

CABINET MEETING 8th July 2015

REGISTERED SPEAKERS

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

- Cllr Eleanor Jackson
Re: Getting through Radstock
- David Redgewell (South West Transport Network)
Re: 'MetroWest bus and rail and the Combined Authority' and 'Greater Bristol Land Use'

Re: Agenda Item 11 (Cabinet Aims and Priorities)

- Cllr Robin Moss

Re: Agenda Item 12 (Strategic Review Update)

- Cllr Robin Moss

Re: Agenda Item 15 (Revenue & Capital Outturn 2014/15)

- Cllr Robin Moss

Re: Agenda Item 17 (Update to the Getting Around Bath Transport Strategy and proposals for a Park & Ride east of Bath)

- Cllr Alison Millar

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS - COUNCILLORS

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| M 01 | Question from: | Councillor Tim Ball |
| <p>Kelston View and North Way</p> <p>Over the past few months the condition of these two roads has become so bad that I have visited the area with Highways officers on several occasions.</p> <p>It seems that the whole substructure of both of these roads has become unstable and the concrete plates that form the road are cracking and in some cases have badly subsided and are visibly rocking. It seems that these two roads are in need of a complete restructure.</p> <p>1) Will the cabinet member for Highways and Transport confirm that if officer reports identify that as I suspect a complete restructure of the road is needed make the sufficient funds available for this work to be done?</p> <p>2) Will he also confirm that he will ensure that temporary repairs will take place with Immediate effect to return these roads to a reasonably safe condition?</p> <p>3) Will he also acknowledge that as these roads are part of a Major Bus route that their condition should be kept in a condition that allows buses to operate with knowledge that the roads are safe for them to use and deliver the comfort that their passengers expect?</p> | | |
| Answer from: | | Councillor Anthony Clarke |
| <p>1) <i>There is an approved programme for Capital Improvement works for 2015/16. Officers will assess the condition and if substantial reconstruction works are required, they will be considered for inclusion in a future programme of work.</i></p> <p>2) <i>Highway Officers have been asked to inspect the roads reported by Cllr Ball and undertake any essential safety repairs ensuring that the road remains safe and comfortable for all road users.</i></p> <p>3) <i>As above.</i></p> | | |

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| M 02 | Question from: | Councillor Tim Ball |
| <p>Due to the dangerous nature of the Whiteway Road particularly the more commonly known section of Pennyquick Hill in Twerton Ward, And the amount of accidents that have taken place on this road over the years.</p> <p>1) Will the cabinet member for transport reconsider the speed limit on this road to ensure that it is correct?</p> <p>2) Consider enforcement of the current or reconsidered speed limit?</p> <p>3) Give active consideration to colouring the road surface red from its Poolmead Road Junction to the Junction with Newton Road as has been done with other roads in the district to give warning to motorists that this is a dangerous road if you speed or overtake?</p> | | |
| Answer from: | | Councillor Anthony Clarke |
| <p><i>1) There is no proposal to review the speed limit on Whiteway Road/Pennyquick Hill in the current approved programme of schemes</i></p> <p><i>2) I have asked officers to review the accident records for the locations and advise whether the accident history justifies reconsideration of the speed limit.</i></p> <p><i>3) There is no proposal to introduce coloured surfacing at Poolmead Road junction with Newton Road. Coloured surfacing will be introduced only if the officer's evidence indicates there is need for some form of Traffic Management work required at this junction.</i></p> | | |

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| M 03 | Question from: | Councillor Dine Romero |
| <p>Will the Leader commit to maintaining the webcasting of Cabinet and full Council meetings?</p> | | |
| Answer from: | | Councillor Tim Warren |
| <p><i>There are no plans to change the webcasting of Cabinet and full Council meetings at present</i></p> | | |
| Supplementary Question: | | |
| <p>Will the Leader agree that it is undemocratic to move Cabinet meetings to 4pm given that this would prevent many people in attending, such as those with full time jobs or child care responsibilities and how will he ensure that such residents would participate in the democratic process in future?</p> | | |
| Answer from: | | Councillor Tim Warren |

By looking at the attendance today probably not, and the meeting is being webcast.

