure more accessible play equipment is installed across the Bath and North East Somerset area. Every child deserves to be able to access play equipment without the need to travel long distances.

Councillor Michelle O'Doherty – Member Advocate for Homeless People

Bath & North East Somerset continues to face significant housing pressures, mirroring the national picture. Demand for social housing remains extremely high, while affordability and poor housing conditions continue to affect many residents. The council is continuing to progress affordable and social housing schemes and advanced the Local Plan Reset. The new Renters' Rights Bill, including the long-awaited end of Section 21 "no fault" evictions, is also expected to provide greater

security for tenants. Meanwhile, local support groups assisting rough sleepers and vulnerable residents are supporting increasing numbers of people each week.

Councillor Shaun Stephenson-McGall – Member Advocate for Active Travel – North East Somerset

Together with Cllr Saskia Heijltjes, I've had regular meetings with cabinet members, Cllr Joel Hirst and Cllr Lucy Hodge, to discuss Active Travel schemes and overall strategy. In addition, I've had meeting with officers and on occasion individual NES Councillors.

I've attended various online webinars and conferences around Active Travel especially those organised by Living Streets, the UK charity for everyday walking.

I've actively joined their campaign for the prohibition of pavement parking in England. This national campaign was a partial success, and the English Devolution & Community Empowerment Bill should reach Royal Assent this month. It's disappointing not to see a nationwide prohibition, instead handing the power to local leaders to ban pavement parking. This will result in inconsistency across England for communities and drivers, which increases risks for everyone using our streets. It makes it a political choice, but the fact is, pavement parking endangers lives of the most vulnerable. These new powers do not go far enough to protect pedestrians. Disabled people, parents with buggies and older residents shouldn't have to depend on individual local authorities' appetite and capacity to enforce. In the short term from this autumn, local authorities will be able to enforce against unnecessary obstruction of pavements using civil enforcement officers (CEOs). I will do my best as the Member Advocate for Active Travel (NES) to encourage WECA & B&NES to act against pavement parking as strongly as possible.

Councillor Andy Wait – Member Advocate for Rivers and Waterways

As always, it has been a busy year on the rivers. Those nerds who remember my last report will know that I left it on a cliff hanger with the lives of cygnets and young ducklings in grave risk, due to the unprotected drains in the locks at Widcombe. Amy from Bath Swan Rescue, and residents taking on the Canals and River Trust (CRT) to try to stop the young birds being sucked down the drains due to the workings of the locks. We had some success and have been working since that time with CRT, who don't consider this to be a top priority. Last year we had some successes but also some fatalities. The work goes on as the bird nesting season is once more upon us.

I have become a River Detective and Water Guardian looking after a stretch of the River Chew from Albert Weir to the mouth of the Chew when it runs into the River Avon near the Lockkeeper Inn. It involves taking monthly tests of the river quality, for nitrates and phosphates and sending my results to the Bristol and Avon Rivers Trust (BART) as well as looking out for pollution and other issues.

Finally, Oli Henman and I are looking at bringing a motion to council regarding an Avon Charter to look at giving protective legal powers to the River Avon in an attempt to bring those who pollute the river to justice. We are working with all the councils who form part of the course of the River Avon.

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Bath & North East Somerset Council	
MEETING:	Council
MEETING DATE:	14 May 2026
TITLE:	Expansion of WECA
WARD:	All
AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM	
<p>List of attachments to this report:</p> <p>Please list all the appendices here, clearly indicating any which are exempt and the reasons for exemption:</p> <p>Appendix 1 - Expansion of the West of England Combined Authority: Proposal</p> <p>Appendix 2 - Consultation on North Somerset Council joining West of England Combined Authority – findings report</p>	

1 THE ISSUE

- 1.1 The West of England Combined Authority (WECA) will meet on [5 June 2026](#) to consider a report seeking support for the Mayor to submit a proposal to Government to expand the West of England Combined Authority membership to include North Somerset Council.
- 1.2 The formal power to submit the expansion proposal sits with the Mayor and the Leader of North Somerset Council . However, Government has indicated it requires assurance that there is support for the decision from other (WECA) Committee members.
- 1.3 Council is invited to endorse the expansion proposal in advance of the WECA's [5 June 2026](#) Committee meeting.

2 RECOMMENDATION

Council is asked;

- 2.1 To indicate in principle support for the proposed expansion of the West of England Combined Authority to include North Somerset Council.**

3 THE REPORT

- 3.1 In [October 2025](#) the WECA Committee agreed to explore the potential expansion of WECA to include North Somerset Council.
- 3.2 The proposed expansion will enhance regional collaboration, unlock significant new funding streams, and ensure that all residents are fully represented in strategic decision-making.
- 3.3 North Somerset is already connected to the wider West of England economy through cross-boundary travel, business relationships, and shared infrastructure.
- 3.4 Formal inclusion will enable more integrated planning and delivery for transport, housing, skills, and economic growth, benefiting communities across Bath & North East Somerset and the region.
- 3.5 A detailed expansion proposal was developed (see appendix 1), which built on the evidence base in the West of England [Growth Strategy](#) and reflected Government policy direction on devolution and strategic authorities.
- 3.6 A further report was taken to the [January 2026](#) Committee which agreed to submit a proposal for expansion and to launch a statutory [public consultation](#). This took place from 13 February 2025 to 13 April 2026.

Consultation results

- 3.7 The consultation on membership received 1,275 responses, of which 1,268 have been included in analysis and reporting. The full published findings can be seen in **appendix 2**.

(Breakdown of responses by Constituent Authority is not available at the point of writing.)

Headlines:

- In response to the question ‘Do you believe that North Somerset Council should join WECA?’ Over half of all respondents believe that North Somerset Council should join West of England Combined Authority (57%), compared with 38% who do not believe they should join.
 - Respondents to the consultation are more likely to agree that working across a wider combined authority area will support economic growth (53%) than disagree (36%)
- 3.8 The consultation also included an opportunity for respondents to provide views regarding the proposed expansion of WECA. Based on these free text responses, a number of common themes emerged:
 - **Integration:** respondents highlighted existing strong links between North Somerset and the wider region and stated that further integration would help develop a more joined up approach to regional issues.

- **Economic benefits:** respondents highlighted improved access to funding, grant and investment opportunities and the opportunity to reduce duplication.
- **Transport:** respondents felt expansion of the Combined Authority (CA) could benefit the level of 'joined-up' transport planning, strategy and investment

3.9 Those opposed to expansion highlighted concerns that expansion could bring:

- **Limits to local control:** concerns around decision-making authority, increased bureaucracy, a re-emergence of 'Avon'
- **Economic risks:** fears around increased taxation, unfair distribution of regional funds and added pressure to North Somerset Council finances.

3.10 North Somerset Council meets on [12 May 2026](#) to consider the expansion proposal. They are recommended to “**support that the Council proceed with proposals for membership of WECA**”.

3.11 Under previous legislation, final Committee consent for expansion would have come at a later stage. Government now requires the use of the consent process as set out in the [Devolution Act](#) (which received Royal Assent on 29th April 2026). This brings the consent point forward. Under the Act, the final consent is required at the point of **submission** of the expansion proposal.

3.12 In parallel to this process WECA is looking to submit an application to Government to achieve Strategic Authority - **Established** Status. This is the top level a Mayoral Combined Authority can achieve under the new devolution framework. Established Status brings the most powers and the largest, most flexible funding from Government. It allows WECA to plan and invest over longer periods, with fewer restrictions and more local control.

Figure 1 below shows the three types of Strategic Authority, as included in the [Devolution Act](#). WECA currently sits at level two – Mayoral Strategic Authority.

Figure 1 – The three levels of Strategic Authority

Type of Strategic Authority	Mayor required?	Brief explanation of powers
Foundation Strategic Authority	No	Entry-level devolution. Focuses on strategic coordination rather than direct service control. Powers typically cover economic development, strategic transport planning, local growth priorities, and partnership working, but no large devolved funding settlements or fiscal freedoms.
Mayoral Strategic Authority (WECA's current position)	Yes	Core devolution model. Exercised through a directly elected mayor. Powers generally include transport, adult skills, housing and regeneration, economic development, and access to devolved funding pots, supported by stronger accountability arrangements.
Established Strategic Authority	Yes	Highest and most mature form of devolution. Eligible for Integrated Settlements (single, multi-year funding), greater financial flexibility, and wider strategic influence across transport, skills, housing, and economic growth. Intended as the long-term position for capable and well-governed combined authorities.

3.13 For example, in regards to increased flexibility, from financial year 2028-2029 it is hoped that WECA will benefit from an Integrated Settlement (IS). This is a single, multi-year funding pot provided by Government to an Established Mayoral Combined Authority. Instead of lots of separate grants with different rules and deadlines, the authority gets one large allocation covering areas like transport, housing, skills, regeneration, and climate. This provides much more flexibility to move money between priorities, plan for the long term, and deliver projects that best meet local needs.

3.14 Expanding WECA to include North Somerset Council enhances the bid to achieve Established Status. As WECA grows in scale and geography, Bath and North East Somerset Council will be part of a Combined Authority with maximum powers, making it easier to secure national investment.

Proposed next steps

3.15

- North Somerset Council approves expansion proposal, [12 May 2026](#)
- WECA Committee support proposal to submit formal expansion request, [5 June 2026](#)
- Government reviews the proposal against their tests before the Secretary of State confirms whether he approves the expansion progressing – anticipated this will take 4-6 weeks post submission
- Should Government confirm support, legislation will be drafted, anticipated this will take 8-12 weeks
- Once Statutory Instrument passes Parliamentary process, North Somerset Council joins WECA
- Timings may vary dependent on Parliamentary time and recess.

4 STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS

- 4.1 The decision to expand the West of England Combined Authority (WECA) to include North Somerset Council is governed by national devolution legislation and local constitutional arrangements. The formal submission to Government for expansion requires the support of both the Mayor of WECA and the Leader of North Somerset Council, reflecting the statutory process for Combined Authority changes. Once both parties agree, a Statutory Instrument (SI) is drafted and laid before Parliament. If approved, the SI has legal effect and North Somerset Council becomes a full member of WECA.
- 4.2 Bath & North East Somerset Council retains its full rights and responsibilities as a constituent authority. The expansion does not alter the legal status or independence of B&NES, but it does mean that future strategic decisions—including those relating to funding, powers, and governance—will be taken within an expanded Combined Authority framework. The Council will continue to appoint its representatives to the Combined Authority and participate in all formal decision-making processes.

5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCE, PROPERTY, PEOPLE)

- 5.1 Government has indicated its support for expansion, including a potential commitment of up to £15m of capital funding to support delivery of schemes aligned to the West of England Growth Strategy. This funding is not assumed within WECA's current budget or Medium Term Financial Strategy and would be subject to formal grant confirmation, business case approval, and the Combined Authority's established decision-making processes.

6 RISK MANAGEMENT

6.1 A risk assessment related to the issue and recommendations has been undertaken, in compliance with the Council's decision making risk management guidance.

7 EQUALITIES

7.1 The Combined Authority has reported that the proposed expansion presents an opportunity to embed equality and inclusion into the future operating model from the outset. By considering representation, workforce impacts and equitable access the services, the expansion can support a more inclusive regional approach that reflects the diversity of the communities served. Attention to consistent standards, transparent communication and inclusive governance will help ensure that expansion strengthens, rather than dilutes, the Combined Authority's commitment to fairness and inclusion.

8 CLIMATE CHANGE

8.1 North Somerset, in common with the MCA and other Unitary Authorities, has declared a climate and a nature emergency. The MCA and North Somerset already work together in a number of ways to address these emergencies, and formal expansion of WECA would only strengthen the opportunities.

9 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

9.1 Government has stated that a Committee decision showing support for expansion is required to provide assurance that local consent is in place. As such, there are no alternative options to consider.

10 CONSULTATION

10.1 The eight-week WECA public consultation on North Somerset joining the West of England Combined Authority received 1,273 responses in total across the West of England area 56.7% of those who responded are in favour of the expansion, with 37.6% opposed, and 5.7% not sure. The public consultation ran for eight weeks closing on 13 April 2026.

10.2 Monitoring Officer (MO) and Section 151 Officer.

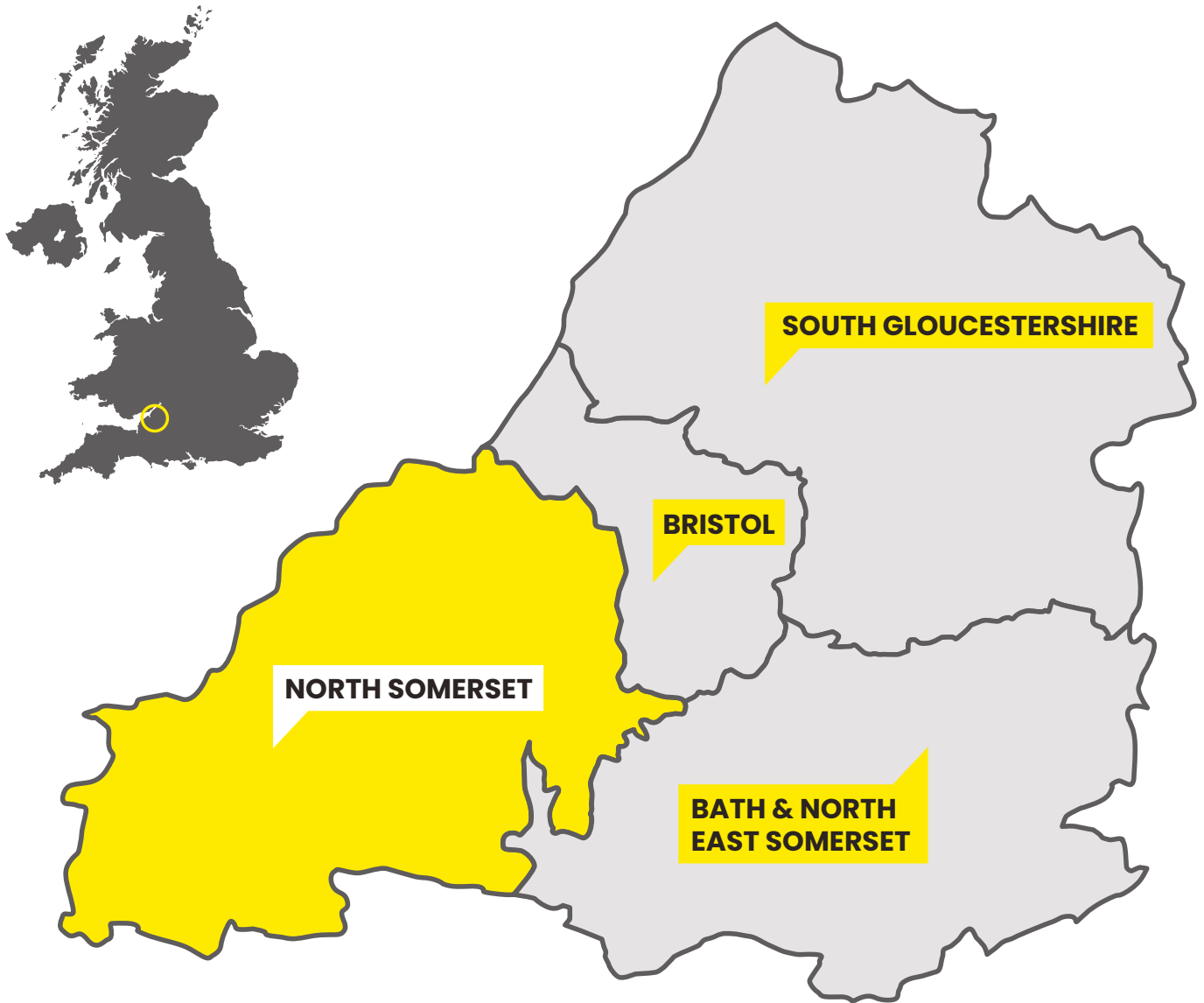
Sophie Broadfield – Chief Executive

Contact person	Ceri Williams – Corporate Office 01225 396053
Background papers	Appendix 1 - Expansion of the West of England Combined Authority: Proposal Appendix 2 - Consultation on North Somerset Council joining

Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format
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EXPANSION OF THE WEST OF ENGLAND COMBINED AUTHORITY: PROPOSAL



Growth • Investment • Services • More power

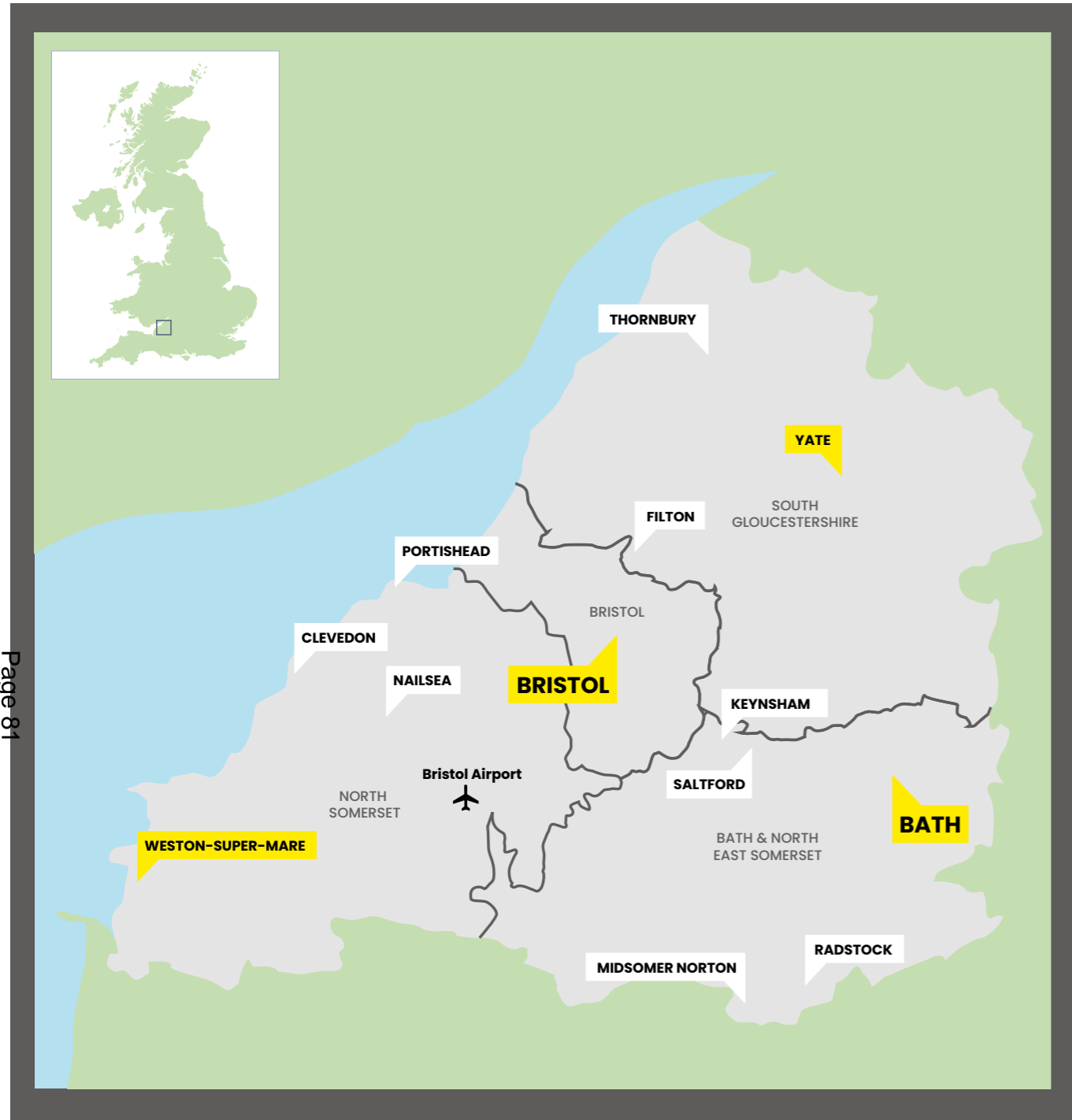
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A. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The West of England Mayoral Combined Authority (WECA) is a legal partnership that brings together the Mayor with local government and works with stakeholders and partners right across the region and beyond. We take decisions together to ensure our region is growing and we work with business, regional anchor institutions, the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector and residents. We're drawing on the collective strengths our region holds to shape a bright future.
2. North Somerset Council is a core part of the West of England region and has been a close partner of WECA since the Combined Authority was established. The residents, businesses, economy and communities across the existing WECA region and North Somerset are intrinsically linked – but currently North Somerset residents are not fully represented in regional decision-making. This proposal to expand WECA would change this. Expansion of WECA would:
 - Strengthen leadership, ensuring all residents across our functional economic area are represented on the WECA Committee by both the Mayor and the Leader of each Unitary Authority.
 - Reflect a sensible geography, expanding WECA to cover a footprint that represents a stronger functional economic area (the geography that has recently been used to develop the West of England Growth Strategy and over which much regional planning takes place).
 - Increase flexibility, enabling the region to more easily collaborate in the design and delivery of services that make sense for our region.
 - Create appropriate accountability, ensuring Leaders from all parts of the region help shape the strategic direction and decision making of WECA.
3. We are taking decisions together for the region to deliver the transport, homes, training and green growth that will accelerate economic growth. Expanding WECA to include North Somerset is a formal, legal step, allowing closer working on these priorities.
4. We are building a more resilient economy for the future. We're building on strong foundations and are ready to deliver the growth that will change lives and contribute to national success.
5. Devolution can power our region forward. We're working at pace to access the highest level of devolved powers and funding currently available to Mayoral Combined Authorities, unlocking the full potential of devolution for our whole region. North Somerset's membership will increase the population of WECA by 217,385 (23%) and increase the access of these residents to devolved funding.
6. The expansion of WECA to include North Somerset would not result in the merger or take-over of councils, Councils will still deliver the things they are responsible for, but coming together under one Combined Authority is the constituent councils choosing to work together on those areas where it make sense to and thereby deliver economic growth. This supports delivery of improvements across the whole area. We have a unique opportunity to accelerate our devolution journey and the positive impact it is having for our region.

Figure 1 – Map of the West of England



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B. WHY WE WANT TO EXPAND THE WEST OF ENGLAND COMBINED AUTHORITY

7. The West of England – Bristol, South Gloucestershire, Bath & North East Somerset, and North Somerset – is a place that is ambitious for our future. We are committed to unlocking economic growth, improving opportunities for residents and creating places where communities can thrive.
8. The West of England Combined Authority (WECA) recently published the West of England Growth Strategy. North Somerset Council (NSC), along with the other Councils across the region, were partners in the development of this plan. Delivering the collective ambition we have set will also be a partnership effort.
9. As the Growth Strategy sets out, by working together, our region is more than the sum of its parts. The Strategy also highlights that the economic outlook for the region is stronger if the functional economic area (FEA) is considered over the wider geography of the existing WECA footprint and the North Somerset Council area.
10. There is a long history of collaboration between WECA and NSC. Currently, some of our devolved funding and delivery arrangements mean that we are not able to collaborate as fully as we want. This means that some of our transport plans are not able to extend as far as we would like; and some of the business support services and employment and skills provision across the region need multiple sets of delivery and governance arrangements, adding unnecessary and burdensome complications to the delivery of important public support.
11. We want to expand WECA so that NSC and the residents and businesses of North Somerset are a full part of delivering a future that all parts of the West of England can be proud of.
12. With closer partnership, we can do more to improve the integrated transport network we are committed to unlocking, we can do more to ensure residents across the region have access to an integrated skills system, and we can ensure investment across the West of England builds on the combined strengths of our strong economy.

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As the Growth Strategy sets out, by working together, our region is more than the sum of its parts.

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BACKGROUND

13. As the government's devolution reforms continue to roll out, the powers and funding flexibilities available to Mayoral Combined Authorities is growing. With an expanded geography, rather than focusing time on creating routes to collaboration between WECA and NSC, we will have the partnership in place that reflects the future of the West of England. With an expanded geography, and with Established MCA status and the integrated funding settlement in place, the West of England will have a greater range of tools available to deliver for the residents of our whole region.
14. On 16th December 2024, the UK government published the English Devolution White Paper. This included statements that:
- “Our goal is simple. Universal coverage in England of Strategic Authorities – which should be a number of councils working together, covering areas that people recognise and work in [...] The government's strong preference is for partnerships that bring more than one local authority together over a large geography.”**
15. The White Paper set a standardised approach to devolution and a direction of travel in which government primarily seeks to engage with 'strategic authorities', and focus an increased proportion of funding and powers at 'strategic authorities' on matters including the following:
- Transport and local infrastructure
 - Skills and employment support
 - Housing and strategic planning
 - Economic development and regeneration
 - Environment and climate change
 - Health, wellbeing and public service reform
 - Public safety

16. Strategic Authorities will also in future benefit from Integrated Settlements, bringing consolidated budgets across housing, regeneration, local growth, local transport, skills, retrofit, and employment support with increased flexibility to move funding between and across those themes. WECA is in government terminology a 'Mayoral Strategic Authority' rather than an 'Established Mayoral Strategic Authority' at the current time - but is seeking to obtain 'Established' status.
17. The proposal for NSC to join WECA is supported in principle by leadership of North Somerset Council and all existing members of WECA Committee (which is comprised of the West of England Mayor and leaders of Bath & North East Somerset, Bristol City, and South Gloucestershire). Many of the partner organisations both WECA and NSC work with across the region have also expressed their support for this expansion.
18. The English Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill will introduce a 'ministerial power of direction' allowing the Secretary of State to mandate the creation of strategic authorities or expansion of existing ones.
19. WECA was set up in 2017 to make decisions and investments that benefit people living and working in Bath and North East Somerset, Bristol and South Gloucestershire. North Somerset Council (NSC) considered joining WECA at the point at which the Combined Authority was being established in 2017. Following public consultation, NSC decided to withdraw from the process, resolving that the principles of devolution "will be best achieved by building on existing arrangements in the West of England, particularly the cooperation between the four authorities". Further informal discussions on joining WECA

have taken place since 2017 but did not progress to a formal proposal.

20. From the North Somerset perspective, the primary reasons for re-considering membership at this stage are the renewed government focus on devolution and Strategic Authorities, the need to access funding to support delivery of infrastructure and economic growth, and in the context of those factors, the need to ensure the maximum effectiveness and transparency of partnership working.
21. The government has explicitly stated its support for WECA to include North Somerset as the right functional economic geography, and has therefore requested that programmes such as Local Growth Plans and Spatial Development Strategies are developed jointly across the footprint. Additionally, Government has written that North Somerset alternative geography provided by the Heart of Wessex would fail to meet national criteria.
22. Devolution is already delivering positive impact in the West of England, for example, via the Future Bright Plus initiative, which provides employment support for those who are in low paid, unsecure employment and dependent upon in work benefits to get by. This project quickly helped boost incomes and is expected to bring long term benefits to those involved and the wider region. Other initiatives include the Productivity Challenge and High Streets Recovery and Renewal programmes, both of which increased employment, leading

to positive regional outcomes. Furthermore, the Bottle Yard Studios increased film and TV production capacity, leading to greater expenditure in this industry, which impacts the wider region. Regional funds such as Transport for City Regions are enabling WECA to move towards delivering a mass transit system.

23. While North Somerset Council previously chose not to proceed in joining WECA in 2017, the strong collaboration across the region has continued, with decision making facilitated across the WECA region and North Somerset through the joint committee governance system. However, the Joint Committee has a limited remit. The proposal to expand the WECA geography with North Somerset joining as full members of the MCA would strengthen collaboration further by: simplifying governance arrangements; increasing visibility; reducing duplication which adds to time and costs; strengthen the development of funding and delivery plans; and ultimately deliver higher levels of economic growth and improved outcomes for residents.
24. The proposal to consult on North Somerset joining WECA is supported by the Mayor of the West of England, Helen Godwin, the three leaders of the existing constituent Unitary Authorities, and was agreed by the Full Council meeting of North Somerset Council on 16 September 2025.

C. CURRENT GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

25. WECA is an existing authority with an established staffing structure and the required statutory officers. The Mayor, Leaders of constituent authorities, Chief Executive Officers (CEOs), and other officer groups meet regularly to support collaboration. Politicians and officers from NSC attend many of these meetings. Expansion of the MCA would further strengthen the collaboration that has already been put in place.

26. The current WECA Committee is made up of the elected Mayor and representatives from the three constituent councils: Bath & North East Somerset, Bristol, and South Gloucestershire. Each of those councils appoints a representative (together with two substitutes) to be a member of the Combined Authority with full voting rights. A Deputy Mayor is appointed from the members.

27. The Committee has a range of formal decision-making powers. Currently a range of decision-making models are in place. This position is due to be simplified once the Devolution and Community Empowerment Act is in place. The Act will introduce a simple majority voting model.

28. Under current arrangements, decision-making arrangements that an expanded WECA Committee would take are:

- Regularly decided by a majority vote of members present.
- At times, a majority that must include the Mayor or Deputy Mayor acting in place of the Mayor.
- Sometimes requiring unanimous support (for example adoption of a spatial development strategy)

- Some decisions (for example approval of borrowing limits, and treasury management strategy including reserves, investment strategy, borrowing and budget of the Combined Authority, the amount of any expenses to be met by the constituent councils and the amount of any levy) require a unanimous vote in favour at a meeting of the Combined Authority at which all members or substitute members are present.

29. Some functions are exercisable only by the Mayor, subject to consultation with the other Combined Authority members before exercise of the function. These include:

- Preparing the local transport plan
- Issuing grants under s31 Local Government Act 2003
- Calling in planning applications of strategic importance
- Designating mayoral development areas

30. Some decisions by the Mayor require the consent of the Combined Authority member (or substitute member acting in that member's place) appointed by the constituent council in whose area the decision will apply. These decisions include:

- The designation of any area of land as a mayoral development area leading to the establishment, by order, of a Corporation.
- The compulsory purchase of land or buildings by the Mayor.
- Any decision that could lead to a financial liability falling directly upon that constituent council.
- The designation of any area as a Clean Air Zone.

31. This is subject to change following proposals from the Government to standardise how functions of combined authorities and combined county authorities through the English Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill and consequential legislation.

32. The Combined Authority maintains a statutory Audit Committee. Its membership, taken as a whole, reflects - so far as is reasonably practicable - the political balance prevailing across the constituent councils. The Committee also includes three independent members. The Audit Committee's functions include:

- Reviewing and scrutinising the authority's financial affairs
- Reviewing and assessing the authority's risk management, internal control and corporate governance arrangements
- Reviewing and assessing the economy, efficiency and effectiveness with which resources have been used in discharging the authority's functions
- Making reports and recommendations to the Combined Authority in relation to the reviews they have conducted.
- To consider and approve the Annual Statutory Accounts.

33. The Combined Authority's statutory Overview and Scrutiny Committee comprises a majority of members drawn from the constituent councils, and its overall membership reflects—so far as reasonably practicable—the political balance prevailing across those councils. Each member has one vote, with decisions taken by simple majority. Three members of North Somerset Council currently attend in an observer capacity.

34. The Committee's core functions are to scrutinise the work of the West of England Combined Authority and the West of England Joint Committee ("the Joint Committee") and to make appropriate recommendations on the discharge of their functions.

35. The membership of Audit and Overview and Scrutiny Committees will be reviewed should expansion be approved to ensure that membership remains representative of the new regional administrative geography. North Somerset councillors would be full voting members of these committees.

36. The Joint Committee has operated alongside WECA's formal governance structures to enable joint decision making with North Somerset. Running the WECA Committee and the Joint Committee in parallel has created complexity and duplication in governance since the Mayoral Combined Authority was established.

37. Expanding WECA would allow the Joint Committee to be abolished, with all regional decisions taken through a single, coherent governance structure. This simplification would improve transparency, reduce confusion and provide residents with a clearer understanding of how decisions are made.

38. Expansion, combined with the election of a new Mayor in May 2025, provides a timely opportunity to refresh and strengthen governance arrangements. Alongside incorporating North Somerset into the MCA, WECA will undertake a full constitutional review to ensure the region has the structures needed to make the most of the opportunities created by the English Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill. North Somerset Council will be fully involved in this review.

