

**Draft Notes of the
Bathavon Forum**
23rd February 2016, 6.00pm
The Library, St Gregory's School Sixth Forum Centre, Bath

Present

Name	Organisation Represented
Cllr Malcolm Austwick	Combe Hay Parish Council
Cllr Lyn Alvis	Monkton Combe Parish Council
Cllr Moira Brennan	Bathampton Parish Council
Cllr Neil Butters	Cllr Bathavon South
Dave Dixon	Stronger Communities Manager, B&NES
Cllr Brian Edwards	Camerton Parish Council
Jean Fossaceco	Clerk to Shoscombe Parish Council
Cllr Charles Gerrish (part)	B&NES Council
Cllr Bob Goodman	B&NES Ward Councillor for Combe Down and Chair of Bath Forum
PC Mark Hodder	Avon & Somerset Police
Cllr John Long	Combe Hay Parish Council
Cllr Robert Law	Englishcombe Parish Council
Kathryn Manchee	Clerk to Camerton, Dunkerton & Tunley and Englishcombe Parish Councils
Cllr Martin Robinson	Dunkerton & Tunley Parish Council
PCSO Paul Spreadbury	Avon & Somerset Police
Chief Inspector Kevin Thatcher	Avon and Somerset Police
David Trethewey	Divisional Director (Strategy & Performance) B&NES and Director Sponsor for the Bathavon Forum
Cllr Mary Upton	Shoscombe Parish Council
Cllr David Veale from 6.20pm	B&NES Ward Councillor for Bathavon West
Cllr Martin Veal from 6.15pm	B&NES Ward Councillor for Bathavon North and Cabinet Member for Community Services
Cllr Brenda Whitchurch	Shoscombe Parish Council
Alison Wells	Community Projects Officer, B&NES
Cllr Chris Winpenny	South Stoke Parish Council

Apologies

Name	Organisation Represented
Cllr Peter Martin	Bathford (on behalf of the Parish Council as they had an emergency meeting)
Cllr Alison Millar	B&NES Ward Councillor for Bathavon North
Andrew Pate	Strategic Director Resources, B&NES

Informal Open Public Session

		Action
1.	Welcome and Introductions	
1.1	DT welcomed those present and all introduced themselves. DT read the following statement regarding the pre-election period in respect of the forthcoming referendum on the future governance of Bath and North East Somerset:	

	<p><i>‘The Referendum on the future Governance of the Council will be conducted in accordance with procedures similar to those used at local government elections. In the lead up to a referendum there is a 6 week pre-referendum period (commonly known as “purdah”). During this time, pre-referendum restrictions apply and Councils are required to take particular care over publicity to ensure that communications are balanced and without bias – that there is no appearance of support for one side or the other in the referendum. Therefore this Forum will not able be take any questions or comments regarding the campaigns for or against.</i></p>	
<p>2.</p> <p>2.1</p> <p>2.2</p> <p>2.3</p> <p>2.4</p> <p>2.5</p> <p>2.6</p> <p>2.7</p>	<p>Update on Local Policing – Chief Inspector Kevin Thatcher</p> <p>DT introduced Kevin Thatcher who said he has been in Bath for nine months and is visiting all the Connecting Communities Forums to introduce himself and give an update on local policing. There have been a few issues at Avon & Somerset this year but Andy Marsh has now been appointed as Chief Constable which should give more consistency going forward.</p> <p>KT said Police budgets are not being cut but they are having to direct existing resources to emerging issues such as terrorism; cyber-crime and child protection, which equates to a saving of £16m - £20 over the next 3-4 years.</p> <p>The Police are currently looking at a strategic alliance with Wiltshire – this could save £30m by pooling ‘back-room’ resources such as HR. They are doing their utmost to protect front-line services. The new Commander, Ian Smith, is keen to ensure the Police remain visible and accessible. Numbers have decreased due to a freeze on recruitment but they are recruiting again now.</p> <p>The Police have gone through some changes locally and moved from Manvers Street in Bath to Redbridge House on the Lower Bristol Road. The Police Station in Bath was too big for their needs and expensive to keep. They still have presence in the City but the new location gives better access to other areas too.</p> <p>MA said contacting the Police is difficult using the 101 number – it can involve a 30 minute call. KT agreed but said staff are being up-skilled and the aim is to have one person to deal with your call to conclusion. He said they know that 50 calls a day are being abandoned because people can’t get through. However, he can give assurance that they are working hard to improve.</p> <p>BE asked whether the Beat Managers in Radstock are under KT’s jurisdiction and whether they are moving. KT said he is responsible for this team. There was a rumour that the station was closing – it probably will eventually but there will be presence in Radstock or the local area. It is a big site and attractive to developers. There are opportunities to work more closely with partners like the Council and possibly co-locate or have presence in Council buildings, which they do in Keynsham.</p> <p>BE said that the Fire Station is on the same site in Radstock. KT said there are some issues with access to the site because of this. At this stage, the Police can say they are committed to having local presence.</p>	

