

BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET

MINUTES OF COMMUNITIES, TRANSPORT AND ENVIRONMENT POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL MEETING

Monday, 16th January, 2017

Present:- **Councillors** John Bull, Brian Simmons, Alan Hale, Neil Butters, Lizzie Gladwyn, Bob Goodman, Ian Gilchrist and Deirdre Horstmann (in place of Peter Turner)

117 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

118 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

The Chairman drew attention to the emergency evacuation procedure.

119 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Councillor Peter Turner gave his apologies and was substituted by Councillor Deirdre Horstmann

120 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

121 TO ANNOUNCE ANY URGENT BUSINESS AGREED BY THE CHAIRMAN

There was none.

122 ITEMS FROM THE PUBLIC OR COUNCILLORS - TO RECEIVE DEPUTATIONS, STATEMENTS, PETITIONS OR QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE BUSINESS OF THIS MEETING

The following members of the public made statements to the Panel:

1. Susan Charles (WWISE) made a statement on Warm Water Swimming at item 10 on the agenda. *A copy of the statement is attached to the minutes and is available on the Council's minute book for this Panel.*
2. Pamela Galloway (WWISE) made a statement on Warm Water Swimming at item 10 on the agenda. *A copy of the statement is attached to the minutes and is available on the Council's minute book for this Panel.*
3. Rosemary Naish made a statement regarding a junction in Clutton. *A copy of the statement is attached to the minutes and is available on the Council's minute book for this Panel.*

In response to a question from Councillor Simmons, Ms Naish explained that her main concern is basic mistakes in the data for the plans. Councillor Butters stated that the Planning Application should deal with concerns. Ms Naish stated that outline planning permission was given and now it is full permission. Martin Shields – Divisional Director for Environmental Services – stated that he would send a written response.

4. Mike Parr made a statement on the 6/7 Bus Route. *A copy of the statement is attached to the minutes and is available on the Council's minute book for this Panel.*

Councillor Simmons asked if there is an alternative route, Mr Parr stated that this route worked before and it would be good to investigate getting back to that. Councillor Anthony Clarke – Cabinet Member for Transport – explained that alternatives are available and that the group are not prepared to consider shortening the route. The survey showed that the route was poorly utilised and the £39k subsidy did not represent value for money.

5. David Redgewell made a statement on Rail and Bus Investment. *A copy of the statement is attached to the minutes and is available on the Council's minute book for this Panel.*
6. Nicolette Boater made a statement on Infrastructure development and investment. *A copy of the statement is attached to the minutes and is available on the Council's minute book for this Panel.*
7. Paul Stansall – Bath Central Library Rescue Team made a statement regarding the relocation of Bath Central Library. *A copy of the statement is attached to the minutes and is available on the Council's minute book for this Panel.*

The following Councillors made statements to the Panel:

8. Councillor Lin Patterson made a statement on the 6/7 Bus Route.

She explained that the three buses do not connect the community and also shops are suffering. She stated that the survey mentioned by Councillor Clarke was taken during a period of severe disruption and a better service is needed. She asked that the Panel recommend that the Cabinet Member reinstates the subsidy.

9. Councillor Rob Appleyard made a statement regarding the 6/7 bus route. He explained that there are no plans from First Bus to refigure the route. He invited the campaign to look at the alternative solution.
10. Councillor Dine Romero made a statement regarding concerns on the budget plans. She stated that she hoped the Panel would scrutinize the proposed changes to Bath Library including the proposed click and collect service and

potential loss of exhibition space, children's are and study area. She also asked that the Panel examine plans for other libraries in the authority. Councillor Romero also asked the Panel to examine and monitor what they are being told regarding the introduction of wheelie bins and changes to the dog walking service and play areas such as Weston.

Councillor Bull asked what the concern is regarding access to books. Councillor Romero stated that she feared the library may become an electronic ordering service. Ian Savigar – Divisional Director Customer Services – explained that the plan is for a modern library where technology will enhance the browsing experience. He explained that there will still be shelves of books and that the consultation starts at the end of this month. Councillor Hale stated that after a few teething problems with Keynsham Library, it has settled and also the library staff are also useful in other areas. He said that the changes may seem big but there is a need to save money.