39. Under the proposed model, the expanded WECA Committee would comprise the Mayor and the Leader (or nominated representative) of each of the four constituent authorities.
40. Decisions would continue to be taken in line with the voting arrangements set out in the West of England Combined Authority Order 2017. Once the proposals in the Devolution White Paper complete the Parliamentary process, voting arrangements will be updated to reflect the provisions of the English Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill.
41. The expanded WECA would remain directly accountable to its residents and provide visible, strategic leadership for the region. Dedicated scrutiny and audit arrangements would ensure transparency and robust oversight of all decisions.
42. Expansion will require the Government to bring forward the necessary legislation. Each constituent council will then appoint its Members to the Combined Authority. All constituent councils will continue to operate as independent local authorities.
43. At the next Mayoral election in 2029, residents across the expanded WECA area will be eligible to vote for the West of England Mayor.



The expanded WECA would remain directly accountable to its residents and provide visible, strategic leadership for the region.



D. OUR PRINCIPLES, VISION, AND AMBITION

44. The West of England has recently published a 10-year Growth Strategy. This sets our vision and ambition for the decade ahead. The Growth Strategy covers both the WECA area and North Somerset, recognising the strong interdependencies between our economies.
45. The vision that we have collectively set for the next decade is that we want to transform our region. The next decade will see the West of England change. Growth will mean more job opportunities, new homes, an injection in pace and investment in the transformation of our transport network and the strengthening of those relationships that will help us deliver. This vision is rooted in pride for the region's diverse talents and communities, and a belief that the West of England is a place bold for business and full of restless creativity.
46. We have clear ambitions for the future of the West of England as set out in the recently published Growth Strategy. Over the coming decade, we have an ambition to deliver 72,000 new jobs and achieved 28% economic growth. We will deliver growth that creates opportunities that benefit all.
47. To achieve our vision and ambition, the West of England shapes its action against a core set of principles. These are:
- **Place-based collaboration:** Working across local authority boundaries to deliver shared priorities in transport, housing, skills, and innovation
 - **Evidence-led investment:** Using data and impact assessments to guide funding decisions and policy development.

- **Sustainability and climate leadership:** Embedding environmental responsibility into all programmes, from transport to housing and business support.
 - **Co-design and partnership:** Engaging with businesses, communities, and institutions to shape policies and programmes that reflect local needs
 - **A focus on outcomes:** In all that we do, the West of England has an unrelenting focus on outcomes – ensuring the action we take delivers for the people who live and work across the region.
48. The expansion of WECA to include North Somerset would ensure we have the formal governance in place to support delivery of our vision and ambition, strengthening the growth potential of the whole region.

THE CASE FOR CHANGE

49. Expanding WECA requires a legislative process. Before expansion can be agreed, there must be a public consultation on a proposal, and the then Secretary of State for the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) needs to be satisfied that a series of statutory tests have been met. These are set out below.
50. The expansion is likely to improve the economic, social, and environmental well-being of some or all of the people who live and work in the area.
51. The expansion will secure effective and convenient local government.
52. The expansion is appropriate in terms of reflecting the identities and interests of local communities.

53. In developing this proposal WECA and NSC have considered four core tests or principles which underpin the devolution framework, namely:
- effective leadership
 - sensible geography
 - flexibility
 - appropriate accountability

EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP

54. Expanding WECA would further strengthen joint working and the shared leadership already provided by the WECA Committee. Bringing North Somerset Council into the Committee would ensure that a wider range of residents, businesses and communities are directly represented in regional decision making, and that governance more accurately reflects the region's functional economic area.
55. Many decisions taken by WECA already affect residents in North Somerset, and vice versa. Choices on housing growth, transport investment and infrastructure planning made by either WECA or North Somerset have cross boundary impacts, particularly for residents who live, work or travel across different parts of the region.
56. Including North Somerset on the WECA Committee would ensure that every part of the region has a voice, and that regional decisions fully reflect the challenges and opportunities across the whole area.
57. Over the past year, WECA has undertaken a significant programme of improvement to strengthen its ability to deliver for residents. This has been a collaborative effort, with all Unitary Authority Leaders shaping the next phase of the organisation. New Advisory Boards are being established, chaired by Unitary Authority Leaders; collaborative leadership models are guiding major

strategic plans such as the West of England Growth Strategy; and a new Investment Strategy now provides a clear, transparent route for determining how regional resources are deployed. Long term investment decisions will be shaped by all Leaders on the Committee, including North Somerset should expansion be agreed.

58. Expanding WECA to include North Somerset would build on this improvement journey by ensuring that delivery and decision making are supported by advisory boards with equal voices from across the region. It would also unlock greater opportunities for collaboration on regionally significant growth and reform programmes—such as transport improvements, job creation, and opportunities for young people—where joint action can deliver greater impact for residents.
59. WECA remains committed to continuous improvement. Work is underway to define the next phase of how the Authority and the region's Unitary Authorities operate together. Expansion would ensure this work takes place across a functional economic area with even stronger growth potential than the current WECA geography, benefiting the region as a whole.
60. Expansion would also strengthen the region's collective voice to Government. The Mayor, working closely with Committee colleagues, plays a key role in making the case for investment and reform—opportunities that are not always available to non mayoral areas. Representing the full functional economic area would enhance the region's ability to advocate effectively for national support.
61. Leaders across WECA are ambitious to move to Established Mayoral Strategic Authority status and secure new powers and funding flexibilities.

Once in place, these powers will enable the region to deliver a more cohesive and ambitious long term plan—best achieved when all partners are able to participate fully in, and benefit from, the opportunities devolution brings.

SENSIBLE GEOGRAPHY

62. The current WECA geography already forms a strong functional economic area, but the inclusion of North Somerset creates an even more coherent and integrated one. Across the expanded geography, 96% of residents both live and work within the area. Travel to work patterns reinforce this: 55% of employees travelling into North Somerset start their journeys in Bristol, Bath and North East Somerset, or South Gloucestershire, and 72% of North Somerset residents commuting out travel to one of these three authorities.
63. The economies of WECA and North Somerset are deeply interdependent, and future growth depends on strengthening these links. The West of England Growth Strategy, published in September 2025, sets out a ten year plan that already treats WECA and North Somerset as a single, sensible geography for long term economic planning.
64. Increasingly, regional strategies – and a growing number of Government requirements – are expected to operate across this wider geography. Aligning governance, decision making and public engagement with the geography we are planning for will improve the quality, coherence and delivery of regional activity.
65. An expanded WECA geography also strengthens the region's inward investment offer. Key assets such as Royal Portbury Dock, Bristol Airport

and North Somerset's manufacturing strengths in chemicals, transport equipment, and food and beverages can be fully reflected in regional propositions. The region hosts several nationally significant high growth sectors, and their performance is underpinned by the strong economic interaction across the wider geography; without these links, the region's growth figures would be lower.

66. The West of England is a region of diverse places—major urban centres, towns, villages and rural communities. Expansion would add Weston super Mare as a fast growing major centre alongside Bristol, Bath and the West Innovation Arc, as well as the towns of Clevedon, Portishead and Nailsea and a range of smaller settlements. Eleven per cent of the region's residents live in rural areas, and expansion ensures their needs are fully represented within regional planning and decision making.

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Many decisions taken by WECA already affect residents in North Somerset, and vice versa

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Figure 2: our sector strengths

Sectors for growth

Advanced Manufacturing

£2.9bn GVA, faster growth than other parts of the UK

Digital & Technologies

£3.8bn GVA, fastest growth of any Combined Authority area

Clean Energy Industries

140% job growth since 2015

Creative Industries

£1.6bn GVA, and **82%** job growth since 2015

Everyday Economy

£16.1bn GVA, **57%** of all jobs in the region

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67. Government has indicated that it will legislate to require a Spatial Development Strategy (SDS) across the WECA and North Somerset geography, regardless of whether NSC joins the Combined Authority. Proper planning for the existing and future growth supported by this strategy will require significant investment in infrastructure that is likely only to be possible through funds available through the Combined Authority.

FLEXIBILITY

68. WECA, its constituent authorities and North Somerset Council share a clear ambition for the future of the whole region. Expansion combined with the broader powers and financial flexibilities that Established Mayoral Strategic Authority status will unlock would give the region far greater freedom to align funding to shared priorities through the Integrated Settlement, accelerate economic growth, and deepen collaboration with partners regionally, nationally and internationally.

69. For residents and businesses in the existing WECA area, expansion would ensure that regional services reflect the full set of powers and resources held by both the Local Authorities and the Mayoral Combined Authority. At present, North Somerset residents only benefit from WECA programmes where specific agreements and funding extensions are put in place.

70. Expansion would give the region the flexibility to extend and configure regional services across a wider geography. WECA programmes such as high street renewal, skills support, investment in cycling and walking infrastructure, and business growth initiatives have delivered tangible benefits, but North Somerset residents have not been able to access them. Equally, the wider region has not captured the additional economic uplift that would have come from delivering these programmes across the full functional economic area. Expansion would provide the flexibility to design and deliver regional schemes in ways that better reflect how people live, work and travel, unlocking greater benefits for residents and businesses across the whole region.

GOVERNANCE AND APPROPRIATE ACCOUNTABILITY

71. Expanding the Mayoral Combined Authority would ensure that all Council Leaders across the wider region have both a voice and a vote in regional decision making. At present, the Leader of North Somerset Council participates in regional discussions through the Joint Committee with the WECA Mayor and constituent council Leaders. However, because North Somerset is not a WECA member, it has no voting rights on WECA decisions – such as funding allocations, strategic planning, or major investment programmes. North Somerset sits on the Joint Committee, but not on the WECA Committee where formal decisions are taken.

72. This limitation in the current governance model means North Somerset has reduced influence over regional funding and investment decisions. As a result, cross boundary issues can be under served, delivery can become fragmented, and North Somerset may miss out on strategic or high value infrastructure, transport and skills funding that is prioritised for areas inside the Combined Authority. This weakens the coherence of regional planning and reduces accountability for decisions that nonetheless affect North Somerset residents.

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Expansion would give the region the flexibility to extend and configure regional services across a wider geography.

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73. Bringing North Somerset into WECA would address this gap directly. As full members of the Combined Authority, North Somerset Leaders would sit on the WECA Committee and hold a vote on all WECA decisions, including those relating to strategic investment, long term planning and major funding allocations. This strengthens representation, ensures decisions reflect the whole functional economic area, and improves the legitimacy of regional choices.
74. Expansion would also significantly improve democratic accountability for both residents and partners:
- **For residents:** Because North Somerset currently sits outside WECA, neither the council nor its residents are formally represented in decisions shaping the region's future. Expansion would ensure that governance and accountability arrangements properly reflect the geography in which people live, work and travel. WECA will work with all constituent authorities, including North Somerset, to strengthen how voices from across the region are heard and reflected in decision making.
 - **For partners:** Expansion removes the need for the bespoke, and at times confusing, accountability arrangements currently required to manage joint work between WECA and North Somerset. A single, coherent governance framework would provide clearer lines of responsibility, simplify partnership working, and improve transparency for Government, investors and regional stakeholders.



As full members of the Combined Authority, North Somerset Leaders would sit on the WECA Committee and hold a vote on all WECA decisions.



E. A CLOSELY INTEGRATED REGIONAL ECONOMY

OVERVIEW OF THE REGIONAL ECONOMY

75. The West of England, including North Somerset, is a place where residents and businesses can genuinely flourish. The region has a diverse and resilient economy, offering high quality employment across a wide range of industries. Employment levels are strong at 80%, and the workforce is highly skilled, with 56% of residents educated to degree level.
76. The region's mix of vibrant towns and cities, coastal communities and outstanding countryside makes it an attractive place to live and work. Our population is growing faster than the national average. With North Somerset included, the region is home to 1,225,000 people, and by 2040 our population is projected to grow by 9%—more than double the 4% projected for England as a whole.
77. The regional economy has delivered robust performance in recent years, growing at an average of 2.4% annually since 2019, compared with 0.6% nationally over the same period.
78. This growth is driven by a strong set of underlying factors that reflect the deep interdependencies across the wider regional economy, including North Somerset. Figure 3 illustrates the key drivers of growth across the region.



The regional economy has delivered robust performance in recent years, growing at an average of 2.4% annually since 2019



Figure 3: West of England Drivers of Growth



79. The region has a diverse and dynamic economy, home to world leading innovators and a substantial base of small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs). The recent West of England Growth Plan identifies five priority sectors that span the whole region and incorporate North Somerset's strengths. North Somerset's economy enhances these regional assets, and expansion would enable fully joined up planning for growth across the geography in which businesses actually operate.

80. **Advanced manufacturing:** The West of England is a national powerhouse in advanced manufacturing and engineering. From composites and robotics to propulsion and smart materials, the region's R&D ecosystem drives cutting edge innovation. More than 13 world leading aerospace companies have a presence here, supported by specialist expertise in advanced materials, composites, robotics and additive layer manufacturing. The sector employs 17,600 people and contributes £2.9 billion to the regional economy each year.

81. **Digital and technologies:** The region has nationally significant strengths in AI, quantum, cyber security, advanced connectivity, semiconductors and engineering biology. Major employers such as BT, BAE Systems, Hewlett Packard Enterprise, CGI, Immersive Labs and YellowDog sit alongside a deep pool of high growth cyber, AI and software innovators. The sector provides 65,500 jobs—10% of all regional employment—and generates £3.8 billion in economic output.

82. **Clean energy industries:** The West of England is at the forefront of clean energy innovation, spanning community energy, nuclear, tidal, hydrogen and advanced wind technologies. A rapidly expanding retrofit and heat network market

is cutting emissions, tackling fuel poverty and improving building performance. Around 400 high growth clean energy companies operate in the region, and employment in the sector has grown by 140% over the past decade.

83. **Creative industries:** The region has global reach in film, TV, immersive media, gaming, design and sustainable fashion. In 2022, natural history content produced here generated £127.2 million, with regional content viewed by more than 800 million people each month. As one of the UK's top five creative clusters, the West of England is home to over 5,500 creative businesses employing more than 40,000 people.

84. **Everyday economy:** The everyday economy underpins daily life across the West of England, encompassing the services, sectors and people who keep the region running. Key sectors include health and social care, childcare, education, food production, construction, and transport and logistics. The region's 19 hospital sites, 384 primary schools and 95 secondary schools support strong communities and opportunities for young people. A vital logistics and distribution network keeps goods moving, while a vibrant food, drink and hospitality sector attracts over 31 million visitors each year. Supporting these everyday sectors strengthens community resilience and quality of life.

85. North Somerset's diversified economic strengths complement and reinforce growth across the wider West of England. Its priority sectors include aerospace, composites and high tech engineering; a growing digital and IT base; Bristol Airport and associated aerospace activity; thriving creative industries in design, gaming and media, supported by assets such as The Curzon, The Playhouse and

The Tropicana; major food and drink employers and the Food Works Innovation Centre; and the Royal Portbury Dock and wider green economy cluster. North Somerset has also seen strong employment growth in financial services (+25%) and professional, scientific and technical sectors (+17%), closely aligning with regional strengths.

86. Employment in these sectors across the region is shown in the table below.

North Somerset's diversified economic strengths complement and reinforce growth across the wider West of England

Figure 4: Employment by priority sector across the West of England, 2024

Employment levels					
Sector	West of England (including North Somerset)	Bath and North East Somerset	Bristol	North Somerset	South Glos
Advanced manufacturing	17,600	1,410	2,300	2,460	12,275
Digital and technologies	66,510	8,020	35,260	5,010	18,340
Clean energy industries	~5,000-7,000				
Creative industries	40,935	7,025	23,465	3,535	6,740
Everyday Economy	380,545	64,690	164,640	57,455	94,555

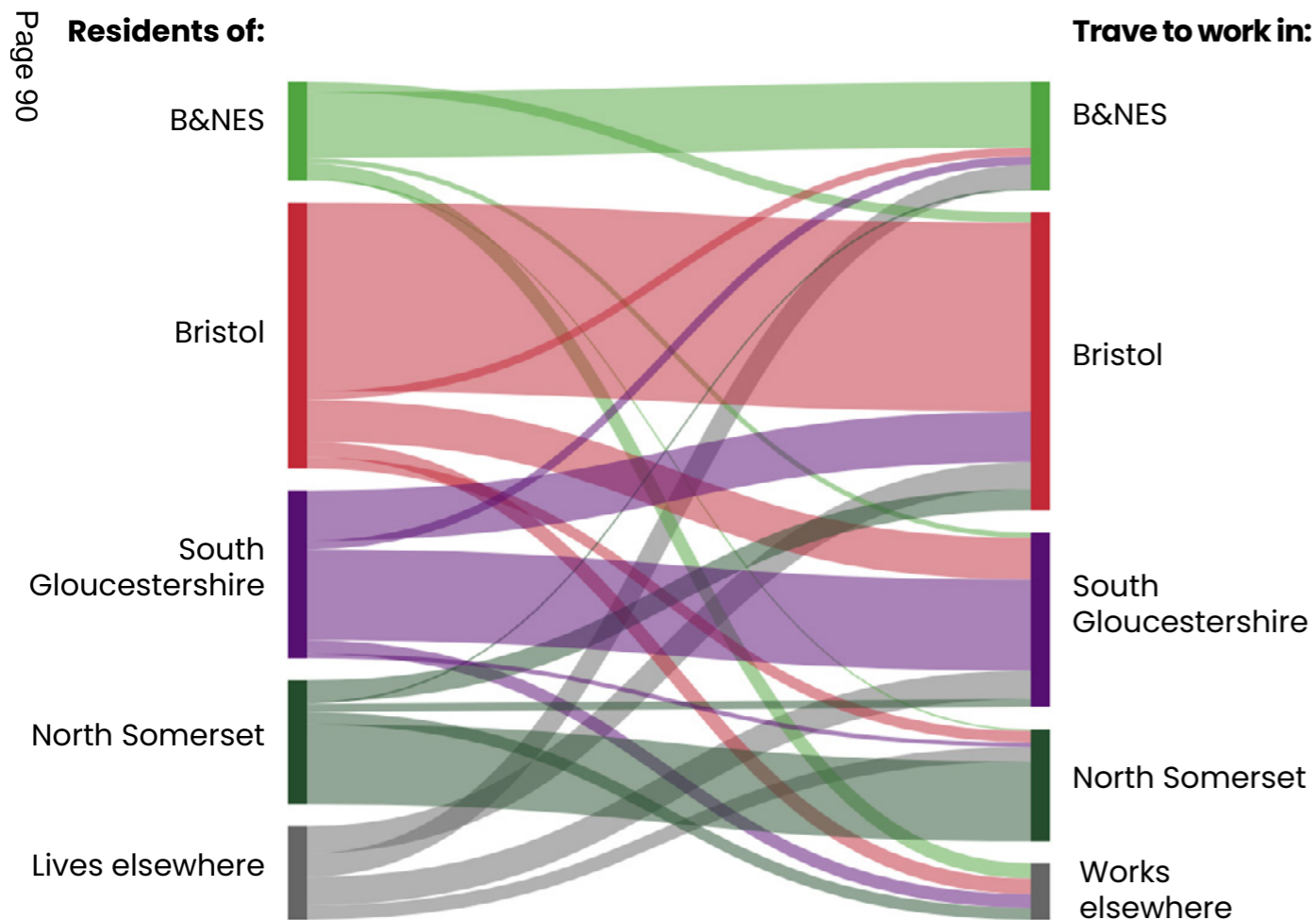
A SINGLE FUNCTIONAL ECONOMIC AREA

87. The West of England functions as a single, integrated economic area. Residents and businesses routinely live, work and plan their futures across administrative boundaries. Bringing North Somerset into the Combined Authority would align public sector planning with the reality of how the region operates. The economy is already closely interconnected across key markets, including:

- Labour markets
- Industrial sectors
- Transport networks
- Housing and property markets
- Consumer, retail and leisure markets

88. Labour markets. Travel to work patterns clearly demonstrate the strong linkages between North Somerset and the existing WECA area. When residents commute out of their home authority, they are far more likely to work in one of the other West of England authorities than anywhere else. Fifty five per cent of employees travelling into North Somerset start their journeys in Bristol, Bath and North East Somerset, or South Gloucestershire, and 72% of North Somerset residents commuting out travel to one of these three authorities. Expanding WECA would therefore bring administrative boundaries into line with the way people actually live and work, enabling more coherent planning for transport, skills and wider economic priorities.

Figure 5: Residents of the West of England mainly work within the region (Census 2021)

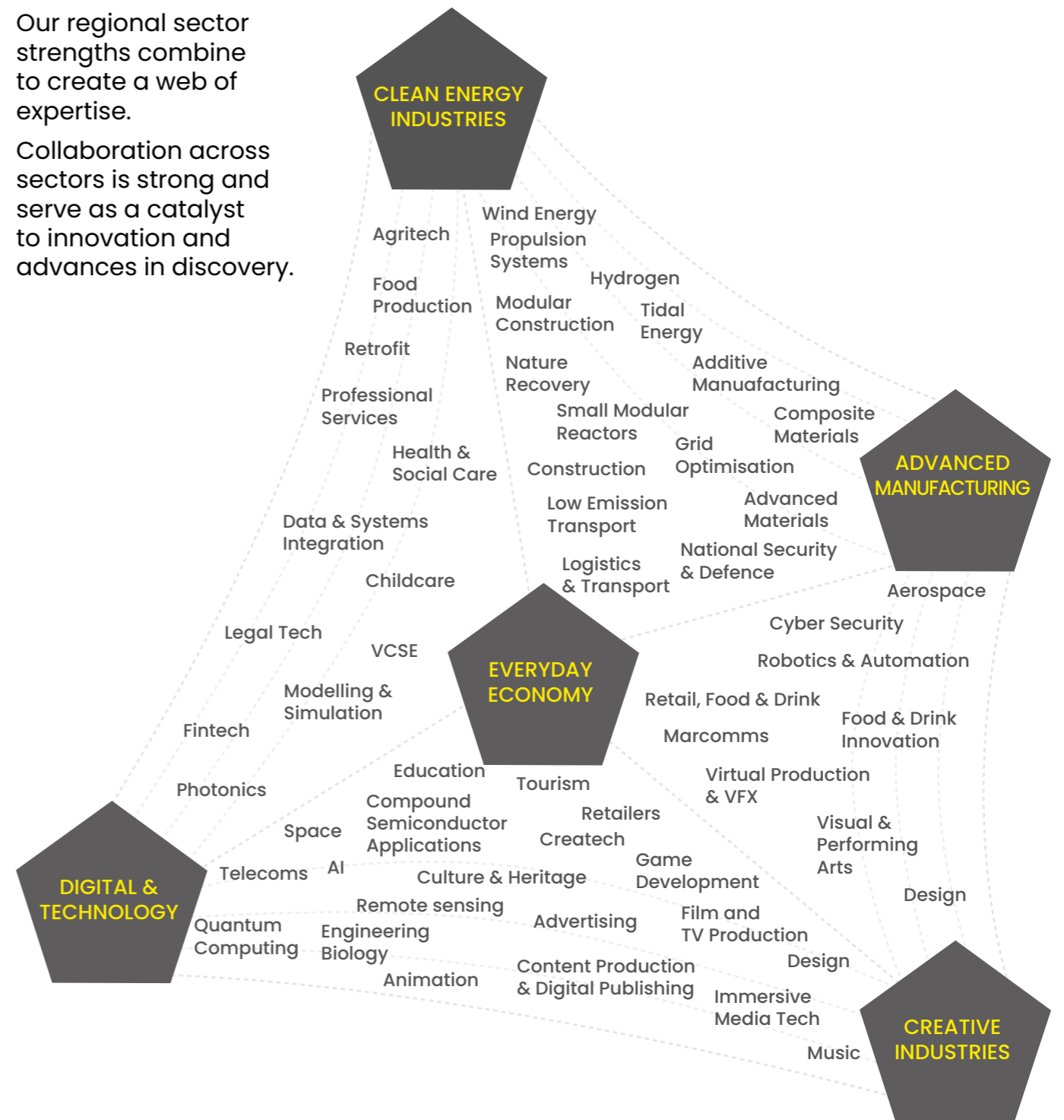


Source: ONS, Census 2021

89. Industrial sectors: Employment patterns across the expanded geography demonstrate the close links between the region’s businesses. The recent West of England Growth Plan identifies five priority sectors across our economy. As figure 6 shows, the interdependency of our sectors and labour market binds the region together.

Figure 6: The region’s sector strengths include a wide range of linkages

Our regional sector strengths combine to create a web of expertise. Collaboration across sectors is strong and serve as a catalyst to innovation and advances in discovery.



Source: West of England Growth Strategy, 2025

90. North Somerset hosts a set of economic capabilities that already contribute significantly to the wider West of England economy, but these assets are not fully reflected in WECA’s current planning or investment decisions. Formal expansion would allow these strengths to be fully integrated into regional strategies, ensuring that investment, infrastructure planning and sector specific programmes are aligned across the geography in which businesses actually operate. This would create a more coherent, competitive and productive economy for the whole region. Key capabilities include:

- **Advanced Manufacturing and Clean Energy** – including Bristol Airport, Royal Portbury Dock, the Foodworks Innovation Centre and a cluster of aerospace and high-tech engineering firms that are central to the region’s global competitiveness.
- **Creative Industries** – with growing businesses in design, gaming and media, supported by cultural assets such as The Curzon, The Playhouse and The Tropicana that anchor a vibrant creative ecosystem.
- **Everyday Economy** – including Weston General Hospital, major food and drink employers, and distribution and logistics, all of which underpin the resilience and productivity of the wider regional economy.

91. **Transport networks.** The region’s transport system already functions as a single network across the current WECA area and North Somerset, reflecting both physical connectivity and the way residents travel for work, education and leisure. WECA and North Somerset Council already collaborate through a Joint Local Transport Plan (JLTP) and a joint Bus Service Improvement Plan

(BSIP), and many major schemes—such as the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlements (CRSTS)—are inherently cross boundary and require coordinated delivery.

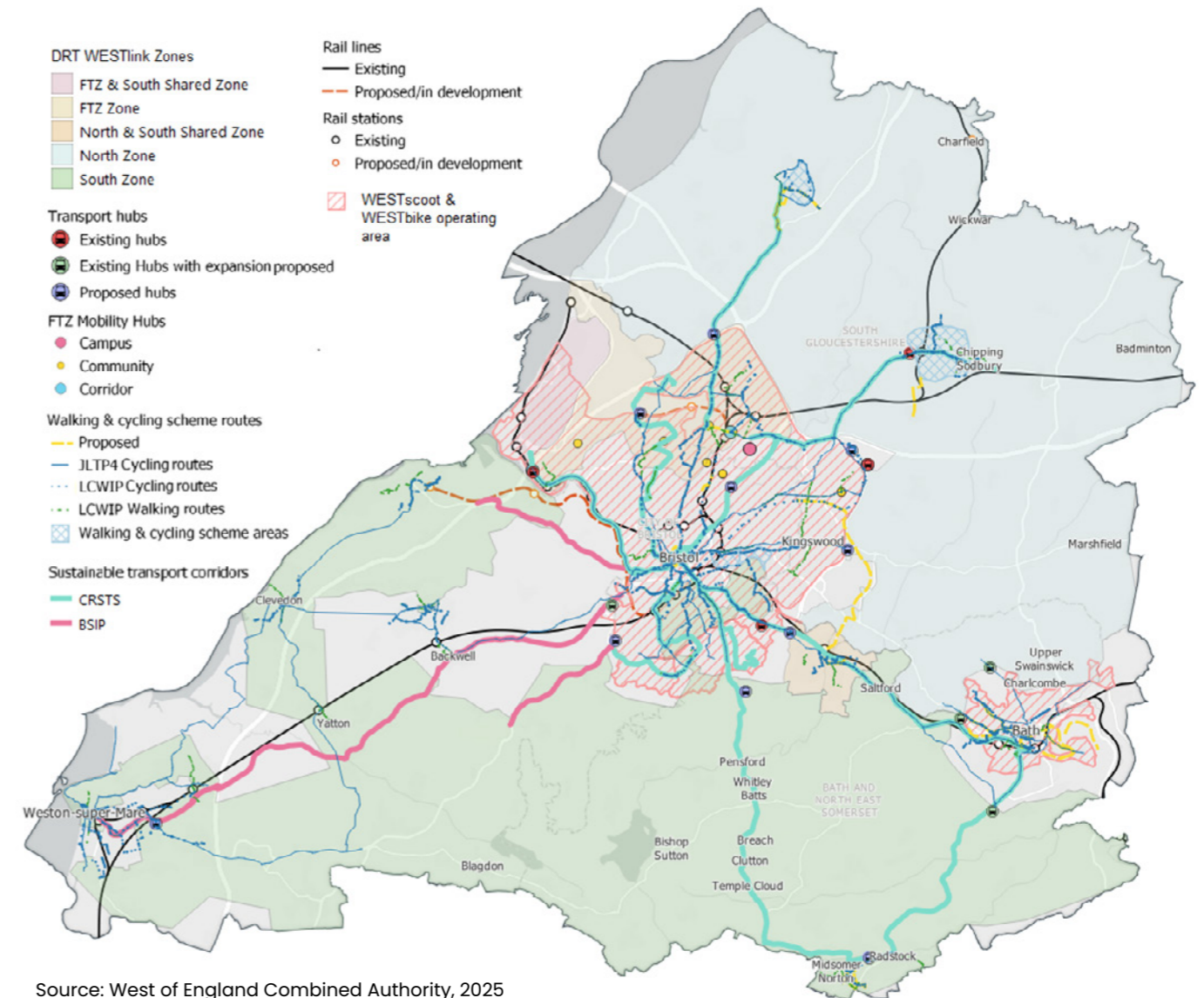
92. Expanding WECA to include North Somerset would strengthen this joint working by enabling fully integrated transport planning, clearer decision making and ensuring North Somerset has a formal voice and vote in regional transport funding decisions.



WECA and North Somerset Council already collaborate through a Joint Local Transport Plan (JLTP) and a joint Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP), and many major schemes



Figure 7: regional transport connections and improvements operate across boundaries



Source: West of England Combined Authority, 2025

93. **Housing and property market.** The housing and commercial property markets operate as a single system across the West of England, reflecting both physical proximity and the wider economic linkages described above. The region is required by law to prepare a Spatial Development Strategy (SDS) that will set out long term housing and employment requirements across both the current WECA area and North Somerset, regardless of whether North Somerset is a WECA member. Weston-super-Mare as North Somerset’s largest town is already approaching 100,000 residents, as a significant centre of population and continuing to grow.

94. The SDS will identify broad locations for jobs, homes and other strategic land uses, ensuring coordinated planning across the region. It will also align the delivery of strategic infrastructure—such as transport, utilities and digital connectivity—to support sustainable growth and unlock new development opportunities. Formal WECA membership would allow WECA resources to be deployed to support growth planning in North Somerset, including the development of business cases for essential infrastructure investment.

95. North Somerset has previously been identified as part of the same housing market as Bristol and South Gloucestershire. Although this assessment will be refreshed, all constituent councils face a shared challenge: the need to deliver significantly more homes—particularly affordable homes—than in recent years, in response to updated housing needs assessments and within the constraints of limited land supply and a stagnant housing market. Expansion would support a more coordinated and effective response to these shared pressures.
96. Consumer, retail and leisure market. The West of England has a vibrant tourism, retail and leisure economy, and North Somerset is a central part of this offer. With 25 miles of coastline, attractive countryside and popular towns such as Weston super Mare, Nailsea, Clevedon and Portishead, North Somerset draws millions of visitors each year. Key attractions including The Grand Pier, Noah's Ark Zoo Farm, the Mendip Activity Centre, National Trust properties and thriving town centres are regularly visited by residents from across WECA and beyond.
97. **Movement also flows in the opposite direction:** thousands of North Somerset residents travel each month to Bristol city centre and major retail destinations such as Cribbs Causeway. Expansion would therefore align governance with the reality of how people shop, spend leisure time and access cultural assets across the region.