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| M 04 | Question from: | Councillor Dine Romero |
| Can the Leader please clarify the role of Cabinet assistants? | | |
| Answer from: | Councillor Tim Warren | |
| <i>The role of Cabinet Assistants is to assist the Cabinet Members to effectively perform their roles and help them deal with their portfolio responsibilities. Further information on the role is included in the job description which has been circulated to the Group Leaders.</i> | | |
| Supplementary Question: | | |
| Thank you for clarification on the role of Cabinet Assistants. Will Cabinet Assistants have responsibilities for areas of work within Cabinet Members' portfolios? | | |
| Answer from: | Councillor Tim Warren | |
| <i>The Cabinet Assistants will assist Cabinet Members but they will have no decision making powers.</i> | | |

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| M 05 | Question from: | Councillor Andy Furse |
| The previous administration introduced many new measures to tackle the urban gull problem, including: pest-proof sacks for black bag rubbish; educational programmes for visitors and residents around waste and not feeding gulls; and secure "Big Belly" rubbish bins. What new measures will the Cabinet introduce to address the gull problem? | | |
| Answer from: | Councillor Martin Veal | |
| <i>The new administration recognises that the impacts created by urban gulls are a real issue for our residents, businesses and visitors and the area as a World Heritage destination. The measures which have already been employed, such as the Big Belly Bins, have gone some way to mitigate the negative impacts of these birds however we want to do more to address the gull problem. As this year's breeding season draws to a close, Councillors and officers are reviewing our actions and preparing to consult with various stakeholders to understand what other innovative methods are possible. Dealing with the urban gull issue is a collective responsibility and this new administration looks forward to engaging with key stakeholders such as the Bath BID, residents associations and businesses to make Bath and North East Somerset an</i> | | |

exemplar in how it is tackling this issue.

Supplementary Question:

Has the Cabinet contacted colleagues in Government to protest against removal of £250,000 of funding for research in tackling the gull problem, particularly in light of the press release by MP Ben Howard?

Answer from:

Councillor Martin Veal

We will be lobbying Government in terms of addressing the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1991 which protects urban gulls. It is an issue that is nationwide, not just an issue affecting this city.

M 06

Question from:

Councillor Andy Furse

Will the Council invest in netting its property portfolio to test whether this will discourage gulls from nesting and encourage other property owners to follow suit?

Answer from:

Councillor Martin Veal

The Council is always willing to consider any ideas which could curb gull numbers in both Bath and the B&NES area more widely.

However, following consultation with both Property & Project Delivery and Environmental Services, whilst the concept of netting is a good idea, if this is undertaken across the Council's portfolio there may be a public perception that we are safeguarding just our own properties whilst passing the problem and expense on to other property owners who might not have the resources to deal with the gulls even if the Council encouraged them to do so. Unless there is comprehensive netting across the city centre it simply moves the problem on to another property. Furthermore, it does not help reduce the gull numbers as they will simply go to another property to nest. The current practice of egg removal on Council properties does curb the gull problem. The use of netting therefore is a preventative measure to protect the physical building rather than reduce gull numbers.

The physical look of netting is not aesthetically pleasing in a heritage city and planning permission would be required for the listed buildings. There is also an on-going revenue cost for the netting regarding the maintenance and also the problem of birds becoming tangled in it or trapped in the nets.

Supplementary Question:

A press release from the Cabinet stated that Councillor Chris Pearce (Cabinet Assistant for Community Services) will own the gull problem. What will Councillor Chris Pearce do in owning the gull problem?

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| Answer from: | Councillor Martin Veal |
| <i>Councillor Chris Pearce is helping me with this issue in his capacity of Cabinet Assistant. I will be making all decisions within my portfolio.</i> | |

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| M 07 | Question from: | Councillor Neil Butters |
| The Leader has announced an independent transport projects review by external consultants. Please could the Cabinet publish the Terms of Reference of the Review as well as the expected cost and the company which will carry out the review? | | |
| Answer from: | Councillor Tim Warren | |
| <i>The reason this review is taking place is to ensure that the council has robust procedures in place to oversee the delivery of major projects, following the significant and disruptive delays that have been experienced to a number of major transport schemes over the past year or more. This external review will therefore allow the Council to establish what lessons can be learnt from the experience of the past year, with an independent pair of eyes overseeing the review. By ensuring the council has effective procedures in place to manage major projects in future, it is hoped that this review will be able to save the council significant sums in the years ahead.</i> | | |
| Supplementary Question: | | |
| Will the Leader commit to publish consultants' names, costs and also results of the review in a timely fashion? | | |
| Answer from: | Councillor Tim Warren | |
| Yes. | | |

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| M 08 | Question from: | Councillor Neil Butters |
| The Cabinet has announced a period of public consultation leading to the selection of a "preferred or optimum site" for the East of Bath Park and Ride. Is it the Cabinet's intention to consult on one option or more than one option? If more than one, how many options will be included in the consultation? | | |
| Answer from: | Councillor Anthony Clarke | |
| <i>The Cabinet's intention is to consult on more than one site option. Further details will be forthcoming in due course as part of the consultation process and once a final assessment of viable sites has been made.</i> | | |

Supplementary Question:

Is it the case that the Cabinet is already having a preferred site, and if yes which is it?