<p>2.8</p> <p>2.9</p> <p>2.10</p> <p>2.11</p> <p>2.12</p> <p>2.13</p> <p>2.14</p> <p>2.15</p>	<p>BE said he doesn't see as much Police presence as in the past. He is a Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinator and there doesn't seem to be much happening. KT said the Police have had to make changes but hope to retain the staff they have, although they are stretched and numbers are not as high as in the past.</p> <p>MR said that since the 101 number came in, it is not possible to contact the local Beat Manager and PCSOs - previously, an e-mail sent to Radstock would receive a prompt response. KT said all Police Officers should have access to smartphones to enable them to pick up e-mails. They will have access to other useful apps in due course. They should be able to give you their mobile numbers for non-urgent enquiries. MR asked whether these could be sent to them.</p> <p>MR said they had not seen a PCSO for some time either – visibility is definitely down. The previous one has moved but he does not know who the new one is. The information on the noticeboards is out of date as well. He added that Mike Bolwell is the Beat Manager and it would have been good to have someone from this beat area here this evening. KT said he will find out who the PCSO is and provide this information.</p> <p>DT said we can probably address some of this through the work we are doing with Parish Clerks. KM said a specific Police Hotline would be good. AW and SD to follow up. KT said he expects Beat Managers and PCSOs to make contact with the Forums.</p> <p>NB said he serves on the Avon Fire Authority. It is likely that it will relocate to Portishead. No merger with the Police is planned at present but Sue Mountstevens does attend Fire meetings. The Council also held an excellent Scrutiny day regarding the courts system - Bath Magistrates is going to be saved.</p> <p>NB said that, at the Scrutiny day, he was promised some information about speeding in Midford and the use of the Police bike in this area. KT said he did e-mail about this but perhaps it had not been received. NB and KT are now in touch.</p> <p>DT said that, as the Forum develops, it will be possible to bring forward issues with the local Police at each meeting. We can then feed back responses.</p> <p>MB asked that it be minuted as an action for the Police contact details (esp. PSCOs) to be circulated – it is really useful.</p>	<p>AW/SD</p>
<p>3.</p> <p>3.1</p> <p>3.2</p>	<p>Updates including Q&As</p> <p><u>3a - Council's Budget – Cllr Charles Gerrish</u></p> <p>CG said that he gave a presentation to the Forum's November meeting prior to the Chancellor's Autumn Statement and budget settlement announcement. The Council had estimated the settlement based on past information. The announcement was therefore a bit of a blow with, £12m of savings to be found. The Council also had a short time to address the issue before the Budget meeting.</p> <p>CG said that he and Tim Warren went to see the minister and received £900k transition funding per year for two years. The Council is</p>	