BENEFITS OF EXPANSION

98. **Economic opportunities for the future.** With strong economic foundations and an economy that already operates as a single functional area, the West of England

has significant opportunities to build greater prosperity. The region's Growth Strategy sets out these opportunities in detail. Formal expansion to include North Somerset would unlock greater regional potential by integrating public resources, aligning policy levers and enabling genuinely regional planning and delivery. This would strengthen competitiveness, productivity and long term growth across the whole West of England. Key benefits are set out below.

99. A fully integrated transport system that boosts productivity across the region. A single transport authority covering the full functional economic area would deliver clearer, faster and more coherent decision making. This benefits every part of the region:
- A larger, better connected labour market gives employers access to a deeper talent pool and residents access to a wider range of jobs that match their skills. This raises productivity across all four authorities.
 - More efficient logistics and freight movement, with Bristol Airport and Royal Portbury Dock strategically integrated into regional transport plans, strengthens supply chains and supports business expansion across the region.
 - Improved access to local markets helps SMEs in every district grow, scale and create jobs. Better connectivity to ports also supports exporters, increasing the region's international reach.
100. A coherent place based strategy for the entire West of England: Challenges and opportunities do not stop at administrative boundaries. Expansion enables:
- Tailored but scalable place based interventions, ensuring solutions developed in one area

can be applied across the wider geography where appropriate.

- Joined up planning for commercial and residential development, skills, infrastructure and amenities—ensuring growth is planned holistically rather than piecemeal.
 - More efficient use of public resources, with consistent approaches for businesses and residents and better value for money.
 - Stronger, more sustainable communities, as coordinated regeneration and infrastructure investment improves quality of life across the whole region.
101. A more effective and inclusive skills system for the whole region. The West of England has a highly skilled workforce, but too many people, particularly young people and those with health conditions, struggle to access the opportunities growth creates. Expansion would:
- Enable coordinated investment in skills, business support and enabling infrastructure across the full economic geography.
 - Ensure residents in all four authorities can access regionally designed programmes, improving

job prospects, career pathways and access to high quality training.

- Tackle barriers to opportunity at the right scale, reflecting the deep interdependencies between labour markets across the region.
 - Support inclusive growth, ensuring that prosperity is shared across urban, coastal and rural communities.
102. Stronger regional competitiveness and a clearer offer to Government and investors. A Combined Authority covering the full functional economic area can:
- Present a single, coherent regional investment proposition
 - Make a stronger case for national funding and devolved powers
 - Provide greater certainty to investors about long term planning and infrastructure delivery
 - Strengthen the region's position in national and international markets
103. This benefits every part of the West of England, not just the expanding area.

“

The West of England has a vibrant tourism, retail and leisure economy, and North Somerset is a central part of this offer.

”

F. OUR STRATEGIC THEMES AND HOW WE WILL DELIVER THEM

104. Our West of England Growth Strategy sets out our 6 strategic priorities that will underpin the way the proposed expanded WECA seeks to strengthen the regional economy and outcomes for local residents. These are:

- a. Contributing to national economic growth helping our businesses succeed and creating jobs
- b. Connecting the region through public transport & active travel
- c. Building affordable and attractive homes in sustainable communities
- d. Empowering residents with the skills to access the jobs that will shape our future
- e. Making the West of England the home for green jobs and green growth
- f. Lifting children and families out of poverty in the West of England

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105. We will build on these actions over time – shaping a future the West of England can be proud of. Delivery of our strategic ambitions will build on existing arrangements, ensuring we collaborate in setting our strategic direction in ways that maximises the growth potential of the region and brings the greatest positive impact for our residents.

106. Delivery of regional provision will continue to have a mixed model – with some activity delivered once across the region (and other activity planned collaboratively but delivered at a local level in ways that make sense for each place

107. We will develop multi-year investment plans that will shape how regional funds are used over a full Spending Review period – setting a forward plan of delivery.

These will be developed in collaboration between WECA and the constituent Unitary Authorities and approved by the Mayor and Committee. With expansion, North Somerset would be fully incorporated into this process.

108. We're committed to ensuring the West of England is a place where everyone can live well. Our West of England Growth Strategy sets out a network of regional growth zones will be central to our decade of growth, opening up a wealth of new opportunities for businesses and residents right across the West of England. These zones are across the full breadth of the region and include:

- The West Innovation Arc
- Central Bristol and Bath
- Severn Estuary
- Somer Valley
- North Somerset Growth Gateway

109. The North Somerset Growth Gateway growth zone stretches from the £400m Epic business campus near Bristol to the Junction 21 Enterprise Area bringing growth in digital technologies, production innovation and clean logistics with opportunities for 10,000 jobs and homes. The growth zone offers the dual opportunity of investment in innovative production and manufacturing; and growth opportunities in digital technology and its supply chain, stemming from the new Epic Campus.

110. As part of our approach to delivery, we have agreed joint action we will take with Government that will unlock our regional growth potential. These joint priorities are:

- Increasing the availability and affordability of homes
- Improving transport connectivity
- Increasing the development of commercial space
- Ensuring skills provision is geared towards tackling high job vacancy rates

111. Expansion of WECA would increase the ability of the region to work together to realise the ambition across all our growth zones, and to deliver the increased impact that growth in each of these areas would bring. Without expansion, the approach to delivering the ambition of the North Somerset Growth Gateway would require a separate plan.

112. Expansion of WECA would strengthen the ability of the region to deliver the outcomes that the West of England Growth Strategy is focused on achieving. Namely:

- 28% increase in GDP over 10 years
- 15% growth in employment across our core areas of economic strength
- 72,000 new jobs across the region
- 7,750 new homes each year (subject to the agreement of a Spatial Development Strategy)
- 135 megawatts clean energy capacity installed, contributing to UK net zero
- 45% of all commuting journeys being taken via active travel and public transport
- A 25% decrease in young people not in employment, education or training



Our West of England Growth Strategy sets out a network of regional growth zones will be central to our decade of growth, opening up a wealth of new opportunities for businesses and residents right across the West of England.



G. WORKING WITH WIDER PARTNERS

113. The expansion of WECA would simplify governance in the region and create a clearer structure for partners to engage with.
114. With an expanded geography WECA will:
- Establish a new business board, ensuring the voice of businesses right across the region informs policy making, the development of regional sector plans, supporting an acceleration in growth.
 - Refresh our existing partnerships to ensure clarity for all roles and responsibilities
 - Establish new decision-making structures to speed up the transformation of our transport network
 - Having a single, integrated approach to establishing these forums will enable partnerships to function effectively.

115. Our economic activity and the way people live their lives do not stop at the MCA borders. With strong connections along the West Coast of the UK, to South Wales, and towards London and the Midlands – the West of England is a well-connected region. This is a new era for the West of England and it is one that will be underpinned by collaboration, shared purpose and united action. That extends to how we will work with partners in other parts of the UK and around the world. The West of England is open for businesses and will create the partnerships that will help deliver our ambitions – we know the impact will be greater if we work together.

This is a new era for the West of England and it is one that will be underpinned by collaboration, shared purpose and united action.

H. FURTHER DEVOLUTION

116. The range of devolved powers we have is important as it influences how we can deliver for our region and the outcomes we agreed in the Growth Strategy.
117. WECA and NSC are ambitious to strengthen our devolution settlement and work across the expanded geography to deliver for our residents.
118. The existing WECA area already has access to many elements of the Devolution Framework (as set out in the English Devolution White Paper). Extending these powers to cover the NSC area would give residents access to help determine further powers the region could request.
119. WECA and NSC are focused on achieving the status of an Established Mayoral Strategic Authority as swiftly as possible – this level allows MSAs to request more powers. It gives them access to an Integrated Settlement providing a consolidated budget across its areas of competence – that will give us a single allocation of money over the period of the Spending Review, instead of lots of different pots of money, which all come with different timescales, conditions, reporting requirements, accountability etc. The Integrated Settlement is one single pot which will be split into themed blocks and enables places us to target funding devolved from government more closely to our regional priorities. This would enable greater local flexibility as the Integrated Settlement means greater flexibility over how we spend money in the region, with the potential to move money between blocks to better spend money in line with regional need.

120. Established Status would also enable simplified accountability; at the moment, each individual programme comes with lots of different outcomes that need to be delivered which can sometimes overlap, duplicate or work against each other. The Integrated Settlement has one single outcomes framework between the MCA and Government. The Integrated Settlement will also provide longer term certainty as we will be able to plan longer-term, as funding allocations will be over at least a full Spending Review period. This means we can align different funds towards agreed outcomes and provide longer-term certainty to investment partners.
121. Achieving Established Status is contingent on being able to demonstrate a track record of delivery and strong governance arrangements. Simplification of our financing and governance arrangements between WECA and NSC would help us make this transition smoothly and deliver tangible benefits for the whole region.
122. We'll be eligible to apply for Established Status and the Integrated Settlement in autumn 2026, if we can successfully demonstrate our improvement journey, our commitment to consistent high performance, and our capabilities across a number of key areas.
123. Once confirmed, the process will include agreeing an outcomes framework with Government and undergoing some readiness checks, but at the moment we would expect to start delivering against the Integrated Settlement in spring 2028.

124. More broadly, once WECA has reached Established Status, it will gain access to a range of further devolved powers for the Mayor and WECA committee to use as appropriate, such as:

- A right to request further rail devolution
- Priority support to implement multi-modal ticketing across regional transport networks
- Stronger powers to deliver and commission employment support and greater integration with the work of Jobcentre Plus
- The ability to set the strategic direction of any future programme to support affordable housing
- Support for the establishment of a public sector land commission
- Devolved business support (in the form of full devolution of Growth Hub funding)
- Devolution of retrofit funding

125. Alongside these formal powers, once WECA reaches Established Status, it will be allocated funds as new Government initiatives are agreed (rather than having to go through a competitive process to make the case for funding).

126. With expansion to WECA, the residents of the existing WECA area and North Somerset would therefore benefit from the Authority having access to a broader range of powers that will deliver on the ambition Leaders have set for the region, enabling:

- Further improvements to the delivery of a fully integrated regional transport network.
- Increased capacity to deliver regeneration projects across the region, bringing town and city centres, high streets, and community spaces up to the standard residents want to see.

- Improved ability to ensure public land is effectively used to deliver homes, employment sites and services that will deliver economic growth and improve the lives of residents.
- A concerted effort to grow the affordable housing available right across the West of England, ensuring families and people growing up here have greater opportunity to remain in the West of England.
- An increased ability to shape the local employment support and skills system, meeting the needs of our residents and employers – preparing people to take advantage of the thousands of new jobs that will be created over the coming years.
- A broader approach to supporting businesses in the region, ensuring support is tailored to the needs of our businesses.
- Greater capacity to increase the pace of retrofit across the region (making more homes and buildings energy efficient).
- Making use of this range of powers would support the delivery of improvements to services and opportunities for residents in every part of the West of England.



WECA and NSC are focused on achieving the status of an Established Mayoral Strategic Authority as swiftly as possible



DEVOLUTION OPPORTUNITIES

127. The English Devolution White Paper Devolution Framework summary table identifies the functions available for Foundational, Mayoral and Established Authorities.

Key

(**) refers to functions for which funding will be included in Integrated Settlements for Established Mayoral Strategic Authorities

(^) refers to functions which apply to Combined and Combined County Authorities only

Detail	Foundation	Mayoral	Established
Funding and investment			
Access to a multi-departmental, long-term integrated funding settlement**			X
Long-term investment fund, with an agreed annual allocation		X	X
Removal of gateway review from investment fund, after Gateway One complete			X
Ability to introduce mayoral precepting on council tax^		X	X
Consolidation of local growth and place funding in a single pot**	X	X	X
Strategic leadership			
A statutory duty to produce Local Growth Plans		X	X
Membership of the Council of Nations and Regions		X	X
Membership of the Mayoral Data Council		X	X
Transport and local infrastructure			
Local Transport Authority and public transport functions, including bus franchising and responsibility for an area-wide Local Transport Plan	X	X	X
Simplification and consolidation of local transport funding**	X	X	X
Removal of certain Secretary of State consents, e.g. on lane rental schemes		X	X

Detail	Foundation	Mayoral	Established
Duty to establish a Key Route Network on the most important local roads^		X	X
Mayoral Power of Direction over use of constituent authority powers on the Key Route Network^		X	X
Priority for strategic rail engagement (including mayoral partnerships) with Great British Railways	X	X	X
Statutory role in governing, managing, planning, and developing the rail network		X	X
An option for greater control over local rail stations		X	X
A 'right to request' further rail devolution			X
Priority for support to deliver multi-modal ticketing			X
A clear, strategic role in the decarbonisation of the local bus fleet	X	X	X
Active Travel England support for constituent authority capability^	X	X	X
Formal partnership with National Highways		X	X
Skills and employment support			
Joint ownership of the Local Skills Improvement Plan model, with Employer Representative Bodies	X	X	X
Devolution of the core Adult Skills Fund	X		
Devolution of non-apprenticeship adult skills functions through a consolidated skills funding pot**		X	X
Central convening of youth careers provision including greater flexibility for Careers hubs		X	X
A clear role in relation to 16-19 education and training		X	X
Responsibility for developing local Get Britain Working Plans	X	X	X

Detail	Foundation	Mayoral	Established
Devolution of supported employment funding**	X	X	X
Co-design of future employment support that is additional to core Jobcentre Plus provision		X	X
Delegated delivery or commissioning of employment support that is additional to core Jobcentre Plus provision			X
Alignment of Jobcentre Plus boundaries with Strategic Authorities			X
Housing and strategic planning			
A duty to produce a Spatial Development Strategy	X	X	X
Strategic development management powers (once the Spatial Development Strategy is in place)		X	X
Ability to raise a Mayoral Community Infrastructure Levy to fund strategic infrastructure (once the Spatial Development Strategy is in place)		X	X
Ability to make Mayoral Development Orders		X	X
Ability to establish Mayoral Development Corporations		X	X
Homes England compulsory purchase powers (held concurrently)	X	X	X
Devolution of wider grant funding to support regeneration and housing delivery**		X	X
Ability to set the strategic direction of any future programme to support affordable housing provision in their area			X
Strategic Place Partnership with Homes England		X	X
Support to establish a public sector land commission			X

Detail	Foundation	Mayoral	Established
Economic development and regeneration			
Partnership working with Department for Science, Industry and Technology and UK Research and Innovation to explore opportunities for closer long-term collaboration in strengthening local research and innovation capacity	X	X	X
Develop joint innovation action plans with Innovate UK to shape long-term strategies and investments		X	X
Embed UK Research and Innovation lead points of contact for enhanced collaborative working on innovation with Mayoral Strategic Authorities that are committed to work collaboratively on innovation		X	X
Responsibility as the accountable body for the delivery of Growth Hubs	X	X	X
Devolution of Growth Hubs funding**			X
A Strategic Partnership with the Department for Business and Trade focused on domestic growth, exports, investment, and delivery of local growth priorities.		X	X
Partnership working with Department for Culture, Media and Sport Arm's Length Bodies to maximise culture, heritage, and sport spending in place	X	X	X
Environment and climate change			
Devolution of retrofit funding this parliament subject to a successful transition period (see 3.7)**			X
Heat network zoning coordination role	X	X	X
Coordinating local energy planning to support development of regional network energy infrastructure	X	X	X
Green jobs and skills coordination role	X	X	X

Detail	Foundation	Mayoral	Established
A strategic role on net zero in collaboration with government, including on Great British Energy's Local Power Plan and Warm Homes Plan	X	X	X
Responsibility for coordinating delivery and monitoring of Local Nature Recovery Strategies^	X	X	X
Health, wellbeing and public service reform			
A bespoke statutory health improvement and health inequalities duty^	X	X	X
Mayors engaged during the Integrated Care Boards chair appointment process		X	X
Mayors as members of local Integrated Care Partnerships, and consideration for position of chair or co-chair		X	X
A role in convening partners and driving cross-cutting public service reform, including looking at areas such as multiple disadvantage	X	X	X
Public safety			
Mayors accountable for the exercise of Police and Crime Commissioner functions where police force and mayoral boundaries align^		X	X
Mayors accountable for the exercise of Fire and Rescue Authority functions where fire and rescue service and mayoral boundaries align		X	X
A clear and defined role in local resilience, working with the Local Resilience Forum to embed resilience into broader policy and delivery^	X	X	X

I. IMPLEMENTATION

132. Implementation of expansion to the West of England Combined Authority would take place should necessary consents be received and legislation in place. North Somerset Council would then become full members of WECA. The WECA constitution, Committee membership and supporting arrangements would be revised to reflect the new membership. This process would be managed collaboratively.

J. FURTHER READING

[West of England Growth Strategy](#)
[English Devolution White Paper](#)

Consultation on North Somerset Council joining West of England Combined Authority - findings report

APRIL 2026



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Executive Summary

Introduction

West of England Mayoral Combined Authority (MCA) and North Somerset Council (NSC) are actively exploring a proposed extension of the combined authority area to include North Somerset. A public consultation relating to the extension of the combined authority was launched on Friday 13th February 2026, running for eight weeks until Monday 13th April 2026.

This report is based upon response to the consultation, covering responses received up to 9am on Monday 13th April (n=1,275). Following the exclusion of a small number of responses, including those in which the individual responding was under 18 or did not provide consent for their response data to be processed, 1,268 responses were included in analysis and reporting.

Consultation approach and sample

The consultation utilises a self-selecting sample (i.e., anyone with access to the consultation form can opt-in to respond), meaning the sample of respondents is not designed to be representative of the wider population. The following bullet points provide a short summary of the profile of consultation respondents:

- 56% of consultation respondents provided a postcode which was matched to North Somerset, compared with 43% whose postcode was matched to the existing combined authority area
- The majority of responses to the consultation are from individuals (97%), with the remaining responses sent on behalf of organisations
- 76% of respondents provided an age category when prompted, with responses breaking down as follows: 18-34 (12%), 35-54 (26%), 55-74 (47%), 75+ (15%)
- 69% of respondents provided information on sex at birth when prompted, with responses breaking down as follows: Male (58%), Female (42%)
- Using the Census definition of disability, the proportion of disabled respondents is 17%

Key findings

- Across all respondents, over half reported that North Somerset Council should join the MCA (57%) with varied response across different age groups
- A majority of respondents living within the existing MCA area and North Somerset supported North Somerset joining the MCA (66% and 50% respectively)
- The most frequently cited reason as to why North Somerset should join the MCA was centred on integration, with respondents highlighting existing geographical, economic, transport, and collaboration linkages as well as potential benefits of further integration
- The most prominent reason for opposing North Somerset's MCA membership was respondents' concern about a potential loss of local control, followed by a concern around negative financial implications and / or the perceived "cost" associated with joining
- Respondents to the consultation were more likely to agree that working across a wider combined authority area will support economic growth (53%) than disagree (36%)
- Respondents were also more likely to agree that working across a wider combined authority area will improve public services (52%) than disagree (38%)
- A similar proportion of respondents agreed and disagreed that working across a wider combined authority area will support the diverse needs and interests of local communities (44% and 42% respectively); respondents who live in North Somerset were more likely to disagree (49%) than agree (40%)
- Of those respondents citing a clear, perceived benefit of North Somerset Council joining the combined authority, the topic of transport was most commonly mentioned, with potential noted for improving transport services and infrastructure within and across the region
- In terms of key themes raised by those with explicit concerns around the proposal, the most common theme related to perceived financial concerns, with responses coded to this theme primarily focused on perceived negative cost implications for residents and / or the region
- On which activities and projects respondents would prioritise in relation to an expanded MCA, transport-related priorities formed almost half of all codes applied to responses for this question, a far greater proportion than any other theme

Background

Purpose of the consultation

In December 2024, the UK government published the English Devolution White Paper¹. The paper sets out to extend devolution across all areas of England. As part of this move towards greater devolution, West of England Mayoral Combined Authority (MCA) and North Somerset Council (NSC) are actively exploring a proposed extension of the combined authority area to include North Somerset.

Prior to any decision-making on whether to extend the combined authority area to include North Somerset, the MCA is seeking views from interested parties, including those who live, work or own businesses which operate within the existing West of England area and North Somerset Council area. The MCA Committee and North Somerset Council each agreed to launch a formal public consultation on expanding the combined authority area to include North Somerset. The consultation was launched in February 2026².

Proposed changes

The MCA was founded in 2017 and was originally designed to include all four local authorities, with North Somerset Council a full member alongside Bath & North East Somerset, Bristol, and South Gloucestershire. North Somerset decided not to join the MCA ahead of its formal creation in 2017. Since then, the MCA has covered three constituent authorities, with North Somerset Council considered a close partner. At the point of the launch of the consultation, North Somerset Council do not currently have a vote in the formal decision-making committee of the MCA³.

The primary proposal being consulted on is whether North Somerset Council should join the West of England Mayoral Combined Authority. As a result of any extension of the combined authority, North Somerset Council would have equal decision making and voting power on the MCA Committee as the other constituent authorities. The public consultation was designed to enable the MCA and North Somerset Council to receive feedback on the proposed changes ahead of any decision-making.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/english-devolution-white-paper-power-and-partnership-foundations-for-growth/english-devolution-white-paper>

² <https://www.westofengland-ca.gov.uk/about-us/democracy-funding-transparency/expanding-weca-into-north-somerset/>

³ <https://www.westofengland-ca.gov.uk/about-us/democracy-funding-transparency/expanding-weca-into-north-somerset/>

Consultation approach and sample

A public consultation relating to the extension of the combined authority was launched on 13th February 2026, running for eight weeks until 13th April 2026. Further details relating to the consultation process can be found in Appendix A.

The consultation utilised a self-selecting sample (i.e., anyone with access to the consultation form could opt-in to respond), meaning the sample of respondents is not designed to be representative of the wider population. The use of a self-selecting sample limits the ability of analysts to generalise the findings to the wider population, while it is not practical to test any differences between sub-groups for statistical significance when utilising a self-selecting sample. As a result, comparisons between sub-groups should be treated with caution.

Using a self-selecting sample also means that the likelihood of some groups of the population being over-represented or under-represented is high. As an example, 18-34 year olds are responsible for 9% of the responses included in this report despite making up 27% of the region's population, ranging from 17% in North Somerset to 33% in Bristol⁴. This should be noted throughout, particularly where comparisons are being made based on age.

To identify differences between respondents living in North Somerset and those living in the existing combined authority area, respondents were also asked to provide their full postcode. Using ONS data on postcodes and Local Authority District (LAD)⁵, each respondent's postcode was matched to North Somerset or the existing combined authority area (i.e., Bath and North East Somerset, Bristol or South Gloucestershire). Open-ended ("free-text") responses have not been analysed according to where respondents live.

A small proportion of respondents (2%) were included in the 'Total' response but were not considered to be in either the existing combined authority area or North Somerset. These respondents typically did not provide a postcode, provided a postcode which belonged to an area outside the proposed combined authority area or provided an unrecognised postcode. It is worth noting that some respondents are likely to work in North Somerset and live in the existing combined authority area, while others are likely to do the opposite. Those representing organisations were asked to provide a postcode for their organisation.

Further detail on how the mix of respondents to the consultation differs from the population at large can be found in Appendix A.

⁴ ONS mid-year population estimates, 2025

⁵ ONS Open Geography Portal <https://geoportal.statistics.gov.uk/>

This report

Findings in this report cover responses received up to 9am on Monday 13th April (n=1,275). Any responses in which the individual responding was under 18 were excluded from analysis and reporting on the basis of the MCA being unable to obtain informed consent for these individuals. Likewise, any responses from individuals who did not provide consent for their response data to be processed were excluded. Following the exclusion of six responses which met these criteria, as well as an additional written response, 1,268 were included for the purposes of analysis and reporting.

Data were collected across each of the consultation questions:

- Do you believe that North Somerset Council should join the West of England Combined Authority?
 - Why do you believe that North Somerset Council should / should not join?
- To what extent do you agree or disagree that working across a wider combined authority area will support economic growth?
- To what extent do you agree or disagree that working across a wider combined authority area will improve public services?
- To what extent do you agree or disagree that working across a wider combined authority area will support the diverse interests and needs of local communities?
- What benefits do you think can be achieved through expanding the West of England Combined Authority into North Somerset?
- Do you have any concerns about the proposal to expand the West of England Combined Authority into North Somerset? If so, what could be done to address those concerns?
- What activities and projects would you identify as priorities for an expanded West of England Combined Authority?

In this report, percentages are rounded to zero decimal points. As a result, figures may not sum to 100%.

Note that all reported base sizes in the report include those who selected the option 'Don't know', in order for these views to be accounted for in any decision making. Base sizes may differ for each question. Figures based on a base size of less than 30 are not presented.

Further technical details and details relating to methodology can be found in Appendix A. The appendices also contain a short summary of organisational responses (Appendix B) and a copy of the consultation form (Appendix C).

Consultation findings

“Do you believe that North Somerset Council should join the West of England Combined Authority?”

All respondents to the consultation were asked whether they believe North Somerset Council should join the combined authority. Respondents could choose ‘Yes’, ‘No’, or indicate that they did not know whether they supported the proposal (‘Don’t Know’).

Demographic monitoring questions were in place to collect information about the age of respondents, but these questions were not mandatory. This means that the overall number of responses to this question (n=1,268) exceeds the number of respondents ordered by age group (n=962). As a result of the relatively high proportion of respondents not providing information relating to age (24%), findings may differ between respondents overall and those across the age categories.

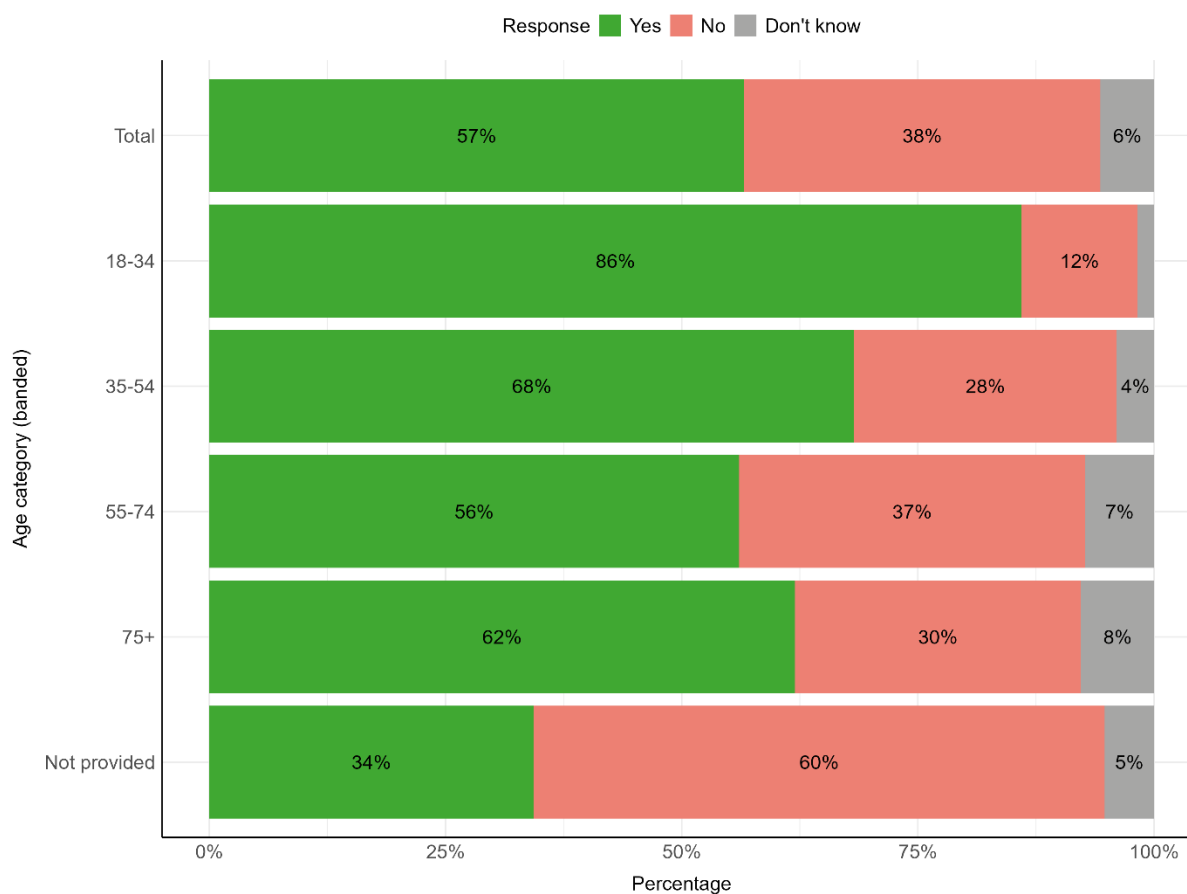
When reviewing response by age category, it is also worth noting the lower number of respondents in the 18-34 and 75+ age groups (n=114 and n=143 respectively) compared with other age groups.

Organisational responses (n=35) are not included in the breakdown of respondents by age group but are included in the total response.

Across all respondents, over half believe that North Somerset Council should join the MCA (57%). A smaller proportion do not believe North Somerset Council should join (38%). A further 6% of respondents did not know whether the extension of the combined authority should take place.

There was varied response across different age groups in relation to North Somerset Council joining the MCA, with respondents in the older age groups less likely to favour the proposal. The vast majority of respondents aged 18-34 believe North Somerset Council should join (86%), compared with smaller proportions of respondents aged 35-54 (68%), 55-74 (56%) and 75+ (62%).

Figure 1: Whether respondents believe that North Somerset Council should join West of England Combined Authority (by age group)



Base: All consultation responses

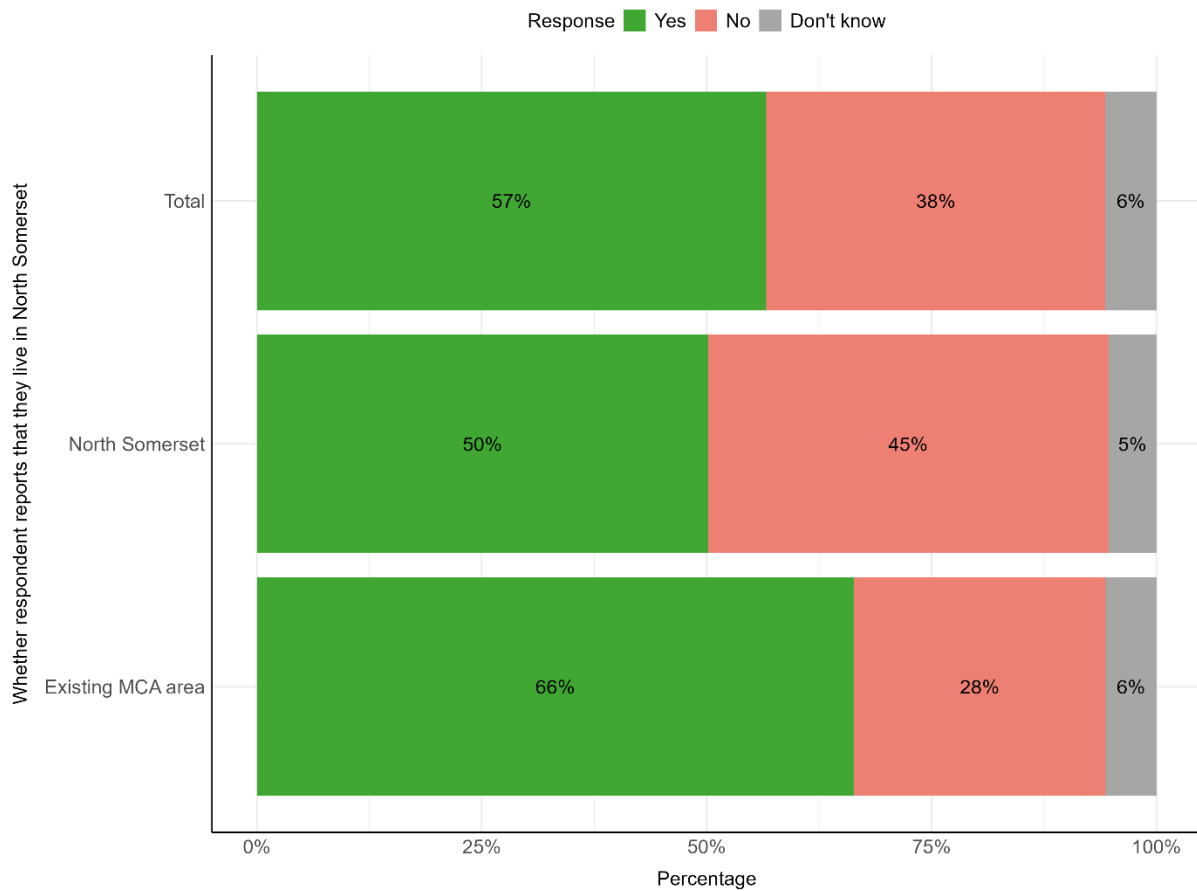
Base size: Total - 1268, 18-34 - 114, 35-54 - 252, 55-74 - 453, 75+ - 143, Not provided - 306

Source: Consultation on NSC joining West of England MCA (Feb - Apr 2026)

Reflecting the age groups most likely to support the proposal, the proportion of respondents expressing a lack of support for the proposal was highest among those aged 55-74 (37%) and lowest for respondents aged 18-34 (12%). The level of respondents selecting ‘Don’t know’ was relatively consistent across all age groups, varying from 2% to 8%.