Answer from:

Councillor Anthony Clarke

No, we don't have a preferred site. We will conduct genuine consultation which will allow residents of the relevant wards and communities to tell us which they think should be the preferred site. We will be providing pros and cons for each site based on consultation material that we are expecting shortly, but it is not our intention to say that we do, or don't support one site over other/s.

M 09**Question from:**

Councillor Alison Millar

When will the Cabinet publish the results of the Mott McDonald traffic modelling report for the East of Bath? Residents to the East of Bath, who will be most affected by a new park and ride, need to see this report as quickly as possible, so they have the maximum possible time to assess the impact of the site or sites upon which they are to be consulted.

Answer from:

Councillor Anthony Clarke

We will happily publish the result of the Mott McDonald work when it is available later in the year. The construction of this traffic model is a complicated and time consuming process. We hope that their initial analysis will be available when we consult on the possible sites for the new Park and Ride. I am sure that the analysis will be of particular interest to the residents of Bath as well as those living to the east of the city.

Supplementary Question:

I am looking forward to receiving the Mott McDonald report. Does the Cabinet Member for Transport agree that upgrading and enhancing the A350 would help alleviate significantly heavy traffic problems coming into Bath?

Answer from:

Councillor Anthony Clarke

We are already discussing this issue with Wiltshire Council.

M 10**Question from:**

Councillor Alison Millar

Will the Cabinet member ensure that full and effective consultation with residents and users (including disabled groups) takes place before any alterations are made to the canal towpath between Bathampton and Sydney Gardens?

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| Answer from: | Councillor Anthony Clarke |
| <p><i>The resurfacing of the Towpath from Bathampton to Sydney Gardens is a project inherited from the previous administration and has already received an allocation of Cycle Ambition Funding following a bid which the Council submitted in just a three week period in January/ February 2015. Since becoming the Cabinet Member, I have made significant efforts to engage more people in these plans.</i></p> <p><i>A Feasibility Study is being carried out and this was presented to me and the affected Ward Members at a meeting on the 6th July. The principles of the scheme were considered. It was noted that a proposal to sympathetically upgrade the footpath would be welcomed by the Kennet & Avon Canal Trust. The meeting agreed that a public consultation should now take place, with an emphasis on providing a safe and enjoyable environment for all canal and tow path users.</i></p> | |

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| M 11 | Question from: | Councillor Alison Millar |
| <p>What steps is the Cabinet taking to oppose Network Rail's plans to put a large transformer and switching station just metres from Bathampton Primary School, as part of the main line electrification process? Local residents are campaigning for this to be located at Farleigh Down instead, where there will be no risk to children's health and where the additional cost would be £250,000 – small in the context of the cost of electrification. Will the Cabinet member join me in supporting this campaign?</p> | | |
| Answer from: | Councillor Anthony Clarke | |
| <p><i>I understand Network Rail are now proposing to locate the transformer further away from the school next to the level crossing and Tynning Road. I will send Cllr Millar a map showing the new location.</i></p> | | |
| Supplementary Question: | | |
| <p>Would the Cabinet Member for Transport support a site which is further away from Bathampton village, such as that at Farleigh Down, as it seems the ones that Network Rail are looking at now are very close to the village of Bathampton?</p> | | |
| Answer from: | Councillor Anthony Clarke | |
| <p><i>As I understand, the site has been moved from the school. The problem is that we can only advise as, in the end, Network Rail is in the position to place their equipment where they wish. It doesn't necessarily mean it would interfere with future plans what we may wish to do.</i></p> | | |

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| M 12 | Question from: | Councillor Lisa Brett |
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Can the Cabinet member please confirm that the commitment of £1m set aside by the previous administration to improve youth and community facilities in Walcot will be maintained?

Answer from:

Councillor Charles Gerrish

In the February 2014 Budget, the Council granted Provisional Approval only for up to £1m for this project, subject to a detailed business case which so far has not been developed.

Supplementary Question:

Could the relevant Cabinet Member give assurance in the report on various options to improve youth facilities in Walcot, currently being developed by officers under instructions from the previous administration, and that this report will be completed and open for scrutiny by the Children and Young People PDS?

Answer from:

Councillor Michael Evans

Yes. This and other projects will be considered. It is not necessarily the case that Walcot will have priority claim on money allocated to all projects.