

CABINET MEETING 7th December 2011

The following Statements and Questions had been registered by the time of publication.

REGISTERED SPEAKERS

There were 7 notices of intention to make a statement at the meeting. Where the intention is to speak about an item on the Agenda, the speaker will be offered the option to speak near the beginning of the meeting or just before the Agenda item.

Statements about issues NOT on the Agenda

- Amanda Leon (Radstock Action Group) Re: Radstock Roads scheme
- George Bailey (Radstock Action Group) Re: Radstock Roads scheme
- John Sprately Re: Radstock Roads scheme

Re: Agenda Item 12 (Public Toilet Provision)

- Cllr Eleanor Jackson

Re: Agenda Item 15 (Keynsham Regeneration)

- Gill Hellier (Keynsham resident)
- Sheila Crocombe (Keynsham resident)
- Roger Busby (Keynsham Civic Society)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS - COUNCILLORS

M 01	Question from:	Councillor John Bull
The installation of new large telecommunications cabinets by BT has caused concern to residents in areas of BANES since in many cases they do not require planning permission. One such cabinet was installed in Paulton in what was an inappropriate location in my view but the authority did not raise the matter with BT even though the location was on land owned by BANES. What action will BANES take to ensure that there is adequate consultation with local residents and ward Councillors to ensure such developments do not happen again?		
	Answer from:	Councillor Tim Ball
<i>The cabinet that has been erected in Paulton does not require planning permission from the Council. However, under the provisions of the Electronic Communications Code the operator should have given the Local Planning Authority (LPA) one month's notice of their intention to install the cabinet. This notice was not given in this case. However if it had the LPA could not object to either the location or appearance of the cabinet, it could</i>		

only give the operator written notice of conditions it would like the operator to comply with. The operator need not comply with these conditions if he considers them to be unreasonable. A Planning Officer has undertaken a site visit and viewed the cabinet in question. Taking into account it does not require planning permission, and its setting, it is not considered expedient for the Local Planning Authority to take any further action in this matter.

If such a cabinet were erected within a Conservation Area or a World Heritage Site 'prior notification' has to be given to the LPA so that approval can be given for the proposed location and appearance of the cabinet. In these cases the LPA advertises the proposal to give the opportunity for third parties to comment before a decision is made.

The land on which the cabinet is located in Paulton is not owned by the Council but is maintained by the Council as highway land. In these cases Section 48 of the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 allows Public Utility Companies to place apparatus on highway land without the formal consent of the Council.

Supplementary Question:	
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Will the Council communicate with BT to ensure that in future proper notification is given?

Answer from:	Councillor Tim Ball
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<i>Yes, BT will be made aware that the council insists on advance notice in future.</i>

M 02	Question from:	Councillor Patrick Anketell-Jones
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Can the Cabinet Member please provide an update on the Council's current Public Realm and Movement Strategy programme and implementation timetable?

Answer from:	Councillor Cherry Beath
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<p><i>Following the Cabinet decision on 9 November 2011 (ref E2327), works are now due to commence at Northumberland Place between February and April 2012 and at High Street between May and October 2012. These projects will utilise the new range of street furniture products. The City Information System (CIS) has been the subject of a demonstration project since April 2011 and the full system (physical, digital and paper-based products) is due to be delivered by April 2012.</i></p>

<p><i>The programme and implementation timetable for the Public Realm and Movement Programme for 2011/12 was previously reported in the Council's Capital Programme via the Open Cabinet meeting on 5 March 2011. As you are aware, while Cabinet is fully committed to the delivery of the Programme, we are currently reviewing some of the priorities inherited from the previous administration. As a member of the Public Realm and Movement Steering Group, Councillor Anketell-Jones will participate in this review.</i></p>
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M 03	Question from:	Councillor Martin Veal
Can the Cabinet Member please indicate when he expects the council's new leisure contract negotiations to be completed and be made public, and does the Cabinet Member expect the new contract to produce any financial savings for the authority?		
	Answer from:	Councillor David Dixon
<p><i>To ensure that the Council is getting best value from its leisure contract an independent review of all the available options has been commissioned. Expert leisure consultants 'Strategic Leisure' being appointed to deliver this. The primary purpose of the review is to identify which of the options will best contribute to achieving the Council's objectives at a cost to the Council which it is able and willing to incur.</i></p> <p><i>The review will consider the following options providing comment on the strengths, weaknesses and risks associated with each:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• Extension for a further 5 years with Aquaterra, as allowed for in the terms of the current contract</i> <i>• Testing the market through an OJEU procurement process, with either a new 5 year or 10 year contract</i> <i>• A combination of different management options splitting the facilities into more than one contract and possibly including asset transfer to the community</i> <i>• Bringing the facilities back in house</i> <p><i>It will also look at the management options for Chew Valley Leisure Centre which does not fall within the Aquaterra contract currently, as well as the new facilities that are currently being developed at Wellsway School and Odd Down Playing Fields.</i></p> <p><i>The planned timescale for this review is as follows:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• Draft report – 1st week December</i> <i>• Final report – 1st week January</i> <i>• Informal Cabinet discussion – January</i> <i>• Formal cabinet decision – March</i> 		