123 MINUTES

The Panel confirmed the minutes of the previous meeting as a true record and they were duly signed by the Chairman.

124 DIRECTORATE PLANS

Panel members considered the Directorate Plans for Place and Resources (where issues fall within the Panel's remit) as part of the Council's service planning and budget development process and made the following comments.

Directorate Plan for Place

Councillor Hale asked whether a rateable value can be imposed onto University buildings. The Chair noted that this falls within the remit of the PHED Panel and the Cabinet Member for Finance and Efficiency, Councillor Charles Gerrish, explained that the Council have responded to Government consultation in line with this view.

Councillor Bull asked about the Highway Maintenance Programme and Transport Improvement Programme (page 31) – he asked that the Panel be sent these figures alongside figures for previous years so that they can see the overall context. The Director agreed. It was explained that the Government do not give clarity on future year proposals and also that the Highways Programme does include the pot hole funding – The Cabinet Member for Finance and Efficiency, Councillor Charles Gerrish, added that £788k is the national productivity investment from the Government regarding highways.

Regarding the Depot Review (page 33) the Director for Place, Louise Fradd explained that the review is about reducing numbers and improving existing service. Councillor Hale asked if the Council can consider any available land for increase in rental accommodation, the Cabinet Member for Finance and Efficiency explained that the Property Company always considers available land. The Director for Place

explained that a 'combined transport and licensing hub' refers to the bringing of the administration together.

Regarding the Transport and Parking Review (page 34) the Director explained that the review is covering short and long stay parking; construction vehicles; non charging car parks. Councillor Butters asked about the future of Avon Street Car Park. The Director explained that there is scope to look at automated number recognition, she explained that there will be a proportion of replacement parking and that there has always been a plan to reduce the amount of city centre parking and that is why Park and Ride schemes are being considered. Samantha Jones, Inclusive Communities Manager explained that if cash services are stopped in car parks then some people cannot access the service and there needs to be a safety net. Members asked about the likely effect of the review. Officers said that nothing was ruled in or ruled out, including charges at Council car parks which are free at present. Councillor Bull asked that the Parking Review be brought back to the Panel at a later date.

Councillor Hale mentioned the Bereavement Service and asked how charges can be increased as well as offering cheaper services. Martin Shields, Divisional Director for Environmental Services, explained that the increase in some services reflects the fact that the authority charges have been low up until now but there will be scope to cater for both ends of the spectrum. Councillor Hale mentioned that it is an excellent team with a fantastic level of customer service.

Councillor Bull asked if Bath will pay for hanging baskets (page 34) in the same way as other areas. The officer explained that a review showed that hanging baskets were being undersold so that has been rectified and should generate income.

Councillor Bull asked how the service redesign of 'Transport – moving people from A to B' (page 34) will save money, the officer explained that regarding SEN transport – the service is not efficient and now there is an officer in Children's Services who talks to the family and works out a service that the family want and will use. He explained that he is happy to come back to the Panel and talk through the details.

Councillor Goodman asked about the reduction in the dog warden service. Sue Green Group Manager - Public Protection & Health Improvement explained the procurement process is happening now. She reminded the Panel of the statutory responsibility of the authority which is strays and kennelling.

Regarding recycling centres, Councillor Bull asked about time banding. The officer explained that time banding will allow staff to check vans in and charge them. He also explained that rather than register electronically now, staff just check for physical proof of address which makes the system easier and saves time.

Directorate Plan for Resources

Panel members asked about the changes to library services over the next 3 years including Bath Central Library, Midsomer Norton, mobile libraries and other libraries. Officers explained that the service is being modernised, that there is considerable

investment planned to enable integration with the advice services in the Council's one stop shops in Bath and Midsomer Norton. Keynsham already has this integrated model. Other libraries will need local community led solutions such as the healthy living centre idea (and successful bid for external funding) for Radstock. Officers further explained that customer demand at one stop shops is reducing with the implementation of Universal Credits. It was explained that further local consultation will take place, with the next level of consultation in Bath beginning at the start of February.