	<p>undertaking a management and service review to be implemented in the Autumn – reserves will be used in the interim. The Council has had to make provision of £360k in anticipation of a Mayoral Election as well. The transition funding will be used to implement savings and as contingency – it cannot be used to supplement the base budget but can be used to assist in the delivery of savings targets and as contingency in case planned income is not received.</p> <p>3.3 There will be a 2% adult social care tax being implemented and a 1.25% rise in Council Tax – the lowest increase in the West of England. To date, £5m efficiency savings have been identified; £3m income projected and £1.4m of underspend will be taken as a saving (this financial year only). The overall aim is to protect frontline services.</p> <p>3.4 For the Bathavon area, there will be LED street lighting in Bathford; drainage work in Swainswick and Highways work in Charlcombe, Freshford and Bathford.</p> <p>3.5 JF asked when Wellow Lane in Peasedown will be done –she was told the end of March. CG said this work would relate to last year’s budget. However, £500k has been allocated for Highway maintenance in 2016-17 and it is yet to be decided where this will be spent.</p> <p>3.6 BE said that the road between Meadgate in Camerton and Paulton has seen an increase in traffic. He is concerned as it is only a country lane. Some drainage work has been undertaken but the road surface is very bad. It is used by a number of residents as a quicker route to Midsomer Norton. He asked whether the developer at Paulton should have made, or will make, a contribution to its maintenance. CG said this has now been recorded and will be passed to Highways to inspect the road. Also to Planning to find out whether any funds have been allocated via the development at Paulton.</p> <p>3.7 MR said in terms of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) what is the position when the impact of a development is felt outside the community in which it is taking place? CG said CIL is different to S106 – some goes to the local Parish Council but the rest will go to B&NES so that if issues arise in future from developments, funds can be used accordingly. MR said that 89 houses will soon be developed in Peasedown increasing the number of people likely to be using lanes in Dunkerton.</p> <p><u>2c – Joint Spatial Plan Response and Working Parties</u></p> <p>DD gave the following update:-</p> <p>3.8 At the November Forum meetings, presentations were given on the Joint Spatial Plan. The four West of England authorities (Bristol City Council; Bath and North East Somerset Council; North Somerset Council and South Gloucestershire Council) are working together to produce a statutory document looking at the housing and economic growth needs of the next twenty years.</p> <p>3.9 A consultation on the various options opened on 9th November and ran until 29th January 2016. The Chairs of all the Forums agreed a joint response to this, based on the shared views given at the November meetings. These were:-</p>	<p>AW</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure sufficient infrastructure improvements, particularly transport, are realised where future growth is planned. - Consider innovative ideas and new technologies to help solve transport problems. - Protect the villages from further growth to avoid over development. - Consider developments within existing local centres that have the infrastructure to support future growth. - Ensure that there is enough affordable housing to meet current and future needs. - Bring forward more brownfield development. 	
3.10	The B&NES Planning Policy team needs to do some further work on the plan and have agreed to set up a series of working groups for a short period between February and May. The groups will be made up of representatives from the Parish Councils and Elected Members. For Bathavon, the invited parishes are Camerton, Shoscombe and Wellow.	
3.11	DD said there will be two working groups – North and South, with the Bathavon invited parishes attending the South working group. The North group’s first meeting was on 18 th February and included background information about the JSP and the role of the working groups. The South Group’s first meeting will be on 25 th February.	
3.12	KM said that she received the first notification about these meetings but not the second – she contacted Simon de Beer but did not receive a response. (AW informed her after the meeting that Sara Dixon sent the notifications). DD said Planning Policy will come to all the Forum meetings in April with an update.	
	<u>2d - Parish Clerks’ Survey</u>	
3.13	DD gave the following update: At the July workshops, all the Forums identified a need for better communication between B&NES and the Parish Councils. Also, more support for Clerks. As a result of this, we have established a working group involving several interested Town and Parish Clerks to look at the issues in more detail.	
3.14	In the Autumn, a survey went out to all Parish Clerks in B&NES, with responses received at the end of December. We’ve had a 70% response rate, which is excellent but would like to hear from all Clerks so have extended the deadline until the end of this month and are in the process of following up with the Clerks that have yet to respond.	
3.15	DD reported that there were some very practical suggestions made by Clerks, such as reducing the amount of leaflets sent to them as some do not have facilities to display these. Also, ensuring there is adequate time to respond to consultations. We have also been asked to ensure that Council Officers and Councillors gain greater understanding about the role of Parish Councils and Clerks.	
3.16	The Clerks also said that briefings on topics such as Health & Safety; Planning and Equalities are welcome and we are looking into developing a training programme in partnership with ALCA.	
3.17	DD said the Council is also in the process of reviewing the Parish Charter and will be using the Clerks’ working group to help with this process. MB asked whether a copy of the Parish Charter could be circulated. She has	AW