M 04	Question from:	Councillor Patrick Anketell-Jones
Can the Cabinet Member please provide an update on any further discussions which the Cabinet Member has had with Kraft regarding the future of the Somerdale site and when a public consultation on the future use of the site is now anticipated to commence?		
	Answer from:	Councillor Cherry Beath
<p><i>Since the update provided at the last Cabinet meeting, I have not had any further discussions with Kraft regarding the future of Somerdale.</i></p> <p><i>Further meetings between B&NES officers and Kraft are however scheduled for later this month where it is hoped Kraft will be in a position to disclose the name of their preferred developer for the Somerdale site. The timing of any public consultation that takes place following this disclosure will be for Kraft and their preferred developer to consider.</i></p>		

M 05	Question from:	Councillor Francine Haeberling
Can the Leader of Council please indicate how long he deems it acceptable for the Occupy Bath protesters to be camped in Queen Square before action should be taken to remove the encampment?		
	Answer from:	Councillor Paul Crossley
<i>The Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods visited the encampment on 23rd November and met a number of the protestors. They gave an indication that they intend to move from Queen Square within three weeks. If they have not vacated the site within that timescale the authority will progress action to enforce their removal. The land is not in Council ownership.</i>		

M 06	Question from:	Councillor Tim Warren
In a recent radio interview Cllr Symonds stated that the cost to the council of repairing Victoria Bridge is likely to be met through either use of reserves or borrowing. Can the Cabinet Member please confirm which funding option is to be used and whether this impacts upon the Cabinet Member for Resources' stated commitment to limit the council's capital borrowing to £180 million over the next four years?		
	Answer from:	Councillor Roger Symonds
<p><i>As part of the current Capital Programme, the Council is spending £80k for peer review work in respect of the bridge. Further provision for the longer term future of the bridge will be considered as part of the 2012/13 budget process for consideration by the Council in February 2012.</i></p> <p><i>Some further emergency work is required to secure the immediate safety of the bridge structure and a specific report will be consider by the Cabinet in January 2012 in this respect.</i></p> <p><i>Against this backdrop, the Cabinet Member for Resources has very recently confirmed the intention of the administration to reduce overall capital borrowings to £180M by 2015.</i></p>		

M 07	Question from:	ERROR - DUPLICATE ITEM
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M 08	Question from:	Councillor Martin Veal
Can the Cabinet Member please confirm that the council will be participating in the £250m Weekly Collections Support Scheme recently announced by the Government to secure weekly waste collections for the next five years?		

Answer from:	Councillor David Dixon
<i>The Council is awaiting details of the bidding application process. Once these are received a bid will be scoped for my agreement prior to submission.</i>	

M 09	Question from:	Councillor Eleanor Jackson
Can the cabinet member justify drastically reducing the amount spent on the rail survey for Radstock to the point where it is possibly not enough money to meet the spec. for an independent study, when getting people out of their cars and onto public transport is the single most effective way of reducing congestion?		
Answer from:		Councillor Roger Symonds
<i>The scope for the independent report is clear and the appointed consultants have confirmed that there are adequate funds to complete the report in accordance with the specification</i>		
Supplementary Question:		
I am pleased to note the Cabinet member's assurances, but not totally convinced. Will he please give an indication of the time frames involved, especially before the railway land returns to the agency?		
Answer from:		Councillor Roger Symonds
<i>I can confirm that the Consultants should complete their commission by end of March 2012. While this is a little later than previously indicated the consultants are using the opportunity of studies they are undertaking for Bristol & South Gloucestershire Councils to co-ordinate their work and so provide a better understanding of the potential for rail improvements within the Sub-region.</i>		

M 10	Question from:	Councillor Eleanor Jackson
Given Cllr Bellotti's remarks at Policy Development and Scrutiny Committee for Wellbeing on transferring £235000, unspent funding for the homeless in Bath, would he consider investing it in a foyer for Radstock?		
Answer from:		Councillor David Bellotti
<i>Councillor Jackson will recall that the previous Children's Overview and Scrutiny Panel received a report commissioned by the Council from Ecotec on the issues associated with youth homelessness. That report concluded that the Council should continue to develop a range of services to meet the needs of vulnerable young people rather than develop centralised facilities such as foyer type facilities. The Cabinet is considering</i>		

how the funds might be used

Supplementary Question:

Given the reference to the Ecotec (or Friedman) Report in the answer to my question, is the cabinet member aware that what is actually recommended is a hub based on Radstock College to support the homeless, but the Foyer idea, which originated in the earlier YMCA (Deverell) Report was also commended? To boil down, would he consider implementing the recommendations?

This should be answered in the light of the situation at Julian House now, and I would strongly urge the cabinet member to read the report, given that he said to the Cabinet that he had not done so.

Answer from:

Councillor David Bellotti

I have now has an opportunity to properly review the Ecotec report and I agree it contains some useful information. Thank you for highlighting this. The cabinet will consider its budget priorities in February and there will be a range of competing pressures to consider.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS - PUBLIC

There were none