To identify differences between respondents living in North Somerset compared with those living in the existing MCA area, each respondent’s postcode was matched to one of these areas. A small proportion of respondents (2%) were included in the ‘Total’ response but could not be matched to an area inside the proposed combined authority area. It is worth noting that some respondents are likely to work in North Somerset and live in the existing combined authority area, while others are likely to do the opposite. Those representing organisations were asked to provide a postcode for their organisation.

Figure 2: Whether respondents believe that North Somerset Council should join West of England Combined Authority (by area of residence)



Base: All consultation responses

Base size: Total - 1268, North Somerset - 714, Existing MCA area - 532

Source: Consultation on NSC joining West of England MCA (Feb - Apr 2026)

Respondents living in the North Somerset area were more likely to support the extension of the MCA into North Somerset (50%) than oppose it (45%). A small proportion of respondents living in North Somerset did not know whether the extension of the combined authority should take place (5%).

Just under two-thirds of respondents within the existing MCA area support North Somerset Council joining (66%), compared with a smaller proportion who did not (28%). A small proportion of respondents living in the existing MCA area chose 'Don't Know' (6%).

“Why do you believe that North Somerset Council should or should not join?”

Following the initial question on whether respondents believe the MCA should be extended into North Somerset, respondents to the consultation were asked to provide the reasons for their response. For ease of analysis, respondents were asked to provide an open-ended (“free-text”) response to one of the following questions based on their initial response:

- [If ‘Yes’ at Q1] “Why do you believe that North Somerset Council should join the West of England Combined Authority?”
- [If ‘No’ at Q1] “Why do you believe that North Somerset Council should not join the West of England Combined Authority?”
- [If ‘Don’t know’ at Q1] “Why are you not yet sure whether North Somerset Council should join the West of England Combined Authority?”

These questions were designed to allow each respondent to provide additional detail, recognising that there may be a range of factors influencing their stance on the proposal. Due to the low number of ‘Don’t know’ responses, analysis relating to the third follow-up question is not covered within the report.

For both open-ended questions analysed, qualitative responses were analysed manually and “coded” according to theme, taking an inductive approach. A summary of the results for these questions is presented below, highlighting the “key” themes (largely designated by frequency of responses coded to that theme). Themes coded fewer than ten times are not reported.

Of the total responses, a proportion were coded as “Invalid response” or “Other” and were therefore removed from the assessment of dominant themes. Invalid responses were classified as such if the content included: symbols only; a statement of declining to respond, such as “no comment”; illegible text; and / or a comment included a statement that might be classified as hate speech alongside no other substantive content. A response was classified as “Other” if a distinct topic was mentioned by too few respondents to form a substantive, standalone theme (<5).

“Why do you believe that North Somerset Council should join the West of England Combined Authority”

This question received **712 responses** in total, after initial data cleaning described above.

A small proportion of respondents expressed a general, positive sentiment towards North Somerset joining the MCA, without specifying a particular benefit.

The majority of respondents to this question cited an explicit benefit, and of these, the most frequently cited reason as to why North Somerset should join the MCA was centred on integration. Respondents highlighted *existing* geographical, economic, transport, and collaboration linkages across authority boundaries. Within this theme, many respondents noted that North Somerset residents routinely work, study, visit, or travel across the region; recognising this, *further* integration was often seen as advantageous to develop a more joined up, strategic approach to regional issues. This theme also encompassed perceived benefits of an enhanced regional voice, collaboration on shared challenges, and strengthened influence when negotiating at regional or national levels if North Somerset were to join the MCA.

The next most common theme related to respondents citing perceived economic advantages as a reason for North Somerset to join the MCA. These advantages included expectations of improved access to funding, grants, and investment opportunities, as well as the potential for cost efficiencies, reduced duplication, and better value for money through sharing of resources.

Another key theme, mentioned by a similar proportion of respondents, was transport. Respondents believed joining the MCA could lead to better and more "joined-up" transport planning, strategy, and investment for the region. Some respondents further expressed this was an important priority for them personally and / or other residents; for example, to facilitate employment opportunities, and / or to deliver accessible travel for disabled residents.

"Why do you believe that North Somerset Council should not join the West of England Combined Authority"

This question received **472 responses** in total, after initial data cleaning described above.

A small proportion of respondents expressed a general, negative perception or concern around North Somerset joining the MCA, without opting to provide a clearly defined reason alongside.

Of those who did state specific concerns, the most prominent reason for opposing North Somerset's MCA membership was respondents' concern about a potential loss of local control if North Somerset were to join the MCA. This related to potential erosion of decision-making authority and autonomy, a perception that North Somerset may have a weaker "voice" within the partnership, and / or a desire to have decision-making remain on a smaller, more local scale as it functions currently. Some respondents expressed concern around the perception that decision-making power would shift away from North Somerset and therefore that the area's distinct priorities and needs, particularly those linked to its rural identity, might be overshadowed by more urban authorities - most commonly this latter concern was connected to Bristol.

The next most common theme involved a concern around negative financial implications and / or the perceived "cost" associated with joining. Specific points

expressed by respondents within this theme most often included concerns around: increased taxation on residents (i.e., raised Council Tax); inefficient use or wastage of public monies; and / or “unfair” distribution or apportioning of funds across the MCA region (i.e., a perception that funds would be disproportionately allocated to Bristol). Broader financial concerns expressed by some respondents within this theme included, for example, references to the current financial status and pressures facing North Somerset Council.

Some respondents also expressed apprehension about the increased scale and bureaucracy that might accompany membership in a larger combined authority. Some felt that joining the MCA could lead to more complex governance structures, slower processes, and greater administrative burden.

A smaller proportion of respondents expressed concerns connected to the previous Avon County Council model. This historical association contributed to a perception that the MCA could replicate governance structures from this model which they had regarded as ineffective or problematic, and / or informed a general negative view of the MCA model’s potential efficacy.

A less frequent theme pointed to respondents’ concerns around the absence of a democratic process to determine whether North Somerset should join the MCA.

“To what extent do you agree or disagree that working across a wider combined authority area will support economic growth?”

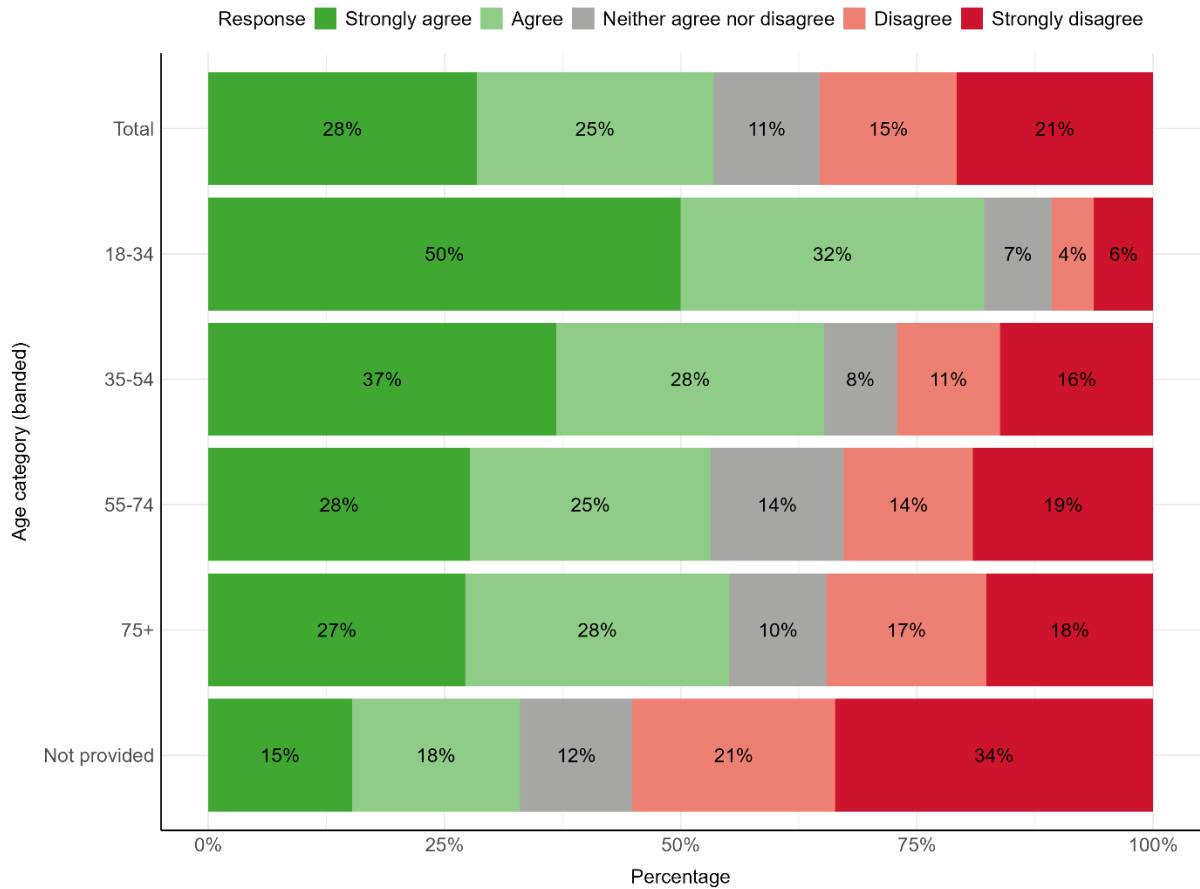
All respondents to the consultation were asked whether they believe that working across a wider MCA area, including North Somerset, will support economic growth in the region. Respondents could choose from a five-point scale in responding to this question: ‘Strongly agree’, ‘Agree’, ‘Neither agree nor disagree’, ‘Disagree’ and ‘Strongly disagree’. These responses are displayed separately in Figure 3 before being combined into ‘Strongly agree / agree’ and ‘Disagree / strongly disagree’ categories during the rest of the report.

As with the initial question on extending the combined authority into North Somerset, the overall number of responses to this question (n=1239) exceeds the number of respondents who provided their age group (n=906). Similarly, organisational responses will not be included in the breakdown of responses by age group but are included in the total response. When reviewing response by age category, it is worth noting the lower number of respondents in the 18-34 and 75+ age groups (n=112 and n=137 respectively) compared with other age groups.

Over half of all respondents agree that working across a wider MCA area will support economic growth (53%). Over one-third of respondents disagree (36%), while the remainder of respondents neither agree nor disagree that an expanded area would support economic growth (11%).

Within each individual age group, a majority of respondents agree that a wider MCA area will support economic growth (53%-82%). Respondents aged 18-34 were most likely to agree (82%), followed by those aged 35-54 (65%). Across respondents aged 55-74 and those aged 75+, there was a similar level of agreement (53% and 55% respectively).

Figure 3: Whether respondents believe that working across a wider combined authority area will support economic growth (by age group)



Base: All consultation responses

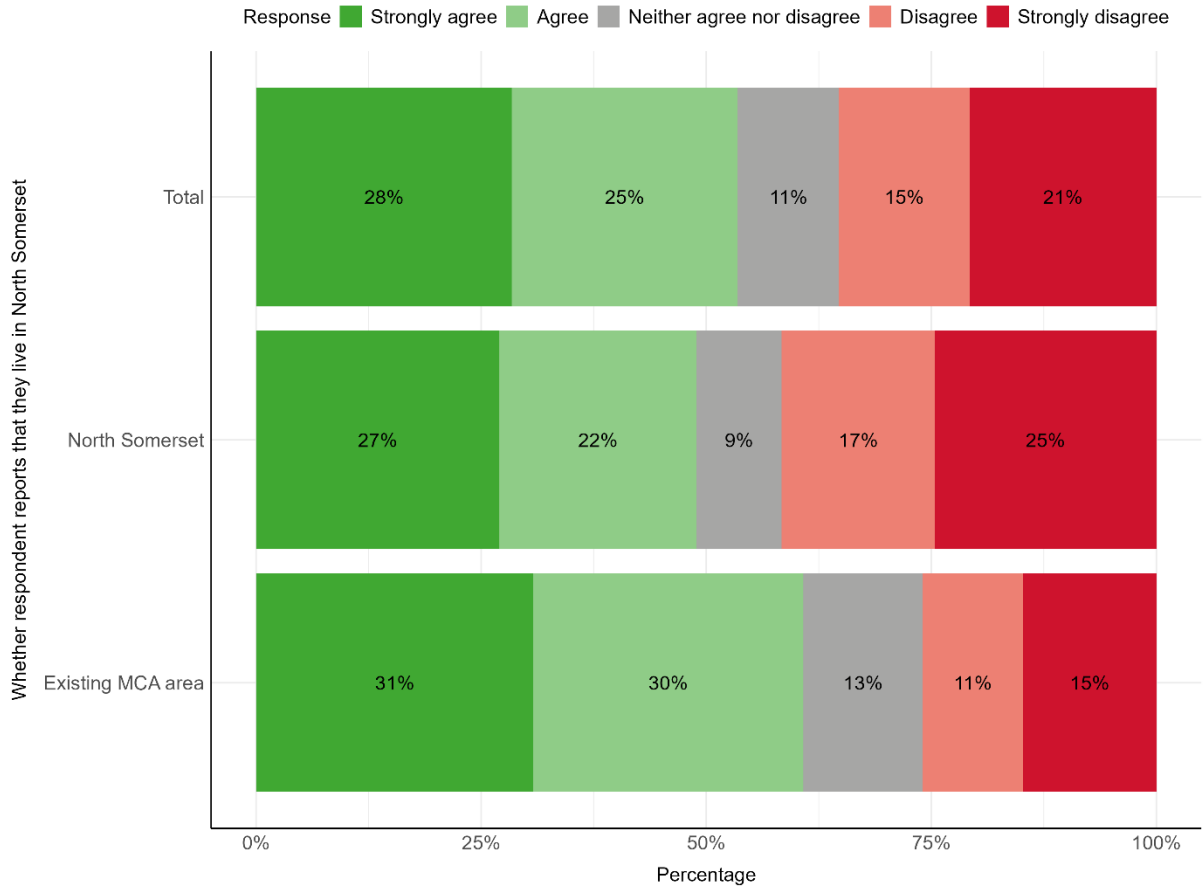
Base size: Total - 1239, 18-34 - 112, 35-54 - 247, 55-74 - 440, 75+ - 137, Not provided - 303

Source: Consultation on NSC joining West of England MCA (Feb - Apr 2026)

Approximately one-third of respondents aged 55-74 disagreed that an expanded MCA area would support economic growth (33%), along with a similar proportion of those aged 75+ (35%). Over one-quarter of respondents aged 35-54 disagreed that a wider area will support economic growth (27%), along with a small proportion of those aged 18-34 (8%). The proportion of respondents who reported that they neither agree nor disagree ranged from 7% to 14% across each individual age group.

As with the initial question on extending the MCA into North Somerset, respondent postcode was used to make comparisons between those living in North Somerset and those living in the existing area. Approximately 98% of responses were able to be matched to one of these areas, with the remainder included in the 'Total' category. Those representing organisations were asked to provide a postcode for their organisation.

Figure 4: Whether respondents believe that working across a wider combined authority area will support economic growth (by area of residence)



Base: All consultation responses

Base size: Total - 1239, North Somerset - 699, Existing MCA area - 520

Source: Consultation on NSC joining West of England MCA (Feb - Apr 2026)

Respondents living in North Somerset were more likely to agree that an expanded MCA area would support economic growth (49%) than disagree (42%).

A majority of those who report living outside North Somerset and inside the existing MCA area agreed that working across a wider area will support economic growth (61%). Over one-quarter of respondents living in the existing area disagreed that working across a wider area would support economic growth (26%).

Considering those who chose 'Don't Know', there was a difference of five percentage points between those living in the existing MCA area and those living in North Somerset (13% and 9% respectively).

“To what extent do you agree or disagree that working across a wider combined authority area will improve public services?”

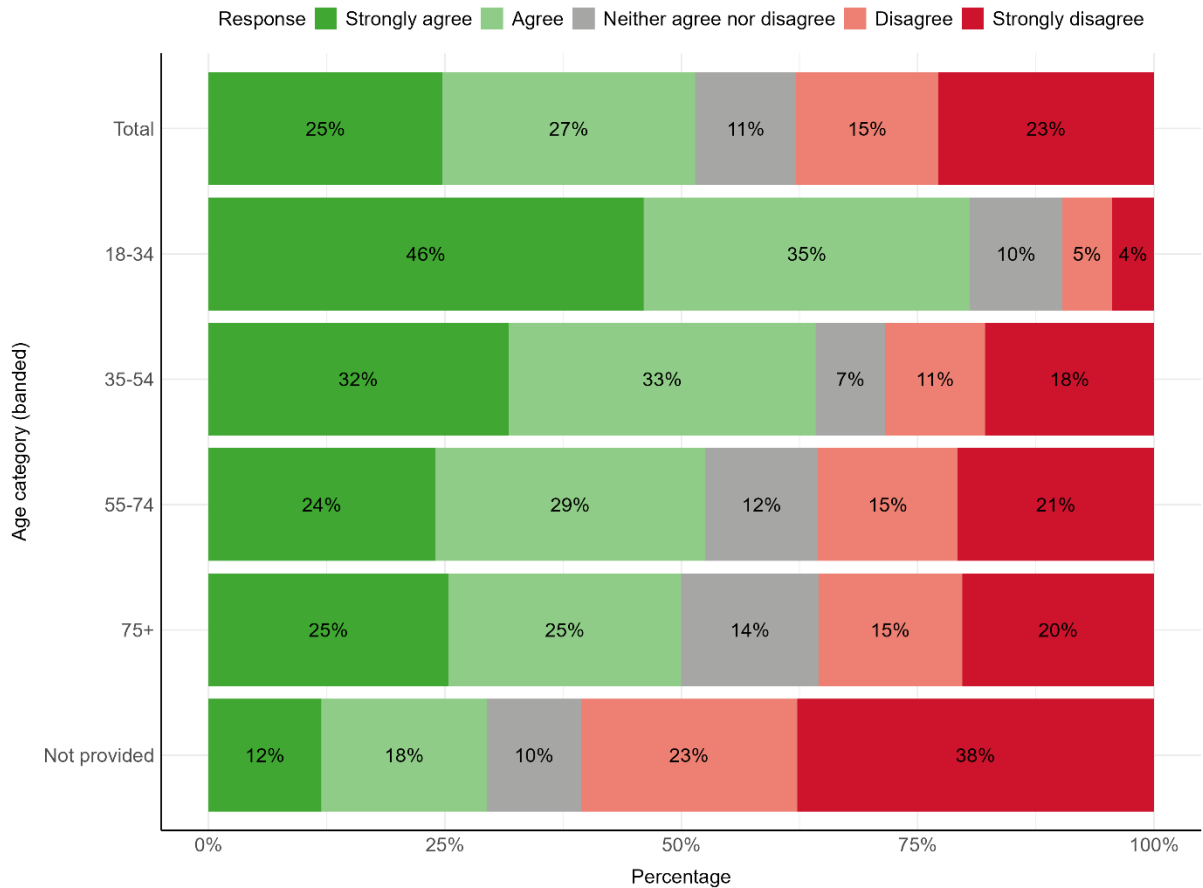
All respondents to the consultation were asked whether they believe that working across a wider MCA area, inclusive of North Somerset Council, will improve public services in the region. As for the previous question relating to economic growth, respondents could choose from a five-point scale in responding to this question.

As with previous questions, the overall number of responses to this question (n=1241) includes organisational responses and exceeds the number of respondents who provided their age group (n=939). When reviewing response by age category, it is worth noting the lower number of respondents in the 18-34 and 75+ age groups (n=113 and n=138 respectively) compared with other age groups.

Respondents were more likely to agree that working across a wider MCA area will improve public services (52%) than disagree (38%). A smaller proportion reported that they neither agree nor disagree (11%).

Within each individual age group, at least half of respondents agree that working across a wider area will improve public services (50%-81%). As with the previous question relating to economic growth, respondents aged 18-34 were most likely to agree (81%), followed by those aged 35-54 (65%). At least half of respondents aged 55-74 and 75+ agree that working across a wider area would improve public services (53% and 50% respectively).

Figure 5: Whether respondents believe that working across a wider combined authority area will improve public services (by age group)



Base: All consultation responses

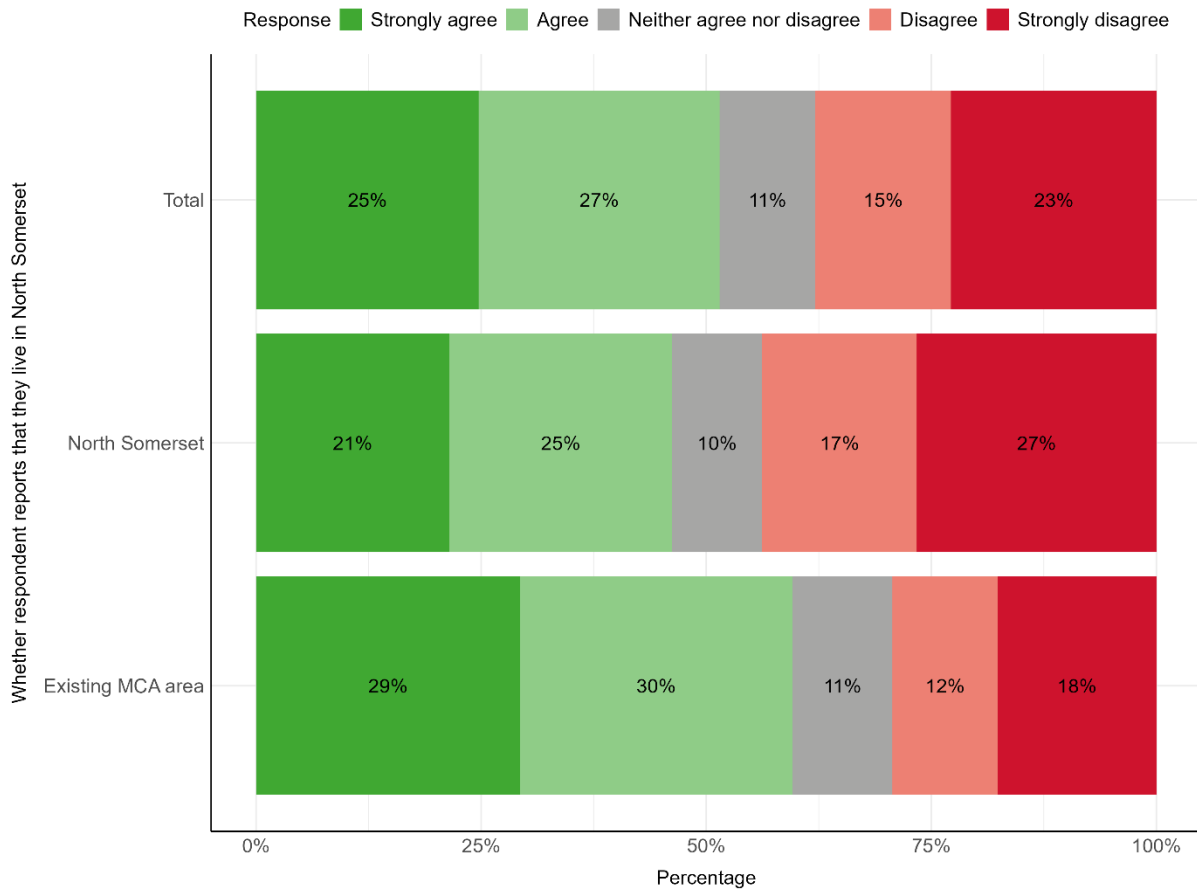
Base size: Total - 1241, 18-34 - 113, 35-54 - 246, 55-74 - 442, 75+ - 138, Not provided - 302

Source: Consultation on NSC joining West of England MCA (Feb - Apr 2026)

Similar proportions of respondents aged 55-74 and 75+ disagreed that an expanded MCA area would improve public services (36% and 35% respectively). Over one-quarter of respondents aged 35-54 disagreed that a wider area will improve public services (29%), compared with a small proportion of respondents aged 18-34 (9%). A similar proportion of respondents aged 18-34, 54-75 and 75+ reported that they do not agree or disagree (10-14%), compared with a slightly smaller proportion of those aged 35-54 (7%).

In line with previous questions, respondents' postcodes were matched to areas within North Somerset or the existing MCA area. This applies to the majority of respondents, with the exception of a small number who were unable to be allocated to either group.

Figure 6: Whether respondents believe that working across a wider combined authority area will improve public services (by area of residence)



Base: All consultation responses
 Base size: Total - 1241, North Somerset - 699, Existing MCA area - 522
 Source: Consultation on NSC joining West of England MCA (Feb - Apr 2026)

Considering respondents who live in the North Somerset area, a similar proportion agreed and disagreed that an expanded MCA area will improve public services (46% and 44% respectively).

A majority of respondents who live in the existing MCA area agreed that working across a wider area will improve public services (59%), compared with just under one-third of respondents living in the existing area who disagreed (30%).

The proportion of respondents who chose ‘Don’t Know’ was similar across those living in the existing area and those living in North Somerset (11% and 10% respectively).

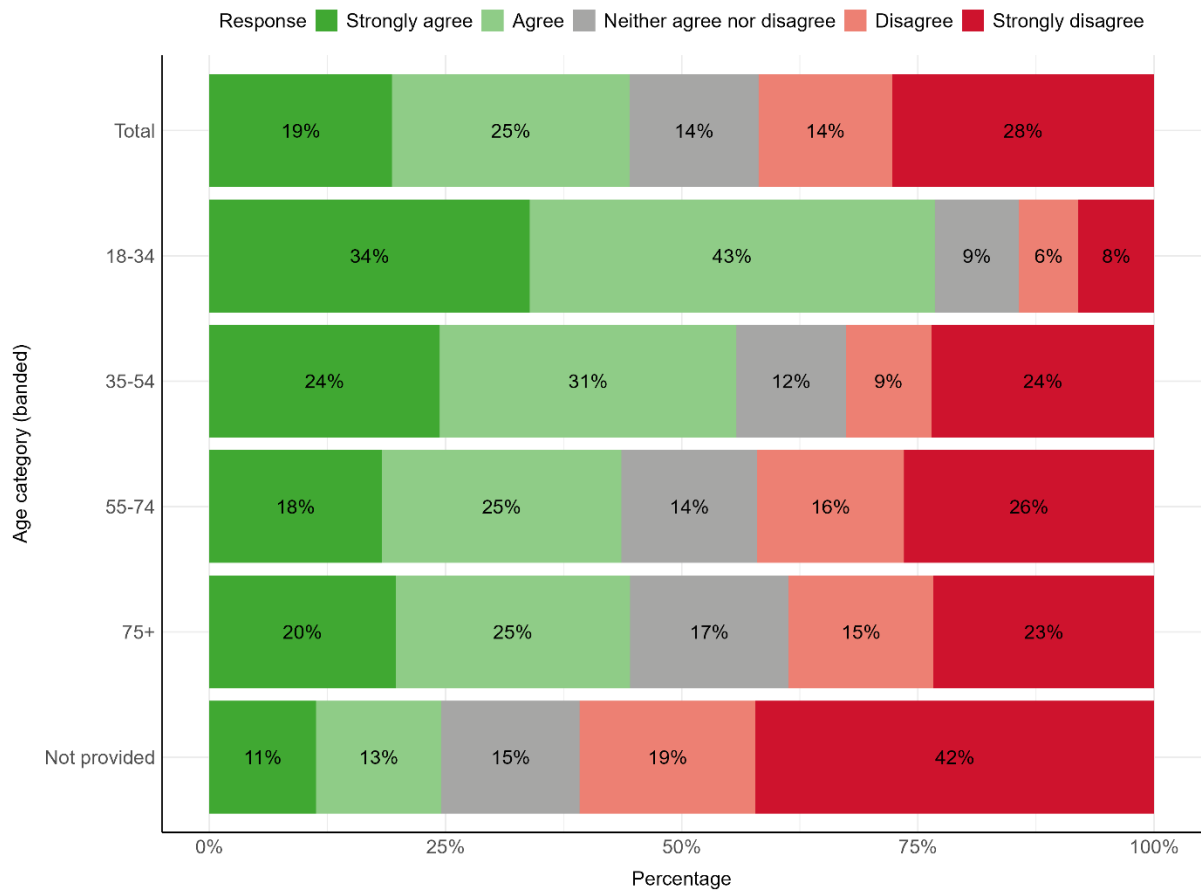
“To what extent do you agree or disagree that working across a wider combined authority area will support the diverse needs and interests of local communities?”

All respondents to the consultation were asked whether they believe that working across a wider MCA area, inclusive of North Somerset Council, will support the diverse needs and interests of local communities. Respondents could again choose from a five-point scale in responding to this question.

As with previous questions, the overall number of responses to this question (n=1231) includes organisational responses and exceeds the number of respondents who provided their age group (n=930). When reviewing response by age category, it is worth noting the lower number of respondents in the 18-34 and 75+ age groups (n=112 and n=138 respectively) compared with other age groups.

Across all respondents, a similar proportion agreed and disagreed that working across a wider MCA area will support the diverse needs and interests of local communities (44% and 42% respectively). This reflected lower levels of agreement compared with previous questions around the potential for an expanded MCA area to support economic growth (53%) and improve public services (52%).