	never seen it and only learned of its existence recently.	
3.18	<p>NB said that in Limpley Stoke, safety barriers had to be replaced. This was done but Parishes were not aware that the road would also be closed for 3-4 weeks. It led to rat-running in neighbouring villages and was raised as a breach of the Parish Charter. However cross-border communications is an issue too – is it common practice for Councils to have one? DT said he does not believe it is, or that Wiltshire has one. However, our communication work with Clerks should help to address issues like this. MR said he is pleased that the Parish Charter is being updated.</p> <p><u>2d – Representations on Other Partnership Groups</u></p>	
3.19	DT said that at the September Forum meeting, a request had been received from the CCG to have a Bathavon representative for the 'Your Health, Your Voice' meetings. This offer is still open so please let us know if you are interested. It is an opportunity to raise health related issues from your area. AW will send further details with the minutes.	ALL/AW
3.20	DT said that similarly, a request had been received for a representative to sit on a new Natural Environment Partnership. MB said the Valley Parish Alliance would be a better representative. She will liaise with Mark Minkley.	MB
4.	<p>Consultation/Information Items</p> <p><u>Green Space Strategy Update</u></p>	
4.1	DD went through the presentation provided by Paul Pearce - Parks Project Manager, B&NES who was unable to be present that evening. He has given similar presentations to the other Forums.	
4.2	DD said we have been encouraging Council Departments to divide the district into the Forum areas in order to get a local flavour to their work and consultations. This has been done with the Green Spaces Strategy.	
4.3	In preparing the Strategy, 600 responses had been received from a household survey and from young people. Other mapping was also undertaken on the supply, quality and access to green spaces. The aim is to ensure that limited resources and CIL monies are targeted effectively going forward.	
4.4	DD went through the table on the presentation, red figures mean an under supply of a particular green space (ie a deficit from the average).	
4.5	It was pointed out that Camerton and Shoscombe are not on the list. DD said it is possible that they have been included in Somer Valley in error, based on the old partnership boundaries. AW to check and advise Paul Pearce. It was also pointed out that South Stoke should be two words.	AW
4.6	NB said there is a new sports facility in Wellow. DD said it may be that more up to date information is required and can be provided as part of this consultation.	
4.7	DD said that there are recommendations for individual areas and went through these. He said a question for Parishes and communities to	

	consider is whether it is better to improve existing facilities than build new ones.	
4.8	AW will send out the relevant papers and links. Comments need to go directly to Paul Pearce.	AW/ALL
4.9	RL said he doesn't understand the figures – do they relate to numbers of people? DT said the information is just a launch pad for discussion with the team behind it. It is important to engage and influence as it will affect decisions on development and investment. DD said that we will obtain further information from Parks.	DD/AW
4.10	There was a discussion about CIL and what it means. Also that having a Neighbourhood Plan means that CIL funds are increased. It was agreed that projects can be part and not wholly funded by CIL funds. Further information about CIL to be sent with minutes.	AW

Ordinary Meeting

5.	Notes of the Previous Meetings (29th September and 19th November)	
5.1	These were agreed as a true record.	
6.	Matters Arising	
6.1	There was none.	
7.	Agree Terms of Reference and appointment of Interim Chair	
7.1	DT asked whether anyone would be interested in being Interim Chair of the Forum until the AGM in the Autumn. He said, as with the other Forums, it would be helpful to have a member of the public that we can liaise and work collaboratively with, rather than the Council fronting it.	
7.2	MR said that there is a fundamental problem with the Forum and that is that there is no-one here from north of the river. MB said the Parishes on the east side all go to Valley Parish Alliance and Parish Liaison. There is confusion about what this Forum is.	
7.3	MR said he would not attend meetings if they were on the east side of Bath. There not many communities in Bathavon that have areas of common interest – they are affected by different issues. He questioned whether it is right to set it up geographically in this way – it is not working and he feels that Parishes such as Dunkerton & Tunley; Camerton and Shoscombe should be with Somer Valley.	
7.4	DT said the process is not meant to be prescriptive – there was a Bathavon Rural District Council and this is the area that has broadly been used. However, there is no requirement for the Bathavon Forum to meet to a particular timeframe.	
7.5	DD said there is nothing to prevent Parishes attending other Forum meetings but it would be useful to have a local Chair and Vice Chair so that the Council is not driving the Agendas.	

