

**STATEMENT TO CABINET NOV 3RD
MANDA RIGBY
REF THE PROPOSED CLOSURE OF PULTENEY BRIDGE**

Hello, I am talking to you this evening representing the 150 people who came to a public meeting about the closure of the bridge to traffic, and also the large number of people who did not attend the meeting because of the lack of buses to get there, but who also contacted me to express their opinion.

I appreciate that there are many complex and interconnected issues relating to the bridge closure. These include protecting Bath's heritage, pedestrian safety on the bridge and traffic management. I welcome the fact that the Council will now take "at least six months" to undergo a proper consultation, but regret that this was not done prior to September 5th, the proposed date for the bridge closure.

The current situation however is the worst of all worlds. The buses have re-routed, yet the bridge is still open to taxis. This being the case, in no way can this period be seen as a valid trial of full bridge closure, all it will serve to do is deny those in Abbey, Bathwick and beyond any acceptable public transport into Central Bath.

If the council is now acknowledging it needs to do far more consultation and traffic modelling before it can make a final decision, please may I urge it to return the buses to the status quo prior to Sept 5th whilst it does so?

First buses re-routed because they told the bridge was going to be closed (and this was before the TRO consultation had even started) and I am sure if the will is there, they could be persuaded by the council to revert to previous timetables and routes for the next six months, and even do this using emergency powers, not the normal 56 days notice.

Residents unanimously wanted this at the public meeting, tourist buses and others are increasingly complaining about North Parade congestion, and this is before the extended 3 week Christmas market impacts Bath at the end of this month.

Whatever the final outcome may be, and there are some innovative compromise solutions being talked about, don't let the residents down by inconveniencing them unnecessarily whilst due thought is now given to this issue

Thank you