Figure 7: Whether respondents believe that working across a wider combined authority area will support the diverse needs and interests of local communities (by age group)



Base: All consultation responses

Base size: Total - 1231, 18-34 - 112, 35-54 - 242, 55-74 - 438, 75+ - 138, Not provided - 301

Source: Consultation on NSC joining West of England MCA (Feb - Apr 2026)

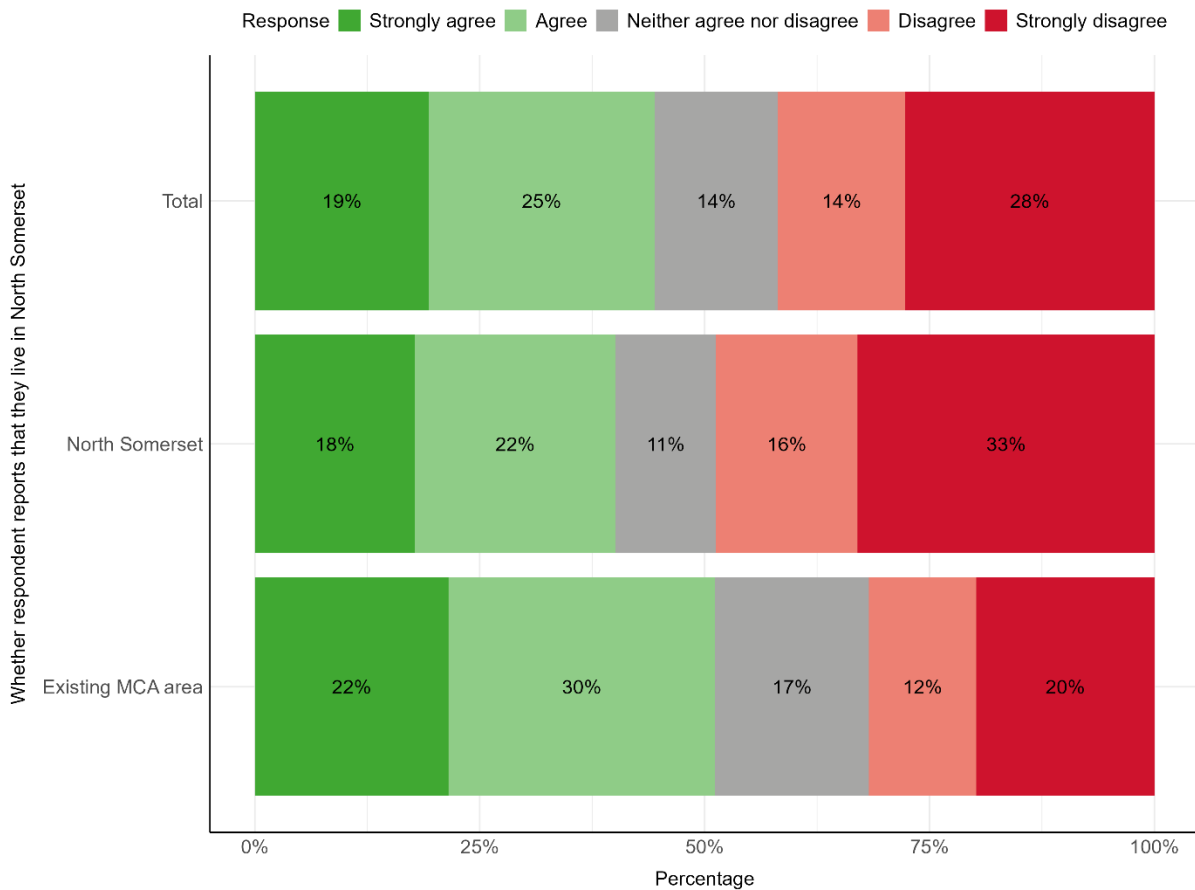
There were varied responses across different age groups in relation to whether respondents believe that an expanded MCA area will support the needs and interests of local communities; over three-quarters of respondents aged 18-34 agreed (77%), compared with a smaller proportion of those aged 35-54, 55-74 and 75+ (55%, 43% and 45% respectively).

As might be expected, the findings above largely reflect whether respondents disagreed that an expanded MCA area will support the needs and interests of local communities. Respondents aged 55-74 were most likely to disagree, along with a similar proportion of those aged 75+ (42% and 38% respectively). Smaller proportions of respondents aged 35-54 (33%) and 18-34 (14%) disagreed that working across a wider area will support the needs and interests of local communities.

The response to this question was also considered in the context of whether respondents report living in North Somerset, or whether they report living in the

existing MCA area. As with previous questions, it is worth noting that some respondents are likely to work in North Somerset and live in the existing combined authority area, while others are likely to do the opposite. Organisational responses were also matched to an area based on the reported postcode of the organisation.

Figure 8: Whether respondents believe that working across a wider combined authority area will support the diverse needs and interests of local communities (by area of residence)



Base: All consultation responses

Base size: Total - 1231, North Somerset - 691, Existing MCA area - 520

Source: Consultation on NSC joining West of England MCA (Feb - Apr 2026)

Respondents who report living in North Somerset were more likely to disagree that working across a wider MCA will support the diverse needs and interests of local communities (49%) than agree (40%).

Just over half of respondents living within the existing MCA area agree that an expanded MCA area will support the needs and interests of local communities (52%), compared with just under one-third who disagree (32%).

Under one-in-five respondents living within the existing MCA area report that they neither agree nor disagree with the idea of an expanded MCA area supporting the

needs and interests of local communities (17%), compared with a smaller proportion of respondents living in North Somerset (11%).

“What benefits do you think can be achieved through expanding the West of England Combined Authority into North Somerset?”

All respondents were asked to provide an open-ended (“free-text”) response to a question on perceived benefits of an expanded MCA, regardless of their initial response relating to whether North Somerset Council should join.

This question received **1061 responses** in total, after initial data cleaning described above.

Qualitative responses were analysed manually and “coded” according to theme, taking an inductive approach. A summary of the results for this question is presented below, highlighting the “key” themes (largely designated by frequency of responses coded to that theme). Themes coded fewer than ten times are not reported.

Of the total responses, a proportion were coded as “Invalid response” or “Other” and were therefore removed from the assessment of dominant themes. Invalid responses were classified as such if the content included: symbols only; a statement of declining to respond, such as “no comment”; illegible text; and / or a comment included a statement that might be classified as hate speech alongside no other substantive content. A response was classified as “Other” if a distinct topic was mentioned by too few respondents to form a substantive, standalone theme (<5).

A small proportion of respondents stated a general positive perception of North Somerset joining with the MCA but did not qualify a specific benefit.

Meanwhile, the most commonly coded theme for this question linked to respondents’ perception there would be no benefits to North Somerset joining with the MCA. (This includes respondents who: stated explicitly that they did not believe any benefits would be achieved; stated they were as yet unsure or unaware of any possible advantages; and those who made a statement indicating no benefits without qualifying it further.) These comments reflected a general sense of scepticism or uncertainty, with some indicating a lack of clear information provided by the MCA about how the MCA extension might deliver positive outcomes to North Somerset and the wider region.

A greater proportion of respondents expressed one or more potential benefits than reported no perceived benefits. Of those respondents citing a clear, perceived benefit, the topic of transport was most commonly mentioned, with potential noted for improving transport services and infrastructure within and across the region. Within the transport theme, respondents suggested that North Somerset Council joining the MCA could variously support: a more integrated and “joined-up” transport system; better public transport services and infrastructure (bus, rail, tram, mass transit); improved connectivity across the region; and / or, strengthened links to key regional hubs such as Bristol Airport. Several described a

partnership between North Somerset Council and the MCA as better positioned to deliver strategic, cross-boundary transport improvements, compared with North Somerset Council acting alone.

The next most common theme involved respondents citing the potential benefits of greater regional collaboration as a result of an expanded MCA, including: more "joined-up" and coordinated regional planning across areas such as transport and housing. In the context of an expanded MCA area, respondents further mentioned the potential for greater combined voice, influence, and negotiating power, both on the regional and national stages.

Further, a smaller proportion of respondents believed that joining the MCA would bring greater access to funding, including regional or national grants that may not otherwise be available, and a number of respondents perceived that MCA membership could lead to a range of efficiency improvements.

Other themes with fewer responses included opportunities for a stronger regional voice, potential for benefits in terms of economic growth, and potential for improved public services across a range of policy areas.

“Do you have any concerns about the proposal to expand the West of England Combined Authority into North Somerset? If so, what could be done to address those concerns?”

All respondents were asked to provide an open-ended (“free-text”) response detailing their concerns in relation to an expanded MCA, regardless of their initial response relating to whether North Somerset Council should join or not. Within the same question, respondents were also asked to detail anything which could be done to address those concerns.

Qualitative responses were analysed manually and “coded” according to theme, taking an inductive approach. A summary of the results for this question is presented below, highlighting the “key” themes (largely designated by frequency of responses coded to that theme). Themes coded fewer than ten times are not reported.

Of the total responses, a proportion were coded as “Invalid response” or “Other” and were therefore removed from the assessment of dominant themes. Invalid responses were classified as such if the content included: symbols only; a statement of declining to respond, such as “no comment”; illegible text; and / or a comment included a statement that might be classified as hate speech alongside no other substantive content. A response was classified as “Other” if a distinct topic was mentioned by too few respondents to form a substantive, standalone theme (<5).

This question received **1041 responses** in total after initial data cleaning described above.

A majority of respondents provided a response which related to a concern, whereas a minority of respondents offered a potential solution. Solutions are discussed further below.

Respondent views were varied. The most prominent individual theme in relation to concerns involved respondents explicitly expressing that they held no, or very few, concerns about the proposal. This theme was articulated considerably more often than any single theme involving a named or general concern. However, when themes relating to named or general concerns are considered collectively, a greater proportion of respondents expressed one or more concerns than reported having no concerns.

The next most commonly reported theme involved respondents expressing a negative perception or concern around North Somerset joining the MCA, without opting to provide a clearly defined reason for this view, i.e., a generalised concern.

In terms of key, named concerns raised, the most common theme related to financial concerns, with responses coded to this theme primarily focused on perceived negative cost implications for residents and / or the region. Specific

points expressed by respondents most often included concerns around: increased taxation on residents (i.e., increased Council Tax); inefficient use or wastage of public monies; and / or “unfair” distribution or apportioning of funds across the MCA region (i.e., a perception that funds would be disproportionately allocated to Bristol). Broader financial concerns expressed by some respondents included, for example, references to the current financial status and pressures facing North Somerset Council.

The next most common theme connected to respondents’ concerns that North Somerset’s voice would be less well heard or even ignored within a larger MCA structure. Some respondents, within this theme, reflected a preference for more localised decision-making. Further, the concern around loss of voice was often linked to a perception that North Somerset’s distinct rural identity and priorities may be overshadowed by differing priorities of more urban areas within the MCA, and / or that discussion may be dominated by Bristol / metropolitan interests.

A small proportion of respondents raised concerns about the increased size and scale of an expanded MCA, and the perception that this would create additional layers of governance and potential for increased bureaucracy. Respondents referenced concerns about the scale of an expanded MCA and the possibility that decision-making processes might become less effective.

Further themes stated with less frequency included concerns around the democratic process of North Somerset joining the MCA, the previous Avon County Council model, the consultation process, perceived political implications, and a possible detriment to regional transport.

The second part of the question invited respondents’ suggestions on what could be done to address their concerns about the proposal. As mentioned, a smaller proportion of respondents to the question offered solutions as opposed to concerns.

The most frequently suggested solution was for North Somerset to remain separate from the MCA, reflecting a view that the best way to address concerns would be to avoid joining the combined authority.

The next most common solution involved ensuring fair and transparent distribution and apportionment of funding across the proposed MCA region. Suggestions included establishing mechanisms to ensure fair allocation of future funding, and increasing transparency around how funds would be used.

Mentioned to a similar frequency as the above theme, was a suggestion that democratic solutions to North Somerset joining the MCA and operating under its Mayor be explored.

The next most common themes, with a similar proportion of responses to each other, were: a suggestion to strengthen mechanisms which deliver accountability for governing authorities; and, a suggestion from some respondents that their preferred solution would be to see the MCA abolished or disbanded.

Themes mentioned to a lesser frequency included: respondents expressing they were not aware of any solutions to their concern; a desire from respondents to

ensure North Somerset is heard and represented; and, a desire for improved communication from and between the MCA and its residents.

“What activities and projects would you identify as priorities for an expanded West of England Combined Authority?”

All respondents were asked to provide an open-ended (“free-text”) response to a question on which activities and projects they would prioritise in relation to an expanded MCA, regardless of their initial response relating to whether North Somerset Council should join or not.

Qualitative responses were analysed manually and “coded” according to theme, taking an inductive approach. A summary of the results for this question is presented below, highlighting the “key” themes (largely designated by frequency of responses coded to that theme). Themes coded fewer than ten times are not reported.

Of the total responses, a proportion were coded as “Invalid response” or “Other” and were therefore removed from the assessment of dominant themes. Invalid responses were classified as such if the content included: symbols only; a statement of declining to respond, such as “no comment”; illegible text; and / or a comment included a statement that might be classified as hate speech alongside no other substantive content. A response was classified as “Other” if a distinct topic was mentioned by too few respondents to form a substantive, standalone theme (<5).

This question received **1144 responses** in total after initial data cleaning described above.

Transport-related priorities formed almost half of all codes applied to responses for this question, a far greater proportion than any other theme. Respondents identified a wide range of potential transport-related opportunities for the region under an expanded MCA, including, for example:

- better, more reliable, and more frequent bus services;
- improved rail connectivity and infrastructure;
- investment in mass transit systems, including potential tram or rapid transit solutions;
- opportunities for more coordinated regional transport planning, strategy, and long-term infrastructure development;
- enhanced connectivity across North Somerset and to neighbouring areas including Bristol and the wider region;
- improved links to Bristol Airport, which sits within North Somerset and was often mentioned explicitly.

Comments often reflected a strong view that transport is a shared regional challenge that requires cohesive, cross-boundary decision-making.

The second most commonly coded theme was that respondents perceived no opportunities for the MCA to deliver productive or meaningful activities or projects. This included individuals who variously felt: that there were no priority projects or opportunities; that joining would be actively detrimental; that there is no potential for regional improvements; and / or that they did not have enough information to identify opportunities.

The next most notable theme focused on the repair of potholes and the improvement of road surfaces and maintenance.

The same proportion of respondents identified community- and social-focused projects as priorities. This also encompassed potential for improvements to social care and health, and other potential community benefits, including for specific groups.

Further, a similar proportion of respondents saw opportunities related to economic development, including potential for business growth and regeneration, job creation, skills and training opportunities, and greater prosperity through more coordinated regional planning.

Other themes, expressed to a lesser frequency, included climate and environmental priorities, regional housing development, including affordable housing, and opportunities for efficiency gains.

Appendix A: Methodology

Target population and sampling

The target population for the consultation was eligible respondents living or working in either the North Somerset Council area or existing combined authority area.

The consultation utilised a self-selecting sample (i.e., anyone with access to the consultation form could opt-in to respond), meaning the sample of respondents is not designed to be representative of the wider population. The use of a self-selecting sample limits the ability of analysts to generalise the findings to the wider population, while it is not practical to test any differences between sub-groups for statistical significance when utilising a self-selecting sample.

The consultation form contains demographic monitoring questions, allowing the MCA to monitor the difference between the profile of respondents and the population at large (further detail can be found in the 'Response Profile' section). In turn, the awareness of any difference between the profile of consultation respondents and the profile of the population supports the MCA in complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) in its decision-making.

Data collection method and timings

The consultation ran for eight weeks from Friday 13th February to Monday 13th April. The consultation form was closed in error from 10am to 3pm on Friday 10th April, and then closed for a final time at 9am on Monday 13th April.

This consultation timeline was developed in accordance with typical timings for similar consultations relating to the establishment of combined authorities. The timeline was, therefore, deemed sufficient to allow enough time for residents to engage with the consultation. Factors which were considered include the time requirements for requesting, completing and returning a paper response to the consultation.

Respondents to the consultation were able to provide a response online or via a paper form, which was available on request and enclosed in Appendix B. To collect online responses to the consultation, the 'DotDigital' cross-channel marketing platform was used. The consultation form was also embedded as part of the Combined Authority's website. Paper copies of the form containing a 'Freepost' address were sent to sites across the existing combined authority area and North Somerset to allow those with lower digital literacy to engage with the consultation. These sites included libraries, community centres and some GPs surgeries. Separate written submissions outside the format of the consultation form were also accepted.

Primarily, respondents were encouraged to complete the consultation form online, with this subsequently being the primary data collection method. Of the 1,275 responses received, 1,273 were provided via the 'DotDigital' platform. One separate organisational response was received via email, while a single paper copy of the consultation form was completed and returned via Freepost.

The consultation form was designed so that respondents are 'routed' through the survey questions based on whether they support or oppose the proposed extension of the MCA into North Somerset, helping to establish sentiment associated with each open-ended response.

Communications

The consultation was advertised using both organic and paid-for content. The Combined Authority's social media channels were used for organic marketing. Promotional videos were developed featuring the West of England Mayor, as well as both the Leader and Deputy Leader of North Somerset Council. These videos were designed to encourage residents to engage with the consultation.

To both market the consultation and help residents understand the issues underpinning the consultation, an animation was created introducing the consultation. This animation was uploaded to YouTube and included on social media posts and in paid-for advertising⁶. It was also included on the consultation webpage, which was highlighted on the home page of the Combined Authority website, directing residents to the consultation page.

£10,000 of marketing spend was allocated to the consultation, with posts targeted towards TikTok and Meta to increase the number of young people seeing and engaging with the consultation.

Response profile

The consultation used an open link, meaning the sample of respondents is self-selecting and not intended to be representative of the wider population. Demographic data were collected voluntarily as part of the consultation form, therefore, to identify gaps between the profile of respondents and the population at large. In some instances, these data are useful for drawing out tentative differences between sub-groups of respondents (e.g., age profile, geography). In the majority of cases, however, these data are important for establishing key gaps in response for certain groups of the population and identifying a need for further engagement beyond the consultation as appropriate. Identifying these gaps

⁶ Consultation on North Somerset joining the West of England Combined Authority
<https://youtu.be/aGpemCTpkSw?si=CYVG1RPEs8AcIU80>

supports the MCA in complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) in its decision-making.

Individuals and organisations

Overall, 1,233 responses were received from individuals (97%) with a further 35 responses received on behalf of organisations (3%). Primarily, organisational responses were received by local government organisations (e.g., parish councils), though some responses were also received from local interest groups, business membership organisations and individual businesses. Further detail relating to organisational responses can be found in Appendix B.

Geography

Using ONS data on postcodes and Local Authority District (LAD)⁷, each respondent's postcode was matched to North Somerset or the existing combined authority area (i.e., Bath and North East Somerset, Bristol or South Gloucestershire).

As may be expected given the focus on North Somerset Council joining the MCA, the majority of respondents provided a postcode which was matched to the North Somerset area (56%). A further 532 respondents provided a postcode which was matched to one of the constituent authority areas which make up the existing MCA area (43%). Overall, just under one-in-five responses were matched to the Bristol area (19%), with a similar proportion being matched to either South Gloucestershire or Bath and North East Somerset (12% and 11% respectively).

Figure 9: Consultation response by unitary authority area

	North Somerset	Bath & North East Somerset	Bristol	South Gloucestershire
Consultation respondents (%)	56	11	19	12
Proposed combined authority area population (%)	18	16	40	25

A small proportion of respondents (2%) were included in the 'Total' response but were not considered to be in either the existing combined authority area or North Somerset. These respondents typically did not provide a postcode, provided a postcode which belonged to an area outside the proposed combined authority area or provided an unrecognised postcode. It is worth noting that some respondents are likely to work in North Somerset and live in the existing combined authority

⁷ ONS Open Geography Portal <https://geoportal.statistics.gov.uk/>

area, while others are likely to do the opposite. Those representing organisations were asked to provide a postcode for their organisation.

Age

Overall, 76% of respondents provided an age category when prompted, with responses breaking down as follows: 18-34 (12%), 35-54 (26%), 55-74 (47%), 75+ (15%). It is worth noting the large proportion of respondents who chose not to provide an age category (24%) when making any comparisons by age group. These individuals are included in age group analysis under the 'Not provided' category for reference.

2024 data on age at local authority level⁸ enables the age profile of consultation respondents to be compared with the population at large. Looking at the profile of consultation respondents, 18-34 year olds are most likely to be underrepresented, making up 9% of responses compared with the population estimate of 27%. 55-74 year olds are most likely to be overrepresented, with just over one-third of all respondents selecting this age category (35%) compared with the population estimate of 20%.

Sex and gender identity

Overall, 69% of respondents provided sex at birth when prompted, with responses breaking down as follows: Male (58%), Female (42%). Female respondents are underrepresented across the consultation sample compared with population estimates for the existing combined authority area plus North Somerset⁹. 13% of respondents chose 'Prefer not to say' when answering the question.

Overall, 68% of respondents answered a voluntary question relating to whether their gender identity matched their sex at birth. Of these respondents, the majority indicated that their gender identity matches their sex at birth (99%), with a small proportion indicating that their gender identity does not match their sex at birth (<1%). As for the initial question relating to sex at birth, 13% of respondents chose 'Prefer not to say' when answering the question.

The proportion of respondents who indicated that their gender identity does not match their sex at birth is similar to population estimates collected as part of the previous Census¹⁰.

Ethnicity

Overall, 71% of respondents answered a voluntary question relating to ethnicity. The majority of these respondents identified their ethnic group within the high-

⁸ <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/datasets/pestsyoala>

⁹ <https://opendata.westofengland-ca.gov.uk/explore/assets/age-sex-ods-lep/view/>

¹⁰ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/datasets/TS078/editions/2021/versions/4>

level 'White' category (95%). Small proportions of respondents identified their ethnic group within one of the following high-level categories: 'Asian or Asian British' (1%), 'Black, Black British, Caribbean or African' (<1%), 'Mixed or multiple ethnic groups' (1%) or 'any other ethnic group' (1%). 15% of respondents chose 'Prefer not to say' when answering the question.

Census data on ethnicity at local authority level enables the age profile of consultation respondents to be compared with the population at large. Population estimates relating to ethnicity for the existing combined authority area plus North Somerset are as follows¹¹:

- 88% identify their ethnic group within the 'White' category
- 4% identify their ethnic group within the 'Asian or Asian British' category
- 3% identify their ethnic group within the 'Black, Black British, Caribbean or African' category
- 3% identify their ethnic group within the 'Mixed or multiple ethnic groups' category
- 1% identify their ethnic group within the 'any other ethnic group' category

Please note that the figures above relate to high-level ethnicity categories for ease of summary. High-level ethnicity categories are typically derived from a larger number of sub-categories.

Long-term conditions and disability

In line with the approach taken on the 2021 Census¹², respondents were asked two separate questions in relation to long-term conditions and disability:

- 1) *Do you have any physical or mental health conditions or illnesses lasting or expected to last 12 months or more?*
- 2) *[If 'Yes' to above] Do any of your conditions or illnesses reduce your ability to carry out day-to-day activities?*

Just under one-quarter of respondents reported that they have a physical or mental health condition or illness lasting or expected to last twelve months or more (23%). Of these, just over three-quarters reported that their condition or illness limits their day-to-day activities 'a little' or 'a lot' (76%). As a result, the proportion of disabled respondents is 17% according to the Census definition. 11% of respondents chose 'Prefer not to say' when answering the question.

¹¹ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/datasets/TS021/editions/2021/versions/3>

¹²

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/census/census2021dictionary/variablesbytopic/healthdisabilityandunpaidcarevariables/census2021/disability>

Data from the Census¹³ indicates that 17% of usual residents in the Bath & North East Somerset, Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire areas are disabled under the Equality Act.

Sexual orientation

Overall, 65% of respondents answered a voluntary question relating to their sexual orientation. Of these respondents, the majority identify as straight or heterosexual (89%). Small proportions of respondents identified as gay or lesbian (4%), bisexual (1%) or chose to write in the sexual orientation with which they identified (1%). 23% of respondents chose 'Prefer not to say' when answering the question.

Census estimates relating to sexual orientation for the existing combined authority area plus North Somerset break down as follows¹⁴:

- 88% identify as straight or heterosexual
- 2% identify as gay or lesbian
- 2% identify as bisexual

Please note, the Census estimates above do not include those who did not answer the Census question on sexual orientation.

Data processing

Raw response data from the 'DotDigital' platform was exported at two points ahead of analysis and reporting. The first export occurred at 9am on Tuesday 10th March with a second export occurring shortly after 10am on Monday 13th April.

Six responses from the initial 1,273 collected via the 'DotDigital' platform were excluded from further analysis. The exclusion of responses took place if the respondent did not consent to additional processing of their response data. As the consultation process was not designed to collect informed consent from younger respondents according to Information Commissioner's Office guidelines¹⁵, responses were also excluded if the respondent indicated that they were under the age of 18.

A single written submission sent on behalf of an organisation was also excluded from analysis, on the basis that the response could not be easily structured according to the content of the consultation form.

¹³ <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/datasets/c2021ts038>

¹⁴ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/datasets/TS077/editions/2021/versions/3>

¹⁵ <https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/uk-gdpr-guidance-and-resources/childrens-information/using-childrens-information-a-guide/>

Analysis and reporting

Analysis of closed questions

For closed questions, respondents typically chose from a set of pre-determined response options (such as an agree-disagree scale). An exception to this is the opening question relating to whether North Somerset Council should join the MCA, in which a binary choice was provided along with the option to express uncertainty towards the proposal.

Following the closure of the consultation, a raw data export from DotDigital was cleaned, including the exclusion of responses referenced in the previous section of the report, before analysis and reporting took place. The data cleaning process included standardisation of variable names and structure, as well as the removal of identifiers as required. Analysis was conducted in 'R', a programming language for statistical computing and data visualisation.

Sub-group analysis

For closed questions, sub-group analysis was carried out on the basis of age and geography (e.g., how the answer to a certain question varied by the age group of respondents or where they live). As noted above, these responses should not be interpreted as being representative of these sub-groups in the population as a whole. Further detail relating to organisational responses can be found in Appendix B.

Analysis of open-ended responses

Open-ended qualitative responses were analysed in two analytical phases. This included analysis of 738 responses received up to 9am on Tuesday 10th March (number of responses varies by individual question), and a further 529 responses received between this initial point and closure of the consultation at 9am on Monday 13th April.

A manual (human-led) qualitative coding and analysis approach was adopted to draw out key themes with accuracy.

Following data familiarisation, the qualitative responses to each question were systematically coded. An inductive coding methodology was applied, meaning that the codes developed were data driven ("bottom up") and led directly by the data, as opposed to any preconceived or theory driven ("top down") categories. This is an established approach, grounded in interpretive qualitative methods, and allowed respondents' perspectives to shape the analytical categories that make up the resulting code frame.

Importantly, only one code was assigned to each response, representing the primary theme expressed. Responses often contained multiple ideas, and in these cases the code was selected either on the basis of the central or most salient issue raised by the respondent, or, where no clear emphasis was evident, according to the first idea mentioned in the response. This report does not include the frequency that certain responses were made, to avoid misrepresenting points raised in multi-faceted comments.

In common with all analysis of qualitative responses, this analysis is subject to researcher judgement, and the identified themes necessarily reflect high level patterns in reported responses rather than comprehensive accounts of individual participants' views.

Appendix B: Organisational responses

Overall, 1,233 responses were received from individuals (97%) with a further 35 responses received on behalf of organisations (3%).

Responses were received on behalf of the following types of organisations:

- Local government and public sector organisations (e.g., parish councils)
- Individual businesses
- Business membership organisations
- Charities and Community Interest Companies (CICs)
- Community groups and local interest groups

Noting the small number of responses received on behalf of organisations, these responses were largely supportive of North Somerset joining the MCA. These responses also contained broadly high levels of agreement towards the potential for an expanded MCA area to support economic growth, improve public services and support the diverse needs and interests of local communities.

Appendix C: Consultation form

QUESTIONS

1. Do you believe that North Somerset Council should join the West of England Combined Authority?

- Yes
- No
- Don't Know

1a. And why do you say that?

2. To what extent do you agree or disagree that working across a wider Combined Authority area will support economic growth?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know

3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that working across a wider Combined Authority area will improve public services?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know

- What best describes your response?
 - I am a member of the public, giving views as an individual
 - I am responding on behalf of, or as a representative, of a business organisationIf the latter, please name organisation:

- Please give the full postcode of where you live or where the organisation you are representing is based.

- What is your sex?
 - Female Male Prefer not to sayIs the gender you identify with the same as your sex at birth?
 - Yes No Prefer not to sayIf 'no', please describe gender identity:

- What is your age group?
 - Under 18 18-24 25-34 35-44 45-54 55-64
 - 65-74 75+ prefer not to say

- What is your ethnic group?
 - White Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups
 - Asian or Asian British Black, Black British, Caribbean or African
 - Other ethnic group Prefer not to say

- Do you have any physical or mental health conditions or illnesses lasting or expected to last 12 months or more?
 - Yes NoIf 'Yes', do any of your conditions or illnesses reduce your ability to carry out day-to-day activities?
 - Yes - a lot Yes - a little Not at all

- Which of the following best describes your sexual orientation?
 - Heterosexual/Straight Gay/Lesbian Bisexual
 - prefer not to say other- please write below

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Bath & North East Somerset Council		
MEETING:	Council	
MEETING DATE:	14 May 2026	
TITLE:	Revision of Parish Charter	
WARD:	All Parished Wards: Bathavon North; Bathavon South; Chew Valley; Clutton and Farmborough; High Littleton; Keynsham East; Keynsham North; Keynsham South; Mendip; Midsomer Norton North; Midsomer Norton Redfield; Newbridge; Paulton; Peasedown St John; Radstock; Saltford; Timsbury; Westfield; Whitchurch	
AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM		
<p>List of attachments to this report:</p> <p>Appendix 1 – Revised Charter</p> <p>Appendix 2 – Parish Information Pack</p>		

1 THE ISSUE

1.1 The Council’s current Parish Charter was formally adopted in 2018 and has now been updated and revised in consultation with our parishes. The revised Charter is now presented to Council for its endorsement and ratification. The revised Charter has already been presented to the Bath and North East Somerset branch of the Avon Local Councils’ Association (ALCA) at its AGM on 11 February 2026 and ratified by them.

2 RECOMMENDATION

2.1 The Council is asked to:

2.1.1 Ratify the revised Parish Charter as detailed in Appendix 1.

2.1.2 Delegate to the lead Director authority to review and update the Parish Charter in consultation with the Cabinet Member and parish councils.

3 THE REPORT

- 3.1 Bath & North East Somerset Council and the Parishes in our area have built a tradition of strong joint working, leading to the creation of a Parish Charter in 2006. This provides a framework on how we work together to serve our shared residents and improve people's lives. The Parish Charter is subject to periodic review, with the last document ratified by both the Council and BANES ALCA in 2018.
- 3.2 A working group of Parish and Council representatives meets three or four times a year to set the agendas for the triannual Parish Liaison meetings and to discuss issues relating to the Charter, including any required updates and improvements to ways of working.
- 3.3 In 2022, the group agreed to undertake a light touch refresh of the Parish Charter, retaining the Values, Core Commitments and principles for devolution and to incorporate:-
- Climate and Nature Emergency and Place-based working to support understanding of local issues and the collaboration necessary to drive change and add value. This is now reflected in the revised Parish Charter (Appendix 1)
 - a practical toolkit that can be easily updated, thereby reducing the length of the Charter. The toolkit provides information on council service standards, processes and procedures. This toolkit is known as the Parish Information Pack (Appendix 2)
- 3.4 As part of this review, the group also agreed to trial a new format for the Parish Liaison meetings, introducing a World Café session to facilitate productive conversations on a range of topics. This has proved popular with both Parish and Council representatives and is now a regular feature of the meetings.
- 3.5 Parishes play a key role in providing local feedback and supporting the Council's core policy of giving people a bigger say. In some instances, they are statutory consultees. While the Parish Charter already contained commitments around consultation, the review process highlighted opportunities to improve these standards so that they are consistently applied. This included ensuring consultation takes place when appropriate, allowing sufficient time for parish responses, and directing questions to parishes collectively rather than to individuals. The commitments in the previous Parish Charter have been strengthened to reflect this feedback. Parishes have also offered support with promoting Council consultations to their residents.
- 3.6 The process of refreshing the Charter involved discussions by the Working Group at eight of its meetings. Officers from various Council departments were also invited to contribute. Updates were provided at five of the Parish Liaison meetings. Three surveys went to all fifty-one Parishes in Bath & North East Somerset – the first to ask for views on how the Charter has been working and any suggested amendments; the second on practical information (eg contact details, meeting dates, facilities managed, training needs etc). This also included questions on their top three issues (broadly Transport; Community Safety and Climate and Nature). The third survey was on the revised Charter itself, giving opportunity to make any final changes. Fifty of the fifty-one Parishes took part over the course of the surveys.

- 3.7 The feedback included acknowledgement of an improved willingness from Bath & North East Somerset Council to engage with Parishes. This, coupled with their own willingness to collaborate, provides a firm foundation on which to continue to build our partnership working to help address not only current issues but to shape our places for the future.