7.6	MR questioned whether the Council should be going further with a Forum for Bathavon. DT asked whether others present had a view. RL said he can see that it is around collating information – it could be clustered around roads but problems that are raised need to be recorded and then we will see what the common problems and interests are.	
7.7	LA said there is a comparison to be made with the Bath Preservation Trust and perhaps it would be worth meeting with them.	
7.8	DD said in the Somer Valley, we do move the meetings around the area. Bathford would have attended this evening but had an emergency meeting so gave their apologies. MR said that attendance may be low because the meetings are in this location.	
7.9	DV suggested that the Ward Councillors look at the issues with DD then report back and decide on some options to present to the Forum.	
7.10	MB said agendas are important and whether the meetings are a good use of people’s time. She wanted to hear the Police presentation today but it is Parish Liaison tomorrow. DD said it is a good point and what we are trying to do with the Forums is put issues previously raised at PACT (Police and Communities Together) and Parish Liaison meetings in one place.	
7.11	MR said the basis is there for some useful meetings. NB said that dates are important – there is little point in having the Forum meetings and Parish Liaison so close together.	DD/AW
7.12	MR asked that Parish Councillors also be invited to the meeting with NB, DV, DD and MV.	B&NES CLLRS/ DD
7.13	DT said it is important to have the right Agenda for these meetings, driven by yourselves. However, we do need to get the geography right as well. DV asked about the frequency of meetings. DT said the other Forums meet quarterly. DV said maybe each Ward should host a meeting and lead on the Agenda?	
7.14	MV said Connecting Communities is about learning from each other. Bathavon North is out on a limb – if the meetings are useful, they will attend. If not, then there is no point holding them. They do work well in other areas so we need to find out why they have not worked so well here. He added that he believes connecting with Wiltshire would be very useful. RL said we need to know why the other Forums work.	
7.15	DT said we now have a proposal to set up a working group. This will come up with options that will be sent to Parishes for their feedback. If you would like to be involved in the process, let DD know.	ALL
7.16	DT suggested leaving the dates of future meetings for now. However, DD requested that the April meeting is held as the Joint Spatial Plan is very important and Planning Policy will be updating all the Forum meetings on this in April. DT agreed and said we will move forward with Bathavon when there is clearer consensus.	
8.	Any Other Business	
8.1	BE said he would like to discuss the Post Office in Timsbury. There was	

	consultation about moving this to the local supermarket which no-one supported but it seems to be going ahead.	
8.2	DT said we have responded to the Post Office on behalf of Parish Councils before. MV said that two were saved in this way but it took a long time and it's hard to find the right person with whom to liaise. It's a profit driven exercise for them. He suggested that the Scrutiny process could look at it and that Donna Vercoe be asked to send details of the previous work undertaken to Kathryn Manchee and Kirstie Green.	AW
8.3	MV said all the communities around Timsbury could also feed in – it may be possible to establish a Trust for the Conygre Hall and run the Post Office from there.	
9.	Dates of Next Meeting	
9.1	The next Forum meeting will take place on Monday 25th April at 6pm , Venue TBC	
9.2	NOTE: This is a change to the previously advertised date of 20 th April, which clashes with a Reception the Chairman of Bath and North East Somerset Council wishes to hold to thank Parish Councils for their contributions.	

Actions

	Responsible
Obtain contact details for local Police and pass to Parish Councils	AW/SD
Find out whether the developer at Paulton should have made, or will make, a contribution to road maintenance (Meadgate to Paulton) and whether Highways can also inspect this route.	AW
Send copy of the Parish Charter with the minutes	AW
The CCG is seeking a representative from the Bathavon Forum to attend the 'Your Health, Your Voice' meetings. Anyone interested to contact Dave Dixon or Alison Wells	ALL
Send details of 'Your Health, Your Voice' with minutes	AW
MB to liaise with Mark Minkley re the Natural Environment Partnership. AW to put them in touch.	MB/AW
AW to check the Bathavon and Somer Valley Green Spaces Strategy proposals to check for anomalies and advise Paul Pearce. Also to advise him that South Stoke should be two words.	AW
Green Spaces Strategy links to be sent to the Forum	AW
Comments on the Green Spaces Strategy to go straight to Paul Pearce by 31 st March 2016	ALL
Further information on the figures contained in the Green Spaces Strategy to be supplied by Paul Pearce	DD/AW/PP
Information on CIL to be sent with the minutes	AW
Ensure Parish Liaison and Forum meetings are not scheduled so close together	DD/AW
Ward Councillors, interested Parish Councillors and DD to meet re future Bathavon Forum meetings. Interested Parishes to let DD know.	ALL
Donna Vercoe to send details of the previous work undertaken to Kathryn Manchee and Kirstie Green	AW