Members asked whether the cuts to the library service budget would lead to a reduction in service. The reply expressed the hope that branch libraries would be run in future by parish councils or community groups.

125 RAIL ELECTRIFICATION BRISTOL-BATH - UPDATE ON PROGRESS

Michelle Scogings – Network Rail – gave a presentation to the Panel which covered the following:

- West of England: electrification and upgrade
- West of England: deferrals
- West of England: deferrals explained
- West of England: deferrals map
- Passenger benefits
- Additional benefits

Panel members made the following points and asked the following questions:

Councillor Butters asked the target date for lengthening the platform at Bath Spa and if the class 165 turbos are going refurbished. Michelle Scogings (Network Rail) explained that the designs for the platform at Bath Spa station have been developed and submitted. She explained that the 165 turbos are being refurbished but to ask GWR for details.

Councillor Goodman explained that he is on the joint scrutiny for the West of England and stated that the Panel should reinforce to the Cabinet Member for Transport, Councillor Clarke that pressure should be put on the Government to prioritise electrification. Councillor Bull asked what reason Network Rail was given for the delay – the Network Rail representative explained that some of the deferral of money will help develop Bristol East and the developing capacity is developed first and then wires go up – this is the most efficient way to do it. The non-visible enabling work is being done. Councillor Hale asked if the electrification will be done by 2019 – the Network Rail representative explained that the control period (funding cycle) is 2019-24 so it will be during that time.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Panel will write to Ministers (Christ Grayling and Paul Maynard) to keep up the pressure for electrification.

126 WARM WATER SWIMMING

The Panel received a presentation on 'Warm Water Swimming in Bath and North East Somerset' from Marc Higgins Team Manager – Leisure and Business Development which covered the following issues:

- The Issue
- Partner Agencies
- The Requests 1, 2 and 3
- Other Options considered
- Additional costs
- Industry Guidance – PWTAG
- Summary

Panel members made the following points and asked the following questions:

Councillor Hale noted that the consultation does not align with what WWISE are asking for and seems more relevant to competitive swimming. The officer explained that Sport England and the ASA do in fact have the remit for swimming for disabled people and they have said that there is no business case for including the type of facility requested by WWISE. The recommendation is about reasonable adjustment.

Councillor Hale asked if there is scope at either Bath or Keynsham to make one (training) pool into a warm water facility. The officer explained that this would cost £1million and a loss of funding if this is done in Bath.

Councillor Simmons suggested that WWISE set up a charity to provide what is requested as it will not stand up to public funding at the moment. Samantha Jones, Inclusive Communities Officer explained that the authority has to be sure that there is enough need for a facility such as this as it is responsible for spending public money and balancing the needs of all groups. She added that there are two groups - Independent Equalities Advisory Group and Bath Access Group already in existence which could be attended by the WWISE members should there be any future issues for discussion.

Councillor Butters thanked Susan Charles and Pamela Galloway for their work on this. Councillor Bull stated that he is sorry the request is irreconcilable.

127 CABINET MEMBER UPDATE

The Cabinet Member for Transport, Councillor Anthony Clarke updated the Panel on the following:

- The authority has applied for money from DEFRA for a clean air zone under new legislation;
- Consultation on Joint Spatial and Transport Plan has come to an end;
- Siting of the East of Bath Park and Ride will be considered at the Cabinet meeting on 25th January 2017 – the Transport Delivery Plan can then be looked at.

Panel members asked the following questions:

Councillor Gilchrist asked about progress regarding Widcombe Subway – the Cabinet Member will report back.

Councillor Bull asked about progress on A36-A46 link road. The Cabinet Member explained that the present economic position is being put together. The Strategic Director added that discussions with the DFT and Highways England are ongoing, this does not assume any design.

128 PANEL WORKPLAN

The Panel noted the workplan with the following additions:

- Parking Review
- Future Use of Shared Space on the roads

The meeting ended at 7.55 pm

Chair(person)

Date Confirmed and Signed

Prepared by Democratic Services