

**Statement by Amanda Leon, Radstock Action Group, to B&NES Cabinet
7 December 2011**

SAVE THE HEART OF RADSTOCK – ABANDON THE NEW LINK ROAD

Radstock Action Group welcomes the decision to keep the Frome Road open. However, there is very little else that has changed about the proposals which originally caused Cabinet to go back for a rethink.

We have to conclude that B&NES is not being honest about its plans for Radstock. The new plans are muddled and contain internal contradictions, they ignore all the major objections put forward previously and, more than anything else, they quite clearly move the goal posts.

- Cabinet members will recall that the reasons originally given for building a new link road were all related to facilitating the building of houses on the NRR railway land but now the headline reason is *Tackling congestion and kick-starting the economy*. Why is B&NES so determined to implement a scheme which will destroy the heart of this beautiful town?
- A superficial and tokenistic 'Feedback Form' asks respondents to answer a series of questions on their views on the minor aspects of the Radstock situation when what should be asked is:
 - Do you want a new road?
 - Do you want The Street to be two-way?
 - Do you want Fortescue Road to have its traffic flow reversed?
- The asking of peripheral questions brings a whole new meaning to the idea of consultation – don't consult on what people are concerned about, consult on what you've already decided and then carry on.
- The big question now that the Frome Road is going to stay open is, 'Why do we need a new link road?' Radstock has never thought we do, but B&NES has previously argued in its favour as related to traffic having to come through the middle of Radstock because Frome Road will be closed to facilitate housing development.
- The current plans do not put Radstock, its businesses and residents at the centre of the picture. They demote the town to a traffic hot-spot for those passing through with congratulatory remarks on how it will be quicker to speed through the town.
- The plans as shown to us at the briefing last week bear all the hall marks of limited planning and a less than professional approach:
 - Two maps are used – one is an aerial view of the town centre – probably from Google Earth, which has no scale on it
 - The other is apparently an old OS map at least 11 years old, which doesn't show much of the recent development in the town
 - The two maps do not match up with each other or with the press release which was issued on 29 November
 - No evidence is offered to support the assumptions on which decisions are being made
 - Calculations about speed, traffic queues and flows bear no relation to the experience of those who live in the town and are highly selective
- Radstock deserves better. Its people deserve respect. We congratulate B&NES on having taken the decision to re-examine the position. But they have to show that they want to listen to those who know best – the people of the town.
- Unless a convincing answer can be found to the question, 'Why do we need a new road?' then it must be abandoned immediately.