4 STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS

- 4.1 Building effective relationships between Bath & North East Somerset Council and our Parishes is vital for tackling a range of issues and challenges in our local communities. The Council has a number of powers including the general power of competence which supports its approach to working in partnership with Parishes.
- 4.2 Parishes are statutory consultees (eg for planning applications) and are widely consulted by Bath & North East Somerset Council on other matters. They provide a representative voice to give communities more control over and say in how local services are delivered.

5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCE, PROPERTY, PEOPLE)

- 5.1 The staffing and other resource requirements for undertaking this review have been managed from within existing budgets.

6 RISK MANAGEMENT

- 6.1 A risk assessment related to the issue and recommendations has been undertaken, in compliance with the Council's decision-making risk management guidance.

7 EQUALITIES

- 7.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment has been undertaken, together with a survey to Parishes enabling them to provide information on the services they currently offer and any support or training needs they might have. No significant issues have been identified.

8 CLIMATE CHANGE

- 8.1 As part of a survey to Parishes that supported the Parish Charter refresh, they were asked whether they had declared Climate Emergency. Of 49 respondents, 29 had done so. In addition, 16 Parishes had a related working group and/or action plan. 15 gave examples of climate or nature related projects with which they were involved. 15 also had Climate Emergency listed as one of the top three issues for their communities. They also highlighted that support from the Council with training, data, sources of funding and examples of good practice would be welcome.
- 8.2 The refreshed Parish Charter has also included the Climate and Nature Emergency commitments.

9 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 9.1 None

10 CONSULTATION

- 10.1 The Parish Charter-Liaison Working Group led the surveys on the redrafting of the Charter with all parishes given the opportunity to participate. The Working Group also involves senior officers of the Council enabling them to discuss views and experiences prior to shaping the revision.
- 10.2 In addition, consultation has taken place with the S151 Officer and the Monitoring Officer.

Contact person	Alison Wells, Corporate Engagement Officer
Background papers	<p>The Terms of Reference for Parish Liaison were updated and ratified in May 2020. No amendments to these were required as part of this review.</p> <p>https://democracy.bathnes.gov.uk/documents/s65621/Appendix%201%20-%20Terms%20of%20Reference.pdf</p>
Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format	

PARISH CHARTER

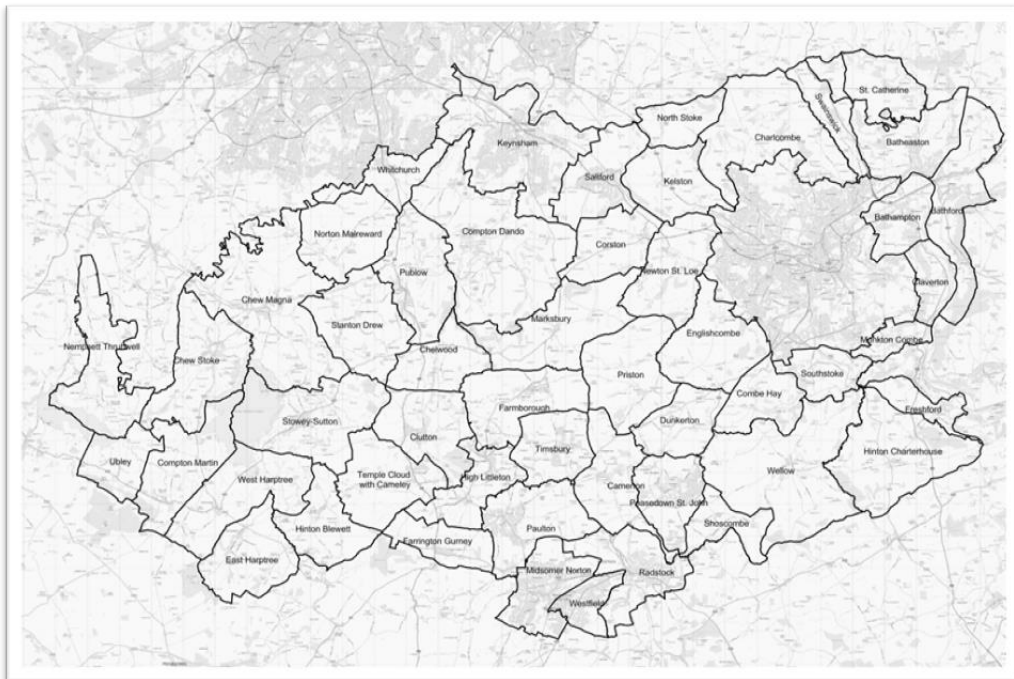
between

Bath & North East Somerset Council

Improving People's Lives

and

the Parish Councils of Bath and North East Somerset



Introduction

Our Parish Charter has one simple aim - **to provide a framework for us to work together to serve the people of Bath and North East Somerset**. We have a common purpose to promote the wellbeing of Bath and North East Somerset, and we serve the same residents.

The Charter is an essential guide to working with Parishes for Clerks, officers and Councillors – both Ward and Parish. We also hope it will be of more general interest - for example to voluntary groups wishing to work with Parish Councils.

This version, updated in 2025, continues to build on the strong tradition of joint working between Bath & North East Somerset Council and the Parish and Town Councils in its area. A testament to our relationship, and strong foundation of partnership working, is the way in which Parishes and Bath and North East Somerset Council came together during the Covid-19 pandemic to jointly and effectively respond to our communities' needs.

The Charter also recognises the continuing challenges in the delivery of public services - from ongoing financial constraints; demographic changes and cost of living pressures, to the impact of climate emergency for our communities now and in the future.

In updating this version of the Charter, the Core Commitments remain. We have however added to them to incorporate the challenges described above. We have also set out how we will manage our relationship – putting things right when they go wrong as well as celebrating the things that go well.

We recognise that the Charter is not able to include everything we do, but it needs to be a working document that is read, understood and offers practical information. The key strengths of our Parish Councils and the principles of effective partnership working remain. Clear communications are also central to successful collaboration. We have therefore redesigned the Charter into four sections:

- **Our Values and Core Charter Commitments:** our values and commitments in promoting the wellbeing of residents of Bath and North East Somerset
- **How we make this happen:** setting out the expectations that will improve the ways in which we work together, highlighting what we do well, the challenges facing us and specific examples of local good practice that we can build on.
- **Parish Information Pack:** A dynamic and practical tool for Parish Clerks and Councillors to assist them in navigating Bath & North East Somerset Council services, reporting issues and how to get support.
- **Monitoring and review:** setting out how we will monitor and review the Charter, how we might know we are succeeding and the procedure to follow if it is believed the Charter is not being upheld.

We will ensure that the Parish Charter and associated documents are made available on our websites. We recognise that information will change over time and we will review and update regularly.

Footnote: In the Charter, we have used the phrases “Parishes” or “Parish Councils” for simplicity throughout. It relates to Town, Parish and Village Councils and Parish Meetings. However, allowance needs to be made for the differing legal framework of Parish Meetings.

Our Parish Charter

One simple aim:

Together to serve the people of Bath and North East Somerset

Our Values

We achieve this by:

- maintaining high ethical standards, **respecting and valuing each other**
- being good partners and continuously **strengthening relationships**
- providing **practical support** and helping each other out
- making the best use of our **skills and resources**

Our Core Charter Commitments

Strategic Objectives

We will:

- work together, and with other key stakeholders, to identify our long-term objectives and priorities to help address the significant challenges facing our area and to promote local economic, social and environmental wellbeing. In doing this, we will value the roles, responsibilities and opinions of our respective Councils.
- work together and support each other to act on the causes and impact of climate change to protect our environment.
- work together to ensure inclusivity and equality in the delivery of services for all residents

Consultation, Communication and Engagement

We will:

- engage with, and consult each other, when a planned decision would have a specific and direct or significant impact on Bath & North East Somerset Council, a Parish Council, or its area, or its residents. This to include allowing adequate time to respond and ensuring the format facilitates a collective response.
- use our local engagement meetings, including Parish Liaison and Connecting Communities Forums, to put in place shared projects and identify key local priorities.

Democracy and Community Leadership

We will:

- champion local democracy and encourage local residents to participate fully in the local democratic process. To support this, Bath & North East Somerset Council will inform all Parishes about all elections, including by-elections.
- respect the democratic mandates of all our individual Councils within their legal and service remits, recognising that Bath & North East Somerset Council and Parish Councils exist as separate bodies and have separate tax raising powers.
- recognise a shared interest in support for local community facilities and work together within legal and policy framework to achieve this where possible.

Delivering for Residents

We will:

- work together to address the significant challenges facing our area. As resources tighten, we will collaborate in supporting communities to do more for their local areas and make the best use of new ways of working, with greater emphasis on the use of digital technology as staffing resources reduce.
- work together to try and answer residents' queries at the first point of contact, signposting as necessary, regardless of whether the query is to a Parish or to Bath & North East Somerset Council.
- use the following joint principles for any devolution of services to Parish and Town Councils:
 - By choice, not imposed
 - One size doesn't fit all
 - All liabilities to be declared openly on both sides
 - Give proper notice of changes
 - Be clear on what is being transferred and over what timescales
 - Encourage Parishes to cluster as appropriate
 - Set up a support offer- eg training/equipment
- work together to protect the most vulnerable in our community and support our communities to build capacity so that they can deliver more for their local areas
- make the best use of new ways of working, including digital technology, to improve how we work together and deliver services.

How we make this happen

Delivering our Charter commitments requires partners to continue to build strong relationships and work together to effectively respond to our communities' needs. How we make this happen is crucial to our success.

The foundations for the Charter start with our engagement through Parish Liaison and Area Forums. We recognise that the area is diverse with differing needs and priorities and have taken a Place based approach to understand local issues, interconnections and relationships to aid the co-ordination of action and investment to improve quality of life.

Our Parish Liaison meetings are attended by Parish representatives as well as Bath & North East Somerset Cabinet Members, Ward Councillors and officers from Bath & North East Somerset Council. In more recent times, the format has changed to introduce a 'World Café' style session to encourage conversation, build relationships and respond to issues. Meetings are organised collaboratively to ensure timely, appropriate and relevant discussions take place.

Parishes are also actively involved in the Area Forums, taking part in discussions with Bath & North East Somerset Council and key stakeholders, contributing vital local knowledge and information.

In 2024 a survey of Parishes was held. The results of the survey highlighted that 86% of Parishes and their community said that transport was their top priority. They also identified community safety; climate and nature emergency; connectivity; planning and development as other priorities for their communities. This information helps us shape our engagement.

During the Covid-19 Pandemic in 2020, Bath & North East Somerset Council were extremely grateful to its Parishes who responded quickly and made the best use of their local resources. Parishes played a vital role in actively supporting residents with shopping, prescriptions and other necessities to ensure the most vulnerable in communities were supported. Many Parishes initiated their own volunteer schemes, or supported community organisations in doing this. Bath & North East Somerset Council established the Community Wellbeing Hub which continues to help simplify access to health and other support services. The working relationships that had been built up over many years enabled this joint effort to be realised and demonstrate the essence of the Charter.

Parishes have also played an important role in supporting the development of new systems such as Fix My Street. User testing with Parishes enabled us to gain useful insights to report and feedback on issues. Their local knowledge and intelligence helped to improve the offer for the whole community.

Communications are key in building positive relationships. We make good use of e-bulletins, newsletters, social media and websites to share information with each other and local communities. This includes promotion of partnership working, good practice and successes.

It is impossible to summarise the work we do together in one page, however, our core commitments underpin everything we do and the approaches we take.

Parish Information Pack

In 2023, we developed a Parish Information Pack to provide the practical information and service standards that were previously included in the Charter in a more user friendly and accessible format.

It contains details of the key day to day queries Parishes may have and the processes to follow. It aims to assist Parish Clerks and Councillors to navigate the services of Bath & North East Somerset Council; identify the support available and report issues.

It is in a format that can be easily updated and made available on our website. We will work together to ensure the content is relevant and current.

Monitoring and Review

A Working Group comprising Parish representatives including BANES ALCA officers and representatives of Bath & North East Somerset Council meets several times a year and collaborates on:

- the setting of agendas for Parish Liaison meetings
- issues relating to implementation of the Parish Charter
- working practices to enhance the relationship with Parishes
- the review and refresh of the Parish Charter
- the celebration and sharing of our work and building of relationships

Parishes may enquire about joining the group to Bath & North East Somerset Council's Corporate Engagement Team or BANES ALCA.

Resolving Issues

The Working Group also works to resolve any concerns Parishes might have regarding the Charter and can be contacted either through BANES ALCA or Bath & North East Somerset Council.

Review

The Charter commitments will be reviewed every four years. However, we will keep the Parish Information Pack and supporting documents up to date and review these annually.

BATH & NORTH EAST SOMERSET COUNCIL
PARISH INFORMATION PACK
NOVEMBER 2025

*Information to support working in partnership with
Bath & North East Somerset Council*

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Introduction

We recognise the important role that Parishes play as providers of local services; signposting and offering an access point to services; and representing the views of local residents.

As part of our commitment we have developed together a Parish Charter. The Parish Charter provides a framework for how we work together, maintain good working relationships and develop an effective partnership to improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of the area. The Parish Charter was first adopted in 1999; and updated in 2006 and 2018. It is currently in the process of being reviewed and, as part of this, some of the practical information it contained has been moved to this document.

We continue to build on our longstanding working relationships with Parishes and are keen to continue to improve how we work with you. We have created this information pack to assist you in your daily activities. We have identified a number of key service areas where Parishes have said they would like more information. We hope it will help you have a better understanding about our service standards, processes and procedures. This should assist you in your working relationship with us and when answering residents' queries.

We will ensure this pack is updated and reviewed regularly to ensure the information is accurate and up to date as possible. We welcome any comments and suggestions you may have to improve the document and our working relationship with you. Contact the Corporate Engagement Team connecting_communities@bathnes.gov.uk

1: How the Council works

Enquiry Type	Democratic Process – BANES Council Meetings/calendars/agendas & papers
What advice should I give my resident?	<p>Residents are encouraged to engage with the democratic process by accessing online agendas to see what each meeting will be discussing. Also, attending and speaking at the various meetings that are open to the public. All details are available here: https://democracy.bathnes.gov.uk/uuCoverPage.aspx?bcr=1</p> <p>This links to information about Councillors, Cabinet, Committees, Scrutiny and a wide range of information about the democratic process. It also has information and deadlines for registering to speak at a meeting.</p> <p>Residents can subscribe for alerts about any meetings they are interested in, via the link from the Panel on the left of the above page.</p> <p>There is no up to date organisational chart available publicly. If you need help in identifying a team or officer to speak with, contacting the Corporate Engagement Team – connecting_communities@bathnes.gov.uk</p>
What happens next?	<p>If your resident needs further information after checking the links above, further information and support is available by contacting Democratic_services@bathnes.gov.uk</p>
What are the service standards and what can my resident expect	<p>Your resident can expect their email or phone call to be acknowledged within a couple of days, and usually a response is given on the same day.</p>
How do I keep updated?	<p>Once you have referred your resident to Democratic Services, there is no need for you to remain updated as the team will advise the resident accordingly.</p>
What is my role as a parish council	<p>To signpost to the above resources.</p>
Any further information that may be of assistance to parish councils	<p>To find your:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Ward Councillors: https://democracy.bathnes.gov.uk/mgMemberIndex.aspx?bcr=1 • Parish council contacts. https://democracy.bathnes.gov.uk/mgParishCouncilDetails.aspx?LS=17&SLS=3&bcr=1

To amend your parish contact details contact Democratic_services@bathnes.gov.uk
 Or Corporate Engagement connecting_communities@bathnes.gov.uk

2: Council Tax

Enquiry Type	Queries concerning Council Tax
What advice should I give my resident?	<p>In the first instance, please refer resident to https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/council-tax where most queries can be resolved. Should their query remain unresolved, contact the Council Tax team at: counciltax@bathnes.gov.uk</p> <p>The easiest and quickest method of resolving the majority of enquiries is for residents to manage their own Council Tax account online; registering at online https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/manage-your-council-tax-online</p>
What happens next?	<p>Autoresponder will acknowledge receipt and give expected reply time, dependent on time of year and service demand.</p> <p>Revenue (billing, collection and recovery team for Council Tax and Business Rates) staff member will respond directly, requesting any further information where applicable.</p>
What are the service standards and what can my resident expect	<p>Normally residents will be contacted within 30 days. However, during certain periods of heavy demand, reply times maybe extended but we always update our autoresponder to set expectations.</p> <p>If the resident is not happy with the response, they can request their query to be reviewed by a Revenue Team Leader and, if they remain dissatisfied, log a complaint through the council's online form https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/make-complaint-about-other-council-services</p> <p>Council Tax is defined in law so there are limited opportunities for staff to use their discretion. However, if someone has difficulty in paying, it is best to tell the Council Tax team as early as possible.</p> <p>Where payment is not made in accordance with the latest Council Tax bill, or a satisfactory payment</p>

	arrangement not agreed, recovery action will be taken incurring costs. We have a duty to collect the tax and keep the cost of collection as low as possible for residents who pay on time. Costs will only be waived where a mistake has been made.
How do I keep updated?	Wait until the 30-day contact time (or other notified time) has passed. Repeat chasing just adds to the work demand of the Council Tax Team and further delays responses. If residents register to manage their own Council Tax account online, they will receive updates on any service changes requested through the customer portal.
What is my role as a parish council	To signpost residents as in the advice provided in section 1. It is important to note that Council Tax is heavily regulated through longstanding legislation tested through the courts. Please be aware that the Revenue Team deal with contentious situations daily so check with them first before passing comment on a resident's interpretation of a perceived issue.
Any further information that may be of assistance to parish councils Page 162	In exceptional cases where a resident wants to complain about the service, direct them in the first instance to our complaints process https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/make-complaint-about-other-council-services . These are monitored by the head of service and keep every complaint in one place in case escalation is required.

3: Planning Enquiries

Enquiry Type	New application for planning permission
What advice should I give my resident?	<p>If your resident is the applicant then you can, if you wish to, write in support of their application. If your resident is a neighbour or another party with particular views about the proposal then you can, if you wish to, write in support of those views - be it an objection or support. All comments are published on the website https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/webforms/planning/</p> <p>Planning decisions can only be made on the basis of 'material considerations'. For something to be a 'material consideration' it must relate to land use issues and must be in the public interest. If your residents' concerns relate to purely private matters (loss of private property value for example) or relate to non-land use issues (motivation of the applicant for example) then the concerns will not be material</p>

	<p>and the Planning team will not be able to take them into account.</p> <p>NOTE: See example checklists and sample material consideration responses that have been developed locally by parishes and an FAQ produced by BANES (pages 45- 51).</p> <p>For further information on commenting on applications see https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/view-and-comment-current-planning-applications</p> <p>If a resident is considering making a planning application, we strongly recommend using our Pre-Application advice service before submission so they understand the potential constraints and put together a good application with a good chance of getting permission. We also recommend talking to neighbours and others beforehand to iron out any possible issues. https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/get-expert-advice</p>
<p>What happens next?</p>	<p>New applications will be checked by the Development Management (DM) Support team and when they are correct will be allocated to a Planning case officer usually within a week. At around the same time various third parties will be consulted including any immediately adjoining neighbours. In some cases, a site notice may be displayed on or near the site on a lamppost or similar.</p>
<p>What are the service standards and what can my resident expect</p>	<p>Planning applications have to meet the national and local requirements to be registered, allocated to an officer and loaded onto the website. For information on these requirements, drawing standards and support available to applicants please visit https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/apply-planning-permission</p> <p>The period for making contributions is published on the application. Late comments may be accepted as applications are rarely determined as soon as the consultation period closes and you can email the case officer directly to ask if a late comment can be accepted.</p> <p>All comments and contributors' names will be published on the council's public website until the application is decided. See the Planning Privacy Notice for information on what we do with your data https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/council-privacy-notice/planning-privacy-notice</p> <p>Members of the public and Parish Councils have 21 days to respond with their views from the date that they are notified, or if there is a site notice, within 21 days of the date printed on that notice. If an application is appealed comments will then be republished online. Appeals are dealt by the Planning</p>

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	<p>Inspectorate (PINS).</p> <p>The Development Management team aim to determine applications within 8 weeks of submission (13 weeks for major applications). These target dates are often exceeded however if it is necessary for the application to go to the Planning Committee.</p> <p>Only Ward members can request an application to be referred to the Planning Committee but the decision whether it goes to committee lies with the Planning Committee Chair and Vice Chair https://democracy.bathnes.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CommitteeId=638</p>
<p>How do I keep updated?</p> <p>Page 164</p>	<p>We strongly recommend signing up for email updates on application in your Parish https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/sign-planning-application-updates. This way you need never miss an application.</p> <p>There is a comprehensive map facility online where you can find all planning applications back to 2006 as well as layers for listed buildings, tree preservation orders, flood zones etc https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/webforms/maps/.</p> <p>Specific queries should be directed to the Planning case officer directly via phone or email.</p> <p>For general enquiries email development_management@bathnes.gov.uk or ring 01225 394041 option 6.</p>
<p>What is my role as a parish council</p>	<p>To represent the views of your local residents in respect of planning applications and similar. It is also helpful if you are familiar with the B&NES Planning website https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/planning to direct resident queries and understand the starting point for planning decision making is the Local Development Plan https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/development-plan</p>
<p>Any further information that may be of assistance to parish councils</p>	<p>Weekly Planning List - The Council produces a weekly list of all Planning application across the authority area. You can use the online planning register to view the weekly list https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/webforms/planning/#weeklyList</p> <p>Street Naming and Numbering - The Council is responsible for registered addresses whether commercial or residential. https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/apply-name-or-number-street-or-property</p>

Building Control - For advice about the building regulation process <https://buildingcontrol.bathnes.gov.uk/>, email: building_control@bathnes.gov.uk Tel: 01225 477571.

Other useful contacts:

- Planning Aid for Planning Advice - <https://www.rtpi.org.uk/planning-advice>.
- A Plain English Guide to the planning system - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/plain-english-guide-to-the-planning-system>
- Planning Practice Guidance web-based resource including National planning policy framework and guidance - <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance>.
- Material Consideration examples can be viewed on the Planning Portal - <https://www.planningportal.co.uk/services/help/faq/planning/about-the-planning-system/what-are-material-considerations>.
- Use Classes - all the definitions in the Use Classes Order - <https://www.planningportal.co.uk/permission/common-projects/change-of-use/use-classes>.

Officers from Planning Teams offer regular training sessions to Parishes which you are encouraged to attend.

4: Listed Building Consent

Enquiry Type:	Listed Building Consent
What advice should I give my resident?	<p>The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires that any works for the alteration or extension of a listed building in any manner which would affect its character as a building of special architectural or historic interest require listed building consent.</p> <p>The Council has a statutory duty through that Act, when considering whether to grant listed building consent for any works, to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.</p> <p>The Council will seek to take enforcement action where works are carried out without the appropriate</p>

	<p>consent.</p> <p>Also, the Council seeks to support and assist listed building owners through its planning advice / pre-application advice service. Preapplication advice is a chargeable discretionary service with fees based on the category of the proposal https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/get-expert-advice</p>
What happens next?	Preapplication will be provided to the resident directly.
What are the service standards and what can my resident expect	Preapplication advice will usually be provided within 20 working days. An email will be responded to in line with corporate policy (10 working days).
How do I keep updated?	You may request that your resident keep you updated on their enquiry or you can email conservation_andplanning@bathnes.gov.uk if you wish to find out if we have heard from your resident and what action we have taken.
What is my role as a parish council	Encourage developers and residents to liaise with the Council at early stages in the planning process.
Any further information that may be of assistance to parish councils	Officers from Planning Teams offer regular training sessions to Parishes which you are encouraged to attend.

5: Planning Enforcement Enquiry

Enquiry Type	Planning Enforcement enquiry
What advice should I give my resident?	<p>The best starting point is the council website https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/report-something-planning-enforcement</p> <p>Here you will find information and guidance on planning enforcement matters, including our Local Enforcement Plan and how to make a complaint about a possible breach of planning control. The webpage also helpfully explains what a breach of planning control is and identifies some frequently raised issues which do not fall within our control.</p>
What happens next?	All new cases will be given a reference number, which you will be advised of in the acknowledgment letter (please reference this in all subsequent correspondence). Cases will then be investigated in

	<p>accordance with the Local Enforcement Plan, which can be viewed here: https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/E3431%20-%20Appendix%201%20-%20BNES%20Local%20Enforcement%20Plan%202022.pdf.</p> <p>In the event that the service has a backlog of cases and yours is not in the high priority category (as set out in the Local Enforcement Plan) you will be advised that the case is on hold pending allocation to an officer.</p>
What are the service standards and what can my resident expect	The Local Enforcement Plan sets out in detail the service aims, how complaints are prioritised, and expected timeframes.
How do I keep updated?	You will be kept updated by the case officer on cases in your name whenever there are significant developments in the progress of the case. You can also contact the case officer to discuss the case at any time. If there is an existing case where someone else has already reported the breach, you can ask to be added as an additional complainant. If your case has not yet been allocated you can contact the team mailbox for an update at: planning_enforcement@bathnes.gov.uk
What is my role as a parish council	No formal role, but you can make planning enforcement complaints on behalf of your Parish Council or parishioners.
Any further information that may be of assistance to parish councils	It is important to remember that the purpose of planning enforcement is to resolve breaches of planning control in the public interest and in accordance with planning legislation and policy. Government policy and guidance has always been clear that it is not intended to be punitive (other than as a last resort means of compelling compliance) and as a local planning authority the council has an obligation to treat all parties fairly and consistently in navigating a course to resolve any breach of planning control, including providing advice and support as appropriate to all parties.

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6: Request for Traffic Management Intervention

Enquiry Type	Request for Traffic Management Intervention – Speeding, HGV, s Crossings, Signs and new footway
What advice should I give my resident?	If your resident has a traffic management issue such as the need for speed reduction measures or a new pedestrian crossing – please email: Traffic_ManagementTeam@bathnes.gov.uk The team will need to know the exact location, the issue and any suggested improvement.

	<p>In the next few months, we will be launching a new web form, which will enable people to submit these types of requests via the council website. We will advise you when this has been set up. There is some existing information and forms on the website. https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/roads-travel-and-transport</p>
<p>What happens next?</p> <p>Page 168</p>	<p>The team will respond to your resident within 20 working days. They will consider whether the request is feasible and advise on the likelihood of it happening. The team receives hundreds of requests for various highway improvements every year ranging from speed limits and parking restrictions to new crossings, traffic calming and shelters for bus stops.</p> <p>An initial assessment of the request is made and if it is deemed to be feasible and potentially affordable in a future programme of work, the request is added to a list and later in the year it is scored along with all the other requests received. The scoring enables a prioritised list to be put forward to the Cabinet Member for Transport for consideration within the following year's Transport Improvement Programme. The number of requests far exceeds the amount of funding available in the programme, which is why they have to be prioritised.</p> <p>Schemes that are likely to score well include those which improve access to public transport, those which enable people to make journeys on foot, by bike or by wheeling, and those which benefit as many people as possible. As an example, a new footway which can be built on highway verge linking a reasonable number of residential properties to local shops could score well. A new footway that requires use of private land and would only benefit a handful of people would not score as well.</p>
<p>What are the service standards and what can my resident expect</p>	<p>An initial response within 20 working days. Requests for these types of measures often require some investigation, which is why it is not always possible to reply more quickly.</p>
<p>How do I keep updated?</p>	<p>Please contact the Traffic Management Team, email: Traffic_ManagementTeam@bathnes.gov.uk</p>
<p>What is my role as a parish council</p>	<p>If a resident makes a request directly to the Parish Council, please ask them to email: Traffic_ManagementTeam@bathnes.gov.uk Similarly, if the request is being made by a Parish Council, please also use this email address. If the request has been put forward by the Parish Council, it is helpful if the request can state this and be submitted by the Clerk.</p> <p>It is helpful to know if the request is supported by the local B&NES Ward Councillor and also whether it</p>

	is supported by the community.
Any further information that may be of assistance to parish councils	The team receives a high volume of enquiries about highway improvements and we ask that follow-up enquiries wait until 20 working days has passed following the initial submission of the request if no response has been sent by this time. The Traffic.ManagementTeam@bathnes.gov.uk email account will automatically send a response advising of the 20-working day response time.

7: Highway Drainage

Enquiry Type	Highway Drainage
Page 169 What advice should I give my resident?	<p>We clean gullies to prevent flooding, maintain our drainage network and keep it running efficiently. Gullies and their immediate pipe connection are emptied and cleansed as part of an annual proactive maintenance programme.</p> <p>There are 31,000 drainage gullies across BANES and we operate a scheduled highways drainage cleansing regime.</p> <p>The Highway Gullies are available as a map layer on the Council's website.</p> <p>Details of the frequency and an interactive map can be found on our website: https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/highway-drainage-cleaning</p> <p>Special attention gullies (SAGs) are cleaned four times per year. These are gullies that are in areas with a higher risk of flooding or are blocked by silt and detritus on a regular basis.</p> <p>You can report problems with drains or flooding on our website: https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/report-problems-drains-or-flooding. This links to the BANES FixMyStreet https://fix.bathnes.gov.uk/</p>
What happens next?	An inspector will assess the report filed via FixMyStreet https://fix.bathnes.gov.uk/ and decide whether a reactive intervention is required (for highway safety or flood risk reasons) or if the asset will be attended to during the routine cyclic maintenance program.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An Inspector will attend and make a judgement whether the defect meets intervention level. • If they decide that action is required, based on their professional assessment an order will be raised/action will be taken.
What are the service standards and what can my resident expect	<p>Gully Cleaning Frequency timetable is as follows:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rural areas – Once per year • Urban Areas – Biennial (every other year) • High Speed Dual Carriageways – Twice per year • Special Attention Gullies – Four times per year
How do I keep updated?	Updates from inspectors will be visible on FixMyStreet https://fix.bathnes.gov.uk/ .
What is my role as a parish council	To provide general information on the process and advise/support your resident on how to report issues and update on what will happen next.
Any further information that may be of assistance to parish councils	How we manage weather warnings: We closely monitor detailed weather forecasts to determine whether reactive gully cleans are needed, and co-ordinate with cleansing teams to clear any surface detritus from areas at a higher risk of flooding.

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8: Highway Winter Gritting Routes and Bins

Enquiry Type	Highway Winter Gritting Routes/Bins
What advice should I give my resident?	<p>We receive detailed weather information from a variety of sources including MetDesk and our own road weather station. We use this information to decide when to grit our priority routes and identify the most effective time to grit. It's important to note we monitor the road surface temperature, not air temperature.</p> <p>You can view our priority gritting routes and grit bin locations on our website: https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/find-out-where-we-grit-winter</p>

	<p>If you have spotted an issue with a grit bin, such as a bin getting low or damaged, you can report it online. https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/report-grit-bin-issue</p>
<p>What happens next?</p>	<p>The Duty Officer will receive detailed weather forecasts and finalise a winter treatment decision. If this decision concludes action is needed, a gritting run is organised for a given time and co-ordinated from the Council's Clutton depot.</p> <p>Grit Bin Reported Issues: An inspector will assess the report filed via Fix My Street https://fix.bathnes.gov.uk/ and decide whether an immediate visit is required (safety reasons) or undertaken within a given timeframe.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An inspector will attend and make a judgement whether the defect meets intervention level. • If they decide that action is required, an order will be raised/action will be taken.
<p>What are the service standards and what can my resident expect</p> <p>Page 171</p>	<p>Bath and North East Somerset Council's operate a Winter Service Policy https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/jsna/Winter%20Service%20Policy.pdf which is designed to meet the Council's statutory obligations and will provide a consistent approach to the management of the network during the winter season.</p> <p>There is minimal scope for change to this policy unless the network itself changes.</p>
<p>How do I keep updated?</p>	<p>Updates from inspectors will be visible on Fix My Street https://fix.bathnes.gov.uk/.</p>
<p>What is my role as a parish council</p>	<p>To provide general information on the process and advise/support your resident on how to report issues and update on what will happen next.</p>
<p>Any further information that may be of assistance to parish councils</p>	<p>Information on our winter gritting routes and bins can be seen on our website: https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/find-out-where-we-grit-winter</p> <p>We give priority to all A and B classification roads and other strategic C and unclassified roads based upon the recommendations contained in the National Code of Practice. A map of gritting routes can be found on our website in the Highways and Travel map layer.</p> <p>We are not responsible for gritting the following roads, which are outside the city of Bath limits:</p>

- A36 Warminster Road (from Trossachs Drive junction to authority boundary)
- A46 Gloucester Road (from A4 London Road junction to authority boundary)
- A4 Batheaston Bypass

9: Request for Parking Restrictions

Enquiry Type	Request for Parking Restrictions
What advice should I give my resident?	<p>If your resident is asking for a new parking restriction or changes to existing parking restrictions please email: Traffic.ManagementTeam@bathnes.gov.uk The team will need to know the exact location and the reasons why the change is needed.</p> <p>In the next few months, we will be launching a new web form, which will enable people to submit these types of requests via the council website. We will advise you when this has been set up.</p>
What happens next?	<p>The Team will consider whether the request is feasible and necessary for traffic management purposes. There is high demand, they will aim to respond within 20 working days, if the changes are deemed necessary, they will be added to list of parking restriction changes.</p> <p>Parking restrictions require a Traffic Regulation Order which is a Legal Order that has to follow a prescribed process including consultation, advertising, a formal decision report and subject to approval the legal making of the order.</p> <p>To manage the large demand the authority is divided into 7 areas and all the parking restrictions in the area are implemented in one TRO. There is a rolling programme with each area TRO being amended every 12 months to 24 months. This timeline is dependent on the agreed programme of works.</p> <p>The seven areas are: Central Bath, South East Bath, North East Bath, South West Bath, North West Bath, North East Somerset, Keynsham and Saltford.</p>
What are the service standards and what can my resident expect	<p>An initial response within 20 working days. Requests for these types of measures often require some investigation, which is why it is not always possible to reply more quickly.</p>

How do I keep updated?	Please contact the Traffic Management Team, email: Traffic_ManagementTeam@bathnes.gov.uk
What is my role as a parish council	<p>If a resident makes a request directly to the Parish Council, please ask them to email: Traffic_ManagementTeam@bathnes.gov.uk</p> <p>Similarly, if the request is being made by a Parish Council, please also use this email address. If the request has been put forward by the Parish Council, it is helpful if the request can state this and be submitted by the Clerk.</p> <p>It is helpful to know if the request is supported by the local B&NES Ward Councillor and also whether it is supported by the community.</p>
Any further information that may be of assistance to parish councils	The team receives a high volume of enquiries about highway improvements, and we ask that follow-up enquiries wait until 20 working days has passed following the initial submission of the request if no response has been sent by this time. The Traffic_ManagementTeam@bathnes.gov.uk email account will automatically send a response advising of the 20-working day response time.

10: Electric Vehicle Charging Points

Enquiry Type	Request for EV Charge Points
What advice should I give my resident?	<p>Electric Vehicle (EV) charging can take place both at home and at public locations. Different rules apply to the installation and operation of each type.</p> <p>Home EV charge point – residents have permitted development rights to install an EV charger on their property if they have off-street parking and meet other specific requirements highlighted on our website (section EVC/Planning Advice):</p> <p>https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/energy-efficiency-retrofitting-and-sustainable-construction-supplementary-planning-document-6</p> <p>The Office of Zero Emission Vehicles (OZEV) oversees EV associated legislation and grants. There is further information on the Government website: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/electric-vehicle-chargepoint-and-infrastructure-grant-guidance-for-installers#ev-chargepoint-grant</p>

A list of accredited charger installers, one of whom must be used when seeking grant funding.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/residential-chargepoints-authorised-installers>

National Grid is the Distribution Network Operator (DNO) for the BANES district and will need to check that enough capacity is available in the local grid to support a new home charger. They provide an online guide to working with them to ensure a successful charger installation.

<https://connections.nationalgrid.co.uk/electric-vehicle-charging-point>

Residents who have on-street parking only are currently unable to access charging from their home energy supply. EV charging via power cables across a footway in the adopted highway is prohibited in BANES district. The Council has a legal duty to ensure the safety of the public highway and laying electric cables across the footway surface creates both a trip hazard and electrical hazard and is not permitted. Cable guards are also unacceptable as they introduce accessibility issues, especially for vulnerable and less able footpath users, made worse in the dark when most EV charging takes place. Importantly, should an accident occur, the homeowner will be liable to any claim on injuries.

Following a review into on-street home charging technologies, systems providing cable channels sunk into the footway were identified as the favoured option. B&NES has been trialling different cable channel products with residents in to identify an approved future offer. A public report on the cable channel trial proposal is available on our website:

<https://democracy.bathnes.gov.uk/mglIssueHistoryHome.aspx?IId=36528&PlanId=882&RPID=47462562>

Public EV charge points – across BANES, there is a network of publicly accessible charge points is operated by a range of regional and national Charge Point Operators (CPO's).

To support the development of public charging in the West of England the local authorities have built and operate the Revive charging network. This network has placed chargers with expert knowledge and resident feedback. It aims for socially equitable charging provision, whilst maintaining the most affordable tariff, with any operating profit used to maintain and grow the network. Revive currently offers 208 operational charging bays in the West of England, across Bristol City, South Gloucestershire, North Somerset and BANES.

<https://travelwest.info/electric-vehicles/revive-charging-network/>

The best way for anyone to understand where EV charging is available in their area is to access Zap-Map. They provide a phone App and website which gather the most up to date information on chargers across the UK, detailing location, type, connectors, network and more. Their website also provides good beginners guides to EV charging and

	<p>associated technology. https://www.zap-map.com/</p>
<p>What happens next?</p>	<p>Two near future projects offer potential to fund EV charge points in BANES parished areas. Both are funded from OZEV, through WECA, with exact charger locations still to be defined:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Green Recovery Fund (GRF) project will build community hubs in rural areas. If B&NES car parks are unavailable, we will work with Parish Councils to find suitable locations in their area to host public off-street EV chargers, on the Revive network, providing 24-hour public access. • The Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) project will see B&NES enter a concession with a CPO for the largescale deployment of public on-street charge points, focused on providing EV charging for residents with no off-street parking. <p>B&NES officers will contact Parish Councils covering the potentially benefiting areas to work together in delivering practical, equitable and successful EV charge points. This process is already taking place for the GRF project and planned for the LEVI project.</p> <p>Residents can suggest locations for public charging points via the Travelwest website. This data is used by the local authorities and Revive network to plan future charge point network expansion. https://travelwest.info/electric-vehicles/charging-points/</p>
<p>What are the service standards and what can my resident expect?</p>	<p>Infrastructure to provide EV charging is a new emerging innovation space. Legislation that impacts the technology deployed and the service standards provided is only just emerging from Government. Residents can expect that B&NES will continue to grow EV charging infrastructure in the district, through both public funding and private commercial developments, while ensuring that the latest service standards are adhered to.</p>
<p>How do I keep updated?</p>	<p>B&NES EV website content is being updated to provide more relevant and accessible information.</p>
<p>What is my role as a parish council?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support residents installing home EV chargers, through signposting and advice. • Ensure on-street EV home charging using cables trailing across the footway does not become a problem by reporting repeat offenders to Highways: https://fix.bathnes.gov.uk/ • Work with B&NES to develop grant funded public EV charging infrastructure in your community. • Where necessary, investigate the possibilities for self-funded community EV charging points.

Any further information that may be of assistance to parish councils	<p>Parish Councils can install public EV charge points on their land and/or work with local organisations to do so for their community. Notably this has been done in Farmborough at their village community shop. We are in discussions to capture lessons learnt from their journey and share across the district.</p> <p>The Energy Saving Trust provide a wide range of reliable and accessible guides relating to electric vehicles and charging: https://energysavingtrust.org.uk/advice/electric-vehicles/</p>
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11: Highways

Enquiry Type	Highway (inc. pavements and road markings) problem/defect.
Page 176 What advice should I give my resident?	<p>Please report your enquiry to BANES FixMyStreet on line: https://fix.bathnes.gov.uk/</p> <p>Reporting the problem online enables the resident to pinpoint the defect and upload photos. Following the report, a unique reference will be issued.</p>
What happens next?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The issue will be allocated to one of our area-based highway inspectors. • Our inspectors spend most of their time out on site. • The report will go direct to the inspectors' mobile tablet – this is the quickest way to ensure that the enquiry gets to the correct person.
What are the service standards and what can my resident expect	<p>The inspector will assess the report and decide whether an immediate visit is required (safety reasons) or undertaken within a specified number of days.</p> <p>When the highway inspector visits site, they will make a judgement whether the defect meets intervention. If they decide that action is required, a job will be raised with our contractor (Volker Highways) to fix the road/pavement as an emergency, within 1 working day, 7 working days or even longer.</p> <p>If the inspector decides no action is required, they will monitor the defect as part of their</p>

	<p>programmed inspection regime.</p> <p>If your report relates to road markings these are batched together and the works ordered through a specialist resource every quarter. The works are weather dependant and can be delayed during the winter months.</p>
How do I keep updated?	The highway inspector will update the notes on the enquiry and updates will be issued through 'Fix My Street.' You can search this for updates by using the unique reference or by viewing the map. The map will also show if the report has already been logged by someone else.
What is my role as a parish council	To advise and support your resident on how to report the issue and update on what will happen next.
Any further information that may be of assistance to the parish councils.	<p>A range of issues can be reported online, please see web page below:</p> <p>https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/report-problem-highway-or-public-space-0</p> <p>For more information about how we manage the highway network contact Craig Jackson, Highways Maintenance and Drainage Manager.</p> <p>For information about our planned highway maintenance work this year please see web links below:</p> <p>https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/find-planned-street-works</p> <p>and for our local transport work in communities (pelican crossings, 20 MPH zones etc), see below:</p> <p>https://democracy.bathnes.gov.uk/documents/s75865/E3432%20-%20Annex%205iii%20-%20Transport%20Improvement%20Programme.pdf</p> <p>Potholes are filled year around by our reactive maintenance crews as we become aware of them through routine safety inspections or customer reports https://fix.bathnes.gov.uk/</p>

Highway licences and permits: hoardings, skips and scaffolds, temporary traffic control, cherry picker licences, banners across highway, drop kerbs.
<https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/apply-highways-licence>

Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders (TTROs)

A Temporary Traffic Regulation Order (TTRO) is made by the Council when it is necessary to temporarily prohibit or control vehicle or pedestrian movements. They can be applied to roads, footways or public rights of way and used for both planned situations such as events or in an emergency. Up to date lists are available on the Council's website:
https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/traffic-regulation-orders?combine=&field_category_target_id=2778

One.Network

One Network is a website that shows UK wide road closures, diversion routes, public events and incidents – anything that has the potential to cause disruption to the road network. You can also look ahead to see what is coming up. <https://one.network/>

If you sign in, you can request alerts for a particular area, which you can draw on a map. You can also set how often you receive these.

A weekly list of street works taking place in Bath and North East Somerset is sent to all Parishes by Highways. If you are not receiving this, email: street_works@bathnes.gov.uk

Traffic Signals faults

Faults with permanent traffic signals should be reported directly to our contractor via their 24 hour helpline 0800 854229. Other queries about traffic signals can be reported to Traffic_Signals@bathnes.gov.uk (emails are only monitored during office hours).

Faulty temporary traffic signals should be reported directly to the company undertaking the road works. Companies working on the highway must place an information board on their site

	<p>with contact information. Alternatively, the one.network website gives details of who is responsible for the road works in question.</p> <p>If signs or barriers have been left after a company has finished their road works, please report these to Street_Works@bathnes.gov.uk or report via FixMyStreet https://fix.bathnes.gov.uk/</p>
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12: Noise and Nuisance

Enquiry Type	How to Report Noise and Nuisance
<p>What advice should I give my resident?</p>	<p>If your resident is reluctant to speak to their neighbour or, your resident has already done so and the noise problem has not been resolved, your resident can make a complaint to us.</p> <p>Please email environmental_protection@bathnes.gov.uk or your resident can leave a voicemail on 01225 477551 and an officer will get back to them. If your resident prefers to log the call at the time of the incident, then they may call: Out of hours logging service - Tel 01225 477477. (Please note, we do not offer a reactive service to noise happening out of office hours. This is a logging service only).</p> <p>Calls logged will be passed to the Environmental Protection Team the next working day. They will then contact your resident within 2 working days.</p> <p>When making a complaint, your resident must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their name, address and if possible contact telephone number(s) and an email address • The address your resident is complaining about and the type of nuisance (eg loud music, a barking dog, an extractor fan etc.) • When and for how long the nuisance normally occurs • The way the nuisance affects them (eg prevents sleep) <p>Anonymous complaints will not be investigated</p> <p>As evidence needs to be gathered from the perspective of person(s) being affected, the Council needs</p>

	<p>to have the address of who is reporting the concern prior to starting an investigation. A complainant's details will never be disclosed to the person(s) responsible for the issue, but this limits us to taking informal action only. If the Council were to gather evidence that required more formal action against the person(s) responsible (ie enforcement notices), complainants are likely to be asked to be a witness in court and their identity is likely to be made known. Our officers will always consult with the complainant before progressing to this stage of the investigation.</p>
<p>What happens next?</p>	<p>How we investigate a complaint</p> <p>The Environmental Protection Team has a duty to investigate and take action where a complaint of noise disturbance amounts to a Statutory Nuisance. While the term "Statutory Nuisance" is not precisely defined in law, it generally means that the noise must unreasonably interfere with the use and enjoyment of property, as assessed by a reasonable person.</p> <p>When assessing if an alleged nuisance is a Statutory Nuisance, an Environmental Health Officer will make an assessment based on these points.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The time(s) at which it happens 2. How often it happens 3. How long it lasts 4. The volume or intensity of the alleged nuisance 5. The location and characteristics of the area where the alleged nuisance takes place <p>Our normal response to a noise complaint is, in the first instance, to send a letter to the person who the complainant believes to be making the noise with the aim of resolving the matter informally. The letter to the alleged person(s) responsible, does not state who has made the complaint. If the matter persists, we will also ask the complainant to complete a noise diary of any further incidents on log sheets that are provided.</p> <p>If a completed noise diary is submitted, we will assess the log and, if we consider there is a justified complaint, we may install noise monitoring equipment or make a visit to determine whether the noise amounts to a statutory nuisance. If we witness the noise and decide it is a statutory nuisance, then we will serve a noise abatement notice on the person responsible, requiring abatement of the nuisance.</p>

	If a person fails to comply with a noise abatement notice, then we can consider seizing and confiscation any audio equipment and prosecuting offenders in the magistrates' court.
What are the service standards and what can my resident expect	Member of the public can expect a response within 48hrs to a contact made to the Environmental Protection Team, either by email or telephone.
How do I keep updated?	If you make the officer aware that you wish to be kept updated (as opposed to referring the matter to us and then handing it off for the resident to lead for themselves), they will do so.
What is my role as a parish council	From time to time, complaints stem from neighbour disputes and sometimes, complainants can be overly sensitive and are unreasonable in their expectations. It is important therefore that residents engage with our process and that they do so consistently. Everyone is innocent until evidence is gathered to the contrary.
Any further information that may be of assistance to parish councils	Dog Wardens provide a service that informs dog owners of their responsibilities and support compliance of the law and protect members of the public from issues arising from irresponsible dog ownership such as straying dogs. For more information visit the website: https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/services/environment/dog-warden-service . There is also some useful information about Dangerous dogs on the Council's website https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/services/environment/dog-warden-service/dangerous-dogs .

13: Parking, Bus Lanes and CAZ fines

Enquiry Type	How to Pay Parking; Bus Lane & Clean Air Zone Fines
What advice should I give my resident?	<p>The options available to a recipient of a Penalty Charge Notice (PCN) are detailed on the reverse of the PCN (where served to the vehicle) or within the document (where served by post).</p> <p>The recipient should be encouraged to visit the following page where they can either pay their PCN or submit an appeal: https://parking.bathnes.gov.uk</p> <p>They may also write to the Council at the address provided. The council is not able to accept appeals over the telephone or by email.</p>

	<p>The Department for Transport, Traffic Management Act 2004, The Secretary of State's Statutory Guidance to Local Authorities on the Civil Enforcement of Parking Contraventions states:-</p> <p>"Elected Members and unauthorised staff should not, under any circumstances, play a part in deciding the outcome of individual challenges or representations. This is to ensure that only fully trained staff make decisions on the facts presented".</p>
What happens next?	<p>As soon as the appeal has been submitted the case will be automatically placed on hold until a member of either Parking Services, or the CAZ team, has considered their appeal.</p> <p>Once an outcome has been made, the Council will write to the recipient to confirm the decision and advise on the options available to them if the appeal has not been successful.</p>
What are the service standards and what can my resident expect	<p>The procedure for the enforcement of Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) is dictated by the Traffic Management Act 2004 and the Council is not at liberty to deviate from this process.</p> <p>As a statutory process is in place, the corporate response standards do not apply; however, the Council aims to respond to all appeals in a timely manner (and in the order of date received); however, this may be impacted by period of high demand.</p> <p>If no response had been provided within 17 days the Council will automatically provide an acknowledge letter to reassure the recipient that the case remains on hold pending an outcome.</p> <p>Once an appeal has been received the case is place on hold and will not progress until an outcome is made on the basis of all the facts and evidence available to the council, including any mitigating circumstances provided by the PCN recipient. The Secretary of State requires that officers do not fetter their discretion when considering an appeal.</p> <p>The Council must respond to all representations (an appeal submitted in response to a Notice to Owner sent by post) within 56 days. If no outcome is made and sent to the recipient within this time (which includes two days for postage) the PCN must be cancelled.</p>
How do I keep updated?	<p>For data protection reasons the Council is only able to discuss details of a case with the liable party.</p>

What is my role as a parish council	To advise and support your resident on how to report the issue and update on what will happen next.
Any further information that may be of assistance to parish councils	Further information is available on the council's website at https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/parking-and-travel/enforcement-and-fines

14: Waste Issues – Bins and Fly Tipping

Enquiry Type	Waste Issues: Bins and Fly tipping
What advice should I give my resident?	<p>Household collections - before reporting, please check our current service disruptions page on the website to check if we are already aware of a problem in your area https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/view-current-waste-collection-problems-0</p> <p>If your address isn't listed, please use the on-line form on the following webpage https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/report-missed-bin-collection and report your missed collection.</p> <p>To report a problem with a public litter bin, or report a fly-tipping incident, please use our Report It page: https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/report-problem-rubbish-or-environment</p>
What happens next?	Successful reports are sent directly to depots to be allocated for a return collection, or for missed refuse where we don't return, to automatically notify the crew on the next collection.
What are the service standards and what can my resident expect	<p>We do not return to missed refuse collections unless a whole street has been missed or a resident has applied for help putting their bins out (an assisted collection).</p> <p>We do not return for sharps collections - the resident needs to re-book this on-line. https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/clinical-or-sharps-waste</p> <p>Missed collections for all other services are returned for when it is operationally possible.</p>
How do I keep updated?	We are unable to provide updates as to when we will return for the collection if we have not returned before the next collection additional waste or recycling will be collected.

What is my role as a parish council	Direct residents to report through the online forms https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/report-missed-bin-collection or via Council Connect on 01225 394041 if they do not have internet access, so we are able to build up information of any repeat problems being experienced at a property and resolve the cause.
Any further information that may be of assistance to parish councils	<p>The Council has a network of litter bins across the district, but some litter bins are also provided on private managed land (eg Curo Housing) and some Parishes arrange for their own litter bins to be emptied.</p> <p>Our business waste team can assist with queries for potential extra wheelie bin recycling services via email to businesswaste@bathnes.gov.uk; Tel: 01225 394041; website: https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/business-waste-and-recycling</p> <p>Ordering a new container https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/order-box-bag-or-bin</p> <p>Arrange an assisted collection for residents that need help with putting their waste & recycling out on collection day https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/request-help-putting-your-rubbish-or-recycling-out</p> <p>Litter Picks - Bath and North East Somerset Council is working with #NoPlaceForLitter to provide everything you need to organise your own community litter pick https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/services/streets-and-highway-maintenance/litter-street-care-and-cleaning/organising-litter-pick</p>

15: Grass cutting

Enquiry Type	Grass cutting queries - Parks and Greenspaces
What advice should I give my resident?	<p>If query is about when will vegetation be next cut or frequency of cut direct to B&NES public web site, to Interactive Maps https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/webforms/maps/ - Use the Local Information drop down – it is under vegetation cutting regimes.</p> <p>Grass cutting is generally undertaken from April to the end of October but can be influenced by the season ie warm</p>

	<p>spring and autumn. Hedge cutting is generally undertaken from November to the end of February which is outside of bird nesting season.</p> <p>Leaf fall in Parks & Open Spaces is generally collected in October - December.</p> <p>There are also webpages that residents can be directed to for more information about how we deal with vegetation - https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/parks-maintenance</p> <p>If there is overgrown vegetation that is causing an issue then we would encourage that this is reported via our website on - Fix My Street via the Report It webpage: https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/report-overgrown-public-spaces-and-parks</p> <p>Reporting the problem on-line enables the resident to pinpoint the location of the issue, describe the problem and upload photos.</p>
<p>What happens next?</p>	<p>If a report is raised on Fix My Street, the enquiry will be allocated to one of our parks officers who will investigate and decide what needs doing, or if it is a quick fix, will sort it out while on site.</p> <p>If the work requires specialist input or machinery then the work will be logged and added to the team schedule of works.</p> <p>This is the quickest way to ensure that the enquiry gets to the correct person.</p>
<p>What are the service standards and what can my resident expect</p>	<p>Grass cutting timetable</p> <p>Type of area and typical mowing frequency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parks, playing fields, green spaces and allotments - Every 2 weeks to 6 weeks from April to October • Parks, playing fields, green spaces and allotments (with reduced cutting frequency) - 1 or 2 cuts per year between August and October • Golf courses - Every week from April to October • Roadside verges - Every 4 to 6 weeks from April to October • Roadside verges (with reduced cutting frequency) - 1 or 2 cuts per year between August and October • Wildflower meadows - 1 cut per year between August and October

	<p>Cutting hedges and shrubs at the right time</p> <p>It is best to cut hedges and shrubs in late Autumn or Winter after they have flowered and produced berries. This also reduces the likelihood of disturbing the site of a nesting bird.</p> <p>Bird nesting season is from 1 March to 31 August. Under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, it is illegal to disturb the site of a nesting bird.</p>
How do I keep updated?	The Parks Officer will update the notes on Fix My Street and the individual who reported the issue will be notified. You can search fix my streets for updates by Map (location/ area); by Issue Reported; or by Most Recent.
What is my role as a parish council	To advise and support your resident on how to gather information about a service and if need to support them to report the issue.
Any further information that may be of assistance to parish councils	<p>At times there may be delays in resolving reports due to land ownership/responsibility queries eg the report could be due to an issue on Curo land, as well as private land or land where it is difficult to ascertain ownership or responsibility.</p> <p>For Curo land issues residents can notify Curo direct - https://www.curo-group.co.uk/contact-us/report-it/ and they can also access Curo maps, which shows areas of responsibility - https://curo.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=1871376202214fe1bcd4fe7bf21f4ce9</p> <p>Some reports may therefore be closed as not responsible or no further action.</p>

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16: Trees and Vegetation

Enquiry Type	Parks Team involvement in Trees or Vegetation Blocking Road or Visibility of Road Signage - In a Residential Area (outside residential areas the responsibility is taken on by the Highways Team)
What advice should I give my resident?	If query is about trees or vegetation blocking roads or interfering with the visibility of highway signage or at road junctions within 30mph residential areas (and thereby causing a safety issue), then report this via our website on -

	<p>Fix My Street via the Report It webpage: https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/report-overgrown-public-spaces-and-parks</p> <p>Reporting the problem on-line enables the resident to pinpoint the location of the issue, describe the problem and upload photos.</p>
What happens next?	<p>If a report is raised on Fix My Street, the enquiry will be allocated to one of our parks officers who will investigate and decide what needs doing, or if it is a quick fix, will sort it out while on site.</p> <p>If the work requires specialist input or machinery then the work will be logged and added to the team schedule of works.</p> <p>This is the quickest way to ensure that the enquiry gets to the correct person.</p>
What are the service standards and what can my resident expect	<p>A response team will deal with this as soon as possible once checks have been done to see if the tree/ overgrown vegetation is on council land. We are unable to give defined response time for general vegetation enquiries.</p> <p>If a tree related report is identified as an emergency (defined as a significant risk to life or property), regardless of communication route, it will be directed to the appropriate tree officer as quickly as possible. It will then be urgently assessed by the Parks Tree Team and appropriate action taken to maintain public safety.</p> <p>If on assessment, it is found to be from private land a certain amount of discretion is used ie the response team may cut back vegetation from private land to improve visibility if it the assessment shows an immediate risk to the public. Depending on the scenario, Parks may pass to Highways so that they can issue a Section 154 of the Highways Act 1980 notice which places a statutory obligation on landowners/occupiers to maintain their boundary to ensure that their garden vegetation does not obstruct highway users nor obstruct visibility.</p>
How do I keep updated?	<p>The parks officer will update the notes on Fix My Street and the individual who reported the issue will be notified. You can search fix my street for updates by Map (location/ area); by Issue Reported; or by Most Recent.</p>
What is my role as a parish council	<p>To advise and support your resident on how to gather information (eg to find out of the overgrown vegetation is from private land or property) about a service and if need to support them to report the issue.</p>
Any further information that may be of assistance to	<p>At times there may be delays in resolving reports due to land ownership/responsibility queries e.g. the report could be due to an issue on Curo land, as well as private land or land where it is difficult to ascertain ownership or</p>

parish councils	<p>responsibility.</p> <p>For Curo land issues residents can be direct to notify Curo - https://www.curo-group.co.uk/contact-us/report-it/ and they can also access Curo maps which shows areas of responsibility - https://curo.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=1871376202214fe1bcd4fe7bf21f4ce9</p> <p>Some reports may therefore be closed, as not responsible or no further action if they are not deemed to be a safety issue.</p> <p>Section 154 of the Highways Act 1980 allows a competent authority to serve notice on any private landowner from whose property any vegetation may be overhanging the highway, we opt for a 21 day informal letter to try and encourage a quick intervention by the landowner before going down a more formal 14 day notice. Unless the 14 day process is correctly followed it is unlikely the authority could recover any costs should we need to intervene and undertake any works to resolve.</p>
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17: Clean and Green Initiative

Enquiry Type	Clean and Green: Investment project to provide increased street cleansing, graffiti removal and maintenance of local neighbourhoods
What advice should I give my resident?	<p>The Council has invested additional £1M in neighbourhood services to enhance work to keep public spaces clean and green.</p> <p>For full details on the project, please visit https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/clean-and-green-bath-north-east-somerset</p> <p>To report a highway or cleansing issue in your neighbourhood Fix My Street via the Report It webpage - https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/report-problem-highway-or-public-space-0</p> <p>It's important to ensure you have the exact location and can provide detailed information and supporting imagery where available.</p> <p>Weeds can also be reported but please note that we prioritise removing weeds where they are causing safety issues, such as obstructing routes for pedestrians and cyclists, blocking drainage channels and increasing flood</p>

	risk, and damaging pavements or roads.
What happens next?	Once a report is raised on Fix My Street, our Clean and Green Team will investigate and decide what needs doing, and schedule this work.
What are the service standards and what can my resident expect	<p>The Clean and Green Team aim to respond to all enquiries within 10 working days. If this is not possible, the team will get in touch with the individual who has raised the report to advise when a response will be possible.</p> <p>The team will review priority areas to ensure they are able to support more promptly. This includes carrying out necessary checks ie safety, land ownership etc.</p> <p>Once work is complete, the team will send before and after photos. You may wish to share some of these images with residents who initially reported the priority areas.</p>
How do I keep updated?	<p>The Clean and Green Team will provide regular updates to specific tasks raised on FixMyStreet and the individual who reported the issue will be notified automatically. The team also email Ward and Parish Councillors with before and after images of work completed in their area.</p> <p>The Clean and Green Team will be transparent regarding delays or why work was not completed during the Action Weeks eg, the priority issue is on private land and will keep all interested parties fully informed.</p>
What is my role as a parish council	<p>To advise and support residents to use the Report it page of the Council's website to inform of highway or public priorities in your area.</p> <p>Liaise with residents and the Clean and Green team regarding cleansing and parks related issues when you're notified of upcoming action weeks in your area.</p>
Any further information that may be of assistance to parish councils	<p>The Clean and Green team follow an Action Week schedule. Each ward is visited at least twice during this timeline.</p> <p>The Clean and Green team will contact Ward and Parish Councillors at least 3-4 weeks in advance to request priorities. To prepare, Parishes may wish to keep a log of cleansing issues raised by residents and liaise with their Ward Councillor/s. The team will also keep a status log of ward priorities eg complete or remain outstanding. Any outstanding priorities will be included as tasks for the next planned Action Week in that area or scheduled sooner</p>

	<p>where capacity allows.</p> <p>At times there may be delays in resolving reports due to land ownership or responsibility of areas eg the reported area could be on Curo land or private land or land where it is difficult to ascertain ownership or responsibility.</p> <p>For Curo land issues residents can directly notify Curo - https://www.curo-group.co.uk/contact-us/report-it/ and they can also access Curo maps which shows areas of responsibility https://curo.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=1871376202214fe1bcd4fe7bf21f4ce9</p> <p>Some reports may therefore be closed, as not responsible or no further action if they are not deemed to be safe. For any further information, please email Clean and Green: CleanAndGreen@bathnes.gov.uk</p>
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18: Events

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Enquiry	Events and Trading Licences
What advice should I give my resident?	<p>Contact the Events Office by email Event@bathnes.gov.uk or telephone 01225 396056 or make an enquiry through the online form here https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/form/make-an-enquiry-about-an-outdoor</p> <p>Licences are needed for a range of activities such as street trading, charitable collections, animals, raffles, street trading and taxis. Contact Licensing@BATHNES.GOV.UK or telephone 01225 477531. https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/licences</p> <p>Events Advice and Support - help for organisers to plan safe and successful events whether on private land, the highway or B&NES green spaces. https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/plan-your-outdoor-event</p>
What happens next?	<p>If an event is deemed large enough to need an application this can be made via the Council's online event application system EventApp. https://app.apply4.com/eventapp/uk/bath</p> <p>Full documentation, including Event Management Plan, Risk Assessments, Public Liability Insurance, Site Plan and other relevant documents, must be submitted to the Events Office via</p>

	<p>EventApp a minimum of 8 weeks in advance of the event set up date.</p> <p>Large scale or new events will be required to attend a Safety Advisory Group for Events (SAGE) meeting - this is usually held by an online Teams meeting. The SAGE team includes representatives from the Emergency Services as well as Managers from within B&NES Council.</p>
What are the service standards and what can my resident expect?	<p>The Events Office is a one-point of contact within the B&NES Council and they will guide, advise and support organisers throughout the application process.</p> <p>The usual response time is seven days but if your query is urgent, please call 01225 396056.</p>
How do I keep updated?	The Events Office Team will update the organiser and guide them through the event application process. Communications can be either via telephone, email or if an application has been sent through EventApp, then they will correspond through this channel.
What is my role as a parish council?	To advise and support residents and guide them to the Events Office as this can serve as the one-point contact into the B&NES Council or follow the necessary procedures if you are organising your own event.
Any further information that may be of assistance to parish councils	<p>If you have an emergency, please see contact details via this link https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/report-emergency</p> <p>Emergency Out of Hours Number 01225 477 477.</p>

19: Safeguarding and Wellbeing Support

Enquiry	Community Wellbeing Support and reporting safeguarding concerns: adults, children and young people (CYP)
What advice should I give my resident?	Safeguarding Concerns: Encourage people to report their concerns about the adult or child/young person.

	<p>You, or you resident should tell us <u>immediately</u> if you consider that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A child is suffering significant harm • You want to protect a child from abuse or serious neglect • You feel the child requires urgent or short-term care (acute services) <p>Call our Children’s Social Work Services on 01225 396111 or 01225 477929 (weekdays, 8.30am to 5pm, except Fridays when we're closed from 4.30pm). Out of hours, if you think a child is in immediate danger, please call our Emergency Duty Team on 01454 615165 or 999.</p> <p>Further information about how to report concerns about a child can be found on our website. https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/report-concern-about-child</p> <p>For concerns about a vulnerable adult:</p> <p>https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/tell-us-about-adult-being-abused-or-neglected</p> <p>If you consider that someone is in <u>immediate</u> danger call 999.</p> <p>If you suspect an adult is being abused or neglected (this could be you or someone you know), call us on 01225 394200 (our phone lines are open Monday to Thursday, 8.30am to 5pm, and Fridays, 8.30am to 4.30pm), or call our Emergency Duty Social Work team on 01454 615165 (evenings, weekends and bank holidays).</p>
What happens next?	Our social care colleagues and partners will assess the information provided and take appropriate action to support the safety and wellbeing of individuals.
What are the service standards and what can my resident expect?	Further information on our work with CYP and families can be found on a dedicated website, along with details of policies and procedures in different cases: https://bcssp.org.uk/

How do I keep updated?	Please be assured that the appropriate interventions will be put in place to support vulnerable CYP, adults and their support networks. Feedback will be limited on such personal and confidential matters.
What is my role as a parish council?	<p>To encourage your resident to report concerns, ensure an urgent referral for any CYP or adult in immediate danger. Provide information to your resident on our early help, LiveWell and Community Wellbeing Hub services below.</p> <p>Reassure your resident that their referral will be treated as confidential.</p>
Any further information that may be of assistance to parish councils	<p>Early help services for CYP/families</p> <p>B&NES early help services work with young people and their families to identify emerging needs and any inequalities at the earliest opportunity https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/get-early-help</p> <p>Livewell Databases</p> <p>Whether you are looking for local childcare, a toddler group, some parenting support; information and resources to support your role as a parent carer with a child with a disability or additional need; or signposting to resources for an adult needing care or support; https://livewell.bathnes.gov.uk/ provides this.</p> <p>Community Wellbeing Hub</p> <p>https://communitywellbeinghub.co.uk/</p> <p>The Community Wellbeing Hub provides a central place for you to access a range of services to improve health and wellbeing. (NB, the Hub is not a signposting service but a partnership between B&NES, healthcare providers and commissioned services with the aim that enquirers tell their story once to access the support they need, even if this needs to come from different services).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Debt, money advice and benefits support

- Short term financial help in a crisis
- Housing advice
- Access to low cost food
- Practical support to improve your mental health
- Finding employment
- Advice on employment issues
- Keeping active and healthy
- Achieving a healthy weight for the whole family
- Improving your cooking skills on a budget
- Managing type 2 Diabetes
- Stopping smoking
- Practical and emotional support to help you build confidence, independence and connecting you to your local community

Telephone: **0300 247 0050** and they will be happy to help you. If you have consent, you can make a referral via the online form here: <https://communitywellbeinghub.co.uk/for-professionals>.

20. Keeping Up to Date

Staying informed

Interagency Bulletin: This monthly e-bulleting is produced by the Corporate Engagement Team and is aimed at third sector organisations as well as Parishes. It contains information on training; funding; networking; events and other up to date information. It is also available on our website.

Press Releases: All Parishes should receive the press releases that the Council sends out. If not, please contact our Communications and Marketing Team by email to communications_Marketing@bathnes.gov.uk

The press releases are sent to Parishes by a system called Vuelio. Please be advised that if you unsubscribe, the Council cannot add you back in. It requires email confirmation to be sent to the Council and then on to Vuelio. In addition, if you forward on the email you receive from Vuelio and the person you forward it to unsubscribes, you will no longer receive the notifications. You can avoid this by removing the

	<p>'unsubscribe link' before you forward the email.</p> <p>Weekly updates through e-connect: e-connect is our weekly email newsletter to residents. It goes out every Thursday. You can find previous editions on our newsroom and if you want to receive e-connect you can sign up online.</p> <p>Sharing Information: Parishes are encouraged to use their local newsletters and websites to disseminate information to local communities. Also to let Bath & North East Somerset Council know of any good practice or successes we could highlight through meetings or publications.</p> <p>Follow our social media accounts to see what we are currently sharing:</p> <p>https://x.com/bathnes https://www.facebook.com/bathnes https://www.instagram.com/bathnescouncil https://bsky.app/profile/bathnes.bsky.social https://www.youtube.com/@BathnesCouncil</p> <p>(Text to embed if wished: You can follow B&NES on Nextdoor, X, Facebook, Instagram and Bluesky; subscribe to us on YouTube and read the latest releases on our Newsroom)</p> <p>Further information:</p> <p>Sign up to e-connect - https://us4.list-manage.com/subscribe?u=d4b66021dfe971c98d4145331&id=fb2e3530f2</p> <p>Council's newsroom - https://newsroom.bathnes.gov.uk/news</p>
<p>Engagement Meetings</p>	<p>Bath & North East Somerset Council provides the framework for Parish Liaison and the Area Forums. Parishes are encouraged to attend these meetings to stay informed and have their say. Parish Liaison takes place three times a year and Area Forums four times per year each.</p>

21: Other Useful Information to support how we work together

Point of Contact at Bath & North East Somerset Council for Parishes	<p>Parish Councils have requested a point of contact and if they need advice may contact the Corporate Engagement Team as to the best route to follow to get things done. Email: connecting_communities@bathnes.gov.uk</p>
Parish Contact Information	<p>The Clerk will be recognised as the primary point of contact for communications from B&NES and will signpost within their organisation as appropriate</p> <p>Parishes will inform B&NES Council's Democratic Services and Corporate Engagement Teams of changes to Clerks, Councillors and other contact details.</p>
Parish Councils' registers of members' interests	<p>Parishes are required to publish these on their websites. If they do not have one, Bath & North East Somerset Council will publish them on their behalf. This can be done via Democratic Services.</p>
Complaints about a Councillor	<p>Residents have the right to complain about the conduct of any elected Councillor within the area of Bath and North East Somerset, including Parish Councillors. If it is believed that the behaviour of a Councillor has breached the Code of Conduct in Part 4 of the Constitution, a complaint can be made to the Monitoring Officer – Michael Hewitt. https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/make-complaint-about-councillor</p> <p>Complaints may involve the Standards Committee. Parish Councils are expected to assist the Monitoring Officer in promoting high standards of behaviour and the assessment of any complaints.</p>
Consultations	<p>As per the Parish Charter, Bath & North East Somerset Council will consult Parishes when a planned decision would have a specific and direct or significant impact on them; their areas or residents. Bath & North East Somerset's officers that undertake consultations are advised that questions should be suitable for collective as well as individual responses. Also, that Parishes need to be able to see all the questions to discuss them. In addition, they are advised that Parishes will need adequate time to respond. If the consultation is due to close before a Parish Council has time to make a collective response based on their meeting pattern, they should contact the officer running the consultation to explain this. It may be possible to allow more time. In terms of Planning Applications, Parishes may contact the relevant Planning Officer to request an extension to the statutory four week consultation period if it falls outside their usual meeting schedule.</p>

	<p>Parishes are expected to respond to consultations to reflect the view of local people.</p> <p>Bath & North East Somerset Council publishes details of its consultations on its website: https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/current-consultations</p>
<p>Bath & North East Somerset Council webpages about and for Parishes</p>	<p>The landing page for Parishes can be found here: https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/parish-councils</p> <p>The Parish Charter page is: https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/document-and-policy-library/parish-charter.</p> <p>Information about the role of Parish Councils is here: https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/role-parish-councils</p> <p>A map of Parishes in Bath and North East Somerset can be found here: https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/find-or-contact-your-parish-council</p> <p>A contact list of Parishes can be found here: https://democracy.bathnes.gov.uk/mgParishCouncilDetails.aspx?LS=17&SLS=3&bcr=1</p> <p>Tools and information for Parishes can be found here: https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/tools-parishes</p> <p>Information on Parish Elections can be found here: https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/town-and-parish-council-elections</p> <p>Information about standing as a candidate at a Parish Election can be found here: https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/stand-candidate-town-or-parish-council</p> <p>To amend any of the information, contact the Corporate Engagement Team connecting_communities@bathnes.gov.uk</p> <p>Tip for finding information on the Council's website: When seeking information, it is often easier to use a search engine. Type in what you are looking for information about and add B&NES. Using the search function within the site does not always generate all the information available. If you need assistance, please contact the Corporate Engagement Team connecting_communities@bathnes.gov.uk</p>

<p>Training for Parishes</p>	<p>Bath & North East Somerset Council regularly offers training to Parishes on topics such as Planning; Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) / Section 106; Parish Online; Emergency Planning; Events etc</p> <p>All Parish Clerks are encouraged to become qualified and Parishes to work towards the Local Council Award Scheme.</p> <p>Information about Parish Councils will be included in Bath & North East Somerset's staff and Ward Councillor induction. Ward Councillors will be actively encouraged to work with their Parish Councils.</p> <p>Bath & North East Somerset Council provides access to its e-learning pool for external partners. Parishes can create an account for free on Learning Pool and sign in to browse courses and any available eLearning.</p>
<p>Volunteering</p>	<p>If Parishes are seeking volunteers for community projects, or wish to advertise for volunteers, there is a Community Volunteer Service: https://banes.everyonehealth.co.uk/volunteer-service/</p> <p>The Council's Corporate Engagement Team are also happy to put notices in the Interagency Bulletin: https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/interagency-bulletin</p>
<p>Parish Online</p>	<p>Parish On-Line is an on-line mapping tool for local authorities, town and parish councils. All Parish and Town Councils have free access to this site. For more information and usernames and passwords, contact the GIS Team by email to GIS_Team@bathnes.gov.uk or Tel: 01225 394427. The Council's GIS team also organises regular training for parishes – do contact them to find out more.</p>
<p>Emergency Planning</p>	<p>Parishes are encouraged to prepare an Emergency Plan for their communities and keep Bath & North East Somerset Council's Emergency Planning Team informed of key contacts in communities, places of safety and key holders for these. Email: EmergencyPlanning@bathnes.gov.uk</p> <p>If you have an emergency, please see contact details via this link https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/report-emergency</p> <p>The Council's Emergency Out of Hours Number is 01225 477 477.</p>

	<p>Incidents of Flooding</p> <p>Ward and Parish Councillors, residents and volunteers are urged not to put themselves or others at risk during incidents of flooding.</p> <p>It is not legal for volunteers to close a road.</p> <p>The Council does not expect volunteers to try to manage traffic during an incident of flooding, nor to try and direct traffic to an alternative route.</p> <p>It is not safe to drive or walk through floodwater and Parishes are encouraged to share this message. Flood water may contain sewage and hide rubbish, wreckage, uneven roads and pavements or broken drain and manhole covers.</p> <p>During incidents of flooding, Parishes with social media may wish to share the information that is provided by the Council and other public services.</p> <p>The Environment Agency operates a flood warning system, providing information to the public, media, emergency services and local authorities. The Environment Agency also provides the Floodline Service (0345 988 1188). You can listen to recorded flood warning information or speak to an operator for general information and advice 24 hours a day. The Government also provides advice for individuals and communities on preparing for flooding.</p> <p>Parishes may use their free access to Parish Online, provided by B&NES, to map areas of regular flooding. If Parishes need to refresh their log in details, they can contact the Council's GIS Team by email to GIS_Team@bathnes.gov.uk</p> <p>If communities want to take part in an 'adopt a drain' initiative to help keep drains clear, this should be on low-speed roads and agreed with B&NES beforehand (email: drainage_flooding@bathnes.gov.uk). A risk assessment needs to be submitted. Actions should not extend beyond sweeping away leaves while standing on the pavement. Volunteers should not lift drain covers under any circumstances</p>
Climate and Nature Emergency	<p>The Council has declared a Climate Emergency and has committed to provide leadership to enable carbon neutrality by 2030 https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/climate-and-ecological-emergencies. There are</p>

	<p>also a number of useful guides published including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BANES guide - https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/what-you-can-do-address-climate-emergency • National Association of Local Councils (NALC) - https://www.nalc.gov.uk/our-work/climate-change • Friends of the Earth - Actions for Parish and Town Councils https://policy.friendsoftheearth.uk/reports/20-actions-parish-and-town-councils-can-take-climate-and-nature-emergency
Avon Local Councils Association (ALCA)	<p>ALCA is a not for profit membership organisation representing, supporting, training and advising Parish and Town Councils (Local Councils) across the West of England area https://www.avonlca.org.uk/.</p> <p>There is a Bath and North East Somerset Branch and the Chair of this is currently Richard Maccabee your local ALCA representative. Contact details to clerk@batheaston-pc.gov.uk</p>
B&NES Invoices to Parishes	<p>If you receive an invoice from B&NES with a 2 week payment deadline but cannot meet this because of your Parishes financial procedures, you can contact us to let us know and we will put a hold on reminders. Send an email to sundrydebt@bathnes.gov.uk and explain the situation. By doing this, there will be an audit trail and record of the action.</p>
Awards for Parishes	<p>The Council's Community Awards includes a category for those working or volunteering for a Parish Council (eg Clerk; Councillors; staff and volunteers for any services the Parish might run such as a Community Library).</p> <p>https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/bnes-community-awards</p> <p>The National Association of Local Councils also has Star Awards specifically for Parishes with a range of categories:</p> <p>https://www.nalc.gov.uk/support/star-council-awards.html</p>

Appendix 1

Planning checklist SAMPLE

(This checklist has been developed by Dunkerton and Tunley Parish Council and updated by Keynsham Town Council)

Application: /...../.....

Location/Address:

.....

Policy Ref	Issue	Assessment		
		Yes	No	Comments
	Have councillors visited the site? How many?			
	Is the application for permitted development?			
	Is the site in the Green Belt?			
	Is it in a conservation area?			
	Is it a listed building?			
GB1	Will there be an adverse visual impact on the Green Belt?			
	Are there any "very special circumstances" that outweigh the harm to the Green Belt? **			
	Is the proposal visible from public footpaths?			
	Have we received neighbours' support? How many?			
	Have we received neighbours' objections? How many?			
D6	Is the amenity of neighbours' (light, access, noise) significantly affected?			
	Will there be any changes to external lighting/light pollution?			
	Is there any expected impact on the local natural environment (flora, fauna?)			
ST7	Are the traffic and highway safety implications acceptable?			

ST7	Are parking arrangements satisfactory?			
	<p>Is the effect of cumulative extensions/development in the neighbourhood acceptable?</p> <p><i>Consider:</i></p> <p>a) "Does the development provide for a variety of housing types and size?"</p> <p>b) "Will the development constitute overdevelopment?"</p>			
	Are the materials and design satisfactory?			
	Is the scale, height and degree of extension/development acceptable?			
D1b	Does the development contribute to distinctiveness, identity or history?			
	Are the drainage arrangements (foul and storm water) satisfactory?			
	Is the proposal for a gypsy or traveller site?			
	Does it meet the criteria in the gypsy and traveller Policy CP11?			

Further issues not considered above:

Planning response **SAMPLE**

Examples of material considerations made to planning applications

(Details supplied by Keynsham Town Council)

SUPPORT - APPLICATIONS

1. Materials (Compliance) – Example 54 LockingWell

All external walling and roofing materials to be used shall match those of the existing building in respect of type, size, colour, pointing, coursing, jointing, profile and texture.

Reason: In the interests of the appearance of the development and the surrounding area in accordance with Policies D.2 and D.4 of the Bath and North East Somerset Local Plan and Policy CP6 of the Bath and North East Somerset Core Strategy.

OBJECTION – APPLICATIONS

1. The proposed development by way of its appearance and siting would have an adverse effect on the character and appearance of the area. The proposal is therefore contrary to Core Strategy policy CP.6, policy D.4 of the current Local Plan, and Plan making policies D.1 and D.2 – **Example General**
2. The proposed development by reason of its siting scale and design will fail to respect the context of the surrounding street scene and spatial characteristics of the area. The development is therefore contrary to policy CP6 of the Core Strategy, adopted 2014, and policies D.2 and D.4 of the Bath and North East Local Plan, including minerals and waste policies, adopted October 2007 – **Example 44 St. Clements**
3. The proposed development will result in substantial reconstruction and extension of the existing building and the construction of a detached garage. The provision of the conversion and extension is considered to harm the openness of the surrounding green belt and no very special circumstances have been put forward to justify development in the green belt. The development is therefore contrary to policy ET.9 and GB.2 of the Bath and North East Local Plan, including minerals and waste policies, adopted October 2007, policy RE6 of the emerging placemaking plan and paragraphs 89 and 90 of the National planning policy framework.
4. The proposed extension to the stone barn by reason of its siting, scale and design will fail to respect and complement the appearance of the host building. The development is therefore construct to policies D.2 and D.4 of the Bath and North East Local Plan, including minerals and waste policies and polices D2 and D5 of the emerging placemaking plan. – **Example Barn Cottage, Old Bristol Road**

5. The proposed dwelling would be located outside of the housing development boundary. The development is therefore contrary to policy HG.10 Bath and North East Local Plan, including minerals and waste policies and policy RE4 of the emerging placemaking plan. **Example Barn Cottage, Old Bristol Road**
6. **DRIVEWAY** - The submitted plans do not demonstrate a visibility splay of an adequate width to allow sufficient visibility to vehicles exiting the site onto the highway. The development is therefore contrary to policy T.24 of the Bath and North East Local Plan, including minerals and waste policies and policy ST.7 of the emerging placemaking plan **Example Barn Cottage, Old Bristol Road**

Planning Frequently Asked Questions Parish and Town Council - Planning frequently asked questions

Understanding decisions (delegated and committee)

The first thing to do is look on the planning website at the case officer's report which led to the recommendation. This should include your comments and how they were addressed. Also then, if the application goes to planning committee you can review the minutes of the committee.

<https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/webforms/planning/search.html>

<https://democracy.bathnes.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CommitteeId=638>

Renewable energy and listed buildings (and other buildings)

See the Councils Supplementary Planning Document and about our Green Heritage Homes project

<https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/sustainable-construction-and-retrofitting-supplementary-planning-document>

<https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/green-heritage-homes>

Does registering an enforcement case 'stop the clock' for immunity?

No, only the taking of formal enforcement action by B&NES as the Local Planning Authority can stop the clock on the accrual of immunity from enforcement action. Formal enforcement action can take the form of issuing an Enforcement Notice or a Breach of Condition Notice.

How are enforcement cases prioritised?

All new enforcement cases are prioritised in accordance with the council's adopted Local Enforcement Plan – the table below is taken from the plan:

Priority Level	Description
High Priority	Ongoing unauthorised demolition or a significant alteration of a Listed Building, unauthorised works to protected trees or other breaches causing either a risk to public safety or substantial harm to amenity.
Medium Priority	Unauthorised developments or uses where there is the potential to cause an unacceptable level of harm.
Low Priority	Technical or trivial breaches where planning permission would likely to have been granted had it been sought, or where the development is marginally beyond the parameters of Permitted Development or an approved development.

Quality of drawings for projecting at parish meetings

Plans and drawings will in most cases be necessary to describe the proposed development, as required by the legislation (see article 7(1)(c)(ii) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure (England) (Order) 2015). Plans or drawings must be drawn to an identified scale, and in the case of plans, must show the direction of north. Some applications like Certificate of Lawful use only require a site location plan to scale, but nothing else. B&NES will ensure that drawings meet the minimum national legislation to that type of application. Unfortunately we cannot guarantee the quality in terms of projecting at meetings

Extract from above:

‘(i)a plan which identifies the land to which the application relates;

(ii)any other plans, drawings and information necessary to describe the development which is the subject of the application;’

Redacted or missing information on applications

Personal details are redacted in line with GDPR legislation, some of this is done through the Planning Portal and some manually by us.

Non notification of non-material changes

Legislation does not require us to notify anyone about NMAs nor to invite comments on these types application. However you can be notified about every type of application in your parish by signing up for email notifications here <https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/sign-planning-application-updates>.

Residents’ comments/objections disappearing

This shouldn’t happen. All comments are published providing they meet the standards, until the application is determined at which point they disappear and only reappear if the decision is appealed. Any issues with comments please contact us on dm@bathnes.gov.uk or on 01225 394041 option 6

Elevations not always easy to understand

Refer to point above. In an attempt to encourage good drawings and plans we have published Drawing Standards guidance for applicants <https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Best%20Practice%20Guide%20-%20Drawing%20Standards%20-%202018%20January%202023.pdf>, but this is not enforceable and drawings will not be rejected if they comply with national requirements and the requirements of the Local List of PAR. If you find drawings that you do not understand, please contact us on dm@bathnes.gov.uk or on 01225 394041 option 6 or ring the case officer

Not sent applications to consider

This shouldn't happen. The Support Team set up the PC consultation where it is required by the legislation for that type of application. Any issues contact us on dm@bathnes.gov.uk or on 01225 394041 option. You can ensure you never miss an application by registering for emailed application notifications in your parish <https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/sign-planning-application-updates>

Lack of response when trying to contact officers

Officers are very busy with high caseloads, if you can't get through to them direct by phone or email please contact us on dm@bathnes.gov.uk or on 01225 394041 option 6 and we'll see what we can do

Suggested update 2 or 3 times a year to explain why certain applications were successful and others refused

BathNES training would need to be a funded service.
Talk to ALCA <https://www.avonlca.org.uk/> about what support they can provide
Ask about one-off cases...officers and managers will aim to make time to talk to or email you.

The Local Plan is being updated, how should the update of neighbourhood plans relate to this?

Twin track your review of your neighbourhood plan to run just behind the local plan. Further advice will be issued by the Planning Policy Team and you can also contact the team directly via Planning_Policy@bathnes.gov.uk

How are Neighbourhood Plans considered in the planning application process and how do I know our plan has been considered?

The case officer must always review an application in relation to any Neighbourhood Plan and their consideration of it will be set out in their case report. Only a made Neighbourhood Plan is part of the statutory Development Plan and carries full weight (the case officer will determine how much weight to give an emerging Neighbourhood Plan).

Our area is in need of smaller dwellings; how can we influence this.

Through your neighbourhood plan / Housing Needs Survey.

Jargon Buster

Access Land	Land with public right of access mapped as ‘open country’ (mountain, moor, heath and down) or registered common land.
ALCA	Avon Local Councils Association.
Asset of Community Value	An amenity or public building which has been put forward by a community under the Localism Act for inclusion on a register held by their local authority. If it is included, it may not be sold without the opportunity for the public to raise funds to buy it.
Chairman’s Community Awards	Annual Awards organised by Bath & North East Somerset Council to recognise volunteers, community leaders and businesses that make a positive contribution to the local community, putting people first and inspiring others to get involved.
Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)	A planning charge, introduced by the Planning Act 2008, as a tool for local authorities in England and Wales to help deliver infrastructure to support the development of their area.
Community Places of Safety	A temporary shelter to be used in an emergency (eg gas leak; flood; – generally a community venue where people will feel comfortable and safe.
Connecting Communities	The Council’s framework for engaging with local communities.
Community Governance Review	A change to parish governance arrangements which Principal Councils (district or unitary) have the power to carry out. A review can consider whether to create a new parish; alter the boundary of an existing parish or to group a number of parishes together. Local people can petition a Principal Council to undertake a Community Governance Review and it must be undertaken if the relevant conditions are met.
Due Diligence	The exercising of an appropriate level of caution or investigation prior to acting or making a decision. It may involve a series of legal, financial and commercial checks depending on the circumstance.
General Power of Competence	The General Power of Competence, Localism Act 2011 Sec 1 (1) gives local authorities, including eligible local councils, “the power to do anything that individuals generally may do” as long as they do not break other laws. It is intended to be a power of first, not last, resort. However, there remain constraints and in particular this does not give any additional

	fund raising powers. A parish council wishing to use the power must formally resolve that it is an 'eligible council'. The qualifications for eligibility are that the clerk has completed a course in local administration, and that at least two-thirds of councillors have been elected (i.e. not co-opted). ¹⁴ The general power of competence is available in England only.
Local Council	A parish, town, village, neighbourhood or community council. These all have the same powers and can provide the same services. The only difference is that a town council has decided that it should be known as a town council instead of a parish, village, neighbourhood or community council, and may choose to have a mayor.
Local Council Award Scheme	Run by the National Association of Local Councils (NALC), the scheme is designed to celebrate the successes of the very best Local Councils, and to provide a framework to support all Local Councils to improve and develop to meet their full potential.
Monitoring Officer	The Monitoring Officer is responsible for promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct and probity within the Council and Parish Councils. They also have a responsibility to report breaches and possible breaches of the law or maladministration to the Council.
NALC	National Association of Local Councils – the national membership body for Local Councils working to support, promote and improve them.
Neighbourhood Plan	The Localism Act 2011 gave communities the right to shape development in their areas through the production of a neighbourhood plan which should support the strategic development needs set out in the Local Plan.
Parish Charter Working Group	A small group of representatives from Bath and North East Somerset Council and local town and parish councils established to review the Parish Charter.
Parish Liaison	The Parish Liaison Meeting is a joint consultative body set up to consider issues of common interest between the parish/town councils (individually or collectively) and Bath and North East Somerset Council, that are relevant for discussion in this forum.
Section 106 (S106)	Legal agreements between Local Authorities and developers. These are linked to planning permissions and can also be known as planning obligations.

List of Parish Council Functions (Source: NALC)

This is an indicative list of parish powers and functions to illustrate the wide range of activities covered by Acts of Parliament. Not every parish exercises these powers and the list is not completely comprehensive

Function	Powers & Duties	Statutory Provisions
Allotments	Powers to provide allotments. Duty to provide allotment gardens if demand unsatisfied and if reasonable to do so	Small Holding & Allotments Act 1908, s.23
Borrowing money	Power for councils to borrow money for their statutory functions or for the prudent management of their financial affairs	Local Government Act 2003, Schedule 1, para. 2
Baths (public)	Power to provide public swimming baths	Public Health Act 1936, s.221
Burial grounds, cemeteries and crematoria	Power to acquire and maintain Power to provide Power to contribute towards expenses of cemeteries	Open Spaces Act 1906, ss 9 and 10; Local Government Act 1972, s. 214; Local Government Act 1972, s. 214(6)
Bus Shelters	Power to provide and maintain shelters	Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1953, s. 4
Byelaws	Power to make bye-laws in regard to: Places of public recreation Cycle parks Public swimming baths Open spaces and burial grounds Mortuaries and post-mortem rooms	Public Health Act 1875, s. 164; Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, s.57(7); Public Health Act 1936, s.223; Open Spaces Act 1906, s.15; Public Health Act 1936, s.198
Charities	Duties in respect of parochial charities Power to act as charity trustees	Charities Act 2011, ss.298-303; Local Government Act 1972, s.139 (1)
Clocks	Power to provide public clocks	Parish Councils Act 1957, s.2
Closed Churchyards	Powers to maintain	Local Government Act 1972, s.215
Commons and common pastures	Powers in relation to inclosure, regulation, management and provision of common pasture	Inclosure Act 1845; Small Holdings and Allotments Act 1908, s.34
Conference facilities	Power to provide and encourage the use of facilities	Local Government Act 1972, s.144

Function	Powers & Duties	Statutory Provisions
Community centres	Power to provide and equip buildings for use of clubs having athletic, social or educational objectives Power to acquire, provide and furnish community buildings for public meetings and assemblies	Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 s.19; Local Government Act 1972, s. 133
Crime prevention	Power to spend money on crime detection and prevention measures	Local Government and Rating Act 1997, s.31
Ditches and ponds	Power to drain and maintain ponds and ditches to prevent harm to public health	Public Health Act 1936, s.260
Entertainment and the arts	Provision of entertainment and support of the arts	Local Government Act 1972, s.145
Environment	Power to issue fixed penalty notices for litter, graffiti and offences under dog control orders	Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005, s.19, s.30, Part 6
General Power of Competence	Power for an eligible council to do anything subject to statutory prohibitions, restrictions and limitations which include those in place before or after the introduction of the general Power of competence	Localism Act 2011, ss.1-8
Gifts	Power to accept	Local Government Act 1972, s.139
Highways	Power to repair and maintain public footpaths and bridle-ways Power to light roads and public places Power to provide parking places for vehicles, bicycles and motor-cycles Power to enter into agreement, as to dedication and widening Power to provide roadside seats and shelters. Power to consent to a local highway authority stopping maintenance of a highway or stopping up/diverting a highway Power to complain to district council about the protection of rights of way and roadside waste Power to provide certain traffic signs and other notices Power to plant trees and shrubs and to maintain roadside verges	Highways Act 1980, ss.43, 50; Parish Councils Act 1957, s.3; Highways Act 1980, s.301; Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, ss.57, 63; Highways Act 1980, ss.30, 72; Parish Councils Act 1957, s.1; Highways Act 1980, ss.47 116; Highways Act 1980, s 130; Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, s.72; Highways Act 1980, s.96
Honorary titles	Power to admit to be honorary freemen/freewomen of the council's area persons of distinction and persons who have, in the opinion of the authority, rendered eminent services to that place or area	Local Government Act 1972, s.249
Investments	Power to participate in schemes of collective investment	Trustee Investments Act 1961, s.11

Function	Powers & Duties	Statutory Provisions
Land	Power to acquire by agreement, to appropriate, to dispose of Power to accept gifts of land	Local Government Act 1972, ss.124, 126, 127; Local Government Act 1972, s.139
Litter	Provision of bins	Litter Act 1983, ss.5,6
Lotteries	Powers to promote	Gambling Act 2005, s.252, 258
Markets	Power to establish or acquire by agreement markets within the council's area and provide a market place and market buildings	Food Act 1984, s.50
Mortuaries and post-mortem rooms	Powers to provide mortuaries and post mortem rooms	Public Health Act 1936, s.198
Neighbourhood planning	Powers to act as lead body for a neighbourhood development plan or a neighbourhood development order	Localism Act 2011, Schedule 9; Town and Country Planning Act 1990, ss.61E-61Q, Schedule 4B; Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, s.38A
Newsletters	Power to provide information relating to matters affecting local government	Local Government Act 1972, s.142
Nuisances	Power to deal with offensive ditches	Public Health Act 1936, s.260
Open spaces	Power to acquire and maintain land for public recreation Power to acquire and maintain land for open spaces	Public Health Act 1875, s.164 Open Spaces Act 1906, ss.9 and 10
Parish Property and documents	Powers to receive and retain Duty to deposit certain published works in specific deposit libraries	Local Government Act 1972, s.226; Legal Deposit Libraries Act 2003, 2. 1
Public buildings and village hall	Power to acquire and provide buildings for public meetings and assemblies	Local Government Act 1972, s.133
Public Conveniences	Power to provide	Public Health Act 1936, s.87
Recreation	Power to provide a wide range of recreational facilities Provision of boating pools	Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, s.19 Public Health Act 1961, s.54

Function	Powers & Duties	Statutory Provisions
Right to challenge services that are provided by a principal authority	The right to submit an interest in running a service provided by a district, county or unitary authority	Localism Act 2011, ss.81-86
Right to nominate and bid for assets of community value	The right to nominate assets to be added to a list of assets of community value and the right to bid to buy a listed asset when it comes up for sale	Localism Act 2011, ss.87-108
Town and Country Planning	Right to be notified of planning applications if right has been requested	Town and Country Planning Act 1990, Sched.1, para.8
Tourism	Power to encourage tourism to the council's area	Local Government Act 1972, s.144
Traffic Calming	Power to contribute financially to traffic calming schemes.	Local Government and Rating Act 1997, s.30
Transport	Powers to spend money on community transport schemes.	Local Government and Rating Act 1997, s.26-29
War memorials	Power to maintain, repair, protect and adapt war memorials.	War Memorials (Local Authorities' Powers) Act 1923, s.1
Water	Power to utilise wells, springs or streams for obtaining water.	Public Health Act 1936, s.125
Websites	Power for councils to have their own websites	Local Government Act 1972, s.142

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