

Draft Notes of the
Somer Valley Forum
Monday 27th March 2017, 6.00pm
Waldegrave Room, Victoria Hall, Church St, Radstock BA3 3QG

Present

Name	Organisation Represented
Lynda Robertson	Chair of Somer Valley Forum
Richard Baldwin	Divisional Director - Safeguarding & Social Care, B&NES (Divisional Director Sponsor of the Somer Valley Forum)
PC Matt Bendall	Neighbourhood Beat Manager – Peasedown and Paulton Beat – Avon and Somerset Police
Cllr Sarah Bevan	B&NES Ward Councillor, Peasedown St John
Jim Collings	Lead Local Flood Authority Manager, B&NES
Sara Dixon	Locality Manager, B&NES
Cllr Michael Evans	B&NES Ward Councillor, Midsomer Norton North
Jody Grabham	Environment Agency
Cllr Ron Hopkins	Westfield Parish Council
Cllr Deirdre Horstmann	B&NES Ward Councillor, Radstock
PCSO Louise Jones	Peasedown and Paulton Beat – Avon and Somerset Police
Jim McEwen	Engineer - Drainage, Highways, B&NES
Cllr Paul Myers	B&NES Councillor, Midsomer Norton Redfield
Brian Perrett	Radstock Residents Association
Jon Poole	Business Intelligence Manager, B&NES
Richard Robertson	Welton Village Group
Cllr Alastair Slade	Midsomer Norton Town Council (part)
Shirley Steel	Somerset and Dorset Railway Heritage Trust
Terry Taylor	Norton Radstock Regeneration
Cllr Karen Walker	B&NES Ward Councillor, Peasedown St John
Alison Wells	Community Projects Officer, B&NES

Apologies

Name	Organisation Represented
Pete Barter	Midsomer Norton Community Association
Cllr Doug Deacon	B&NES Ward Councillor, Timsbury
Cllr Liz Hardman	B&NES Ward Councillor, Paulton
Cllr Barry Macrae	B&NES Ward Councillor, Midsomer Norton North
Cllr Robin Moss	B&NES Ward Councillor, Westfield
Andrew Pate	Strategic Director - Resources, B&NES
Roger Tollervey	Welton Village Group
Cllr David Walker	Peasedown St John Parish Council

		Action
1.	Welcome from the Chair of the Forum and Introductions	
1.1	LR welcomed those present and gave a safety announcement. Apologies as above.	
1.2	LR read the following statement in respect of the pre-election period: <i>In the lead up to the West of England Mayoral Elections there is a 6 week pre-election period (commonly known as “purdah”). During this time, pre-election restrictions apply and Councils are required to take particular care over</i>	

	<p><i>publicity to ensure that communications are balanced and without bias. Therefore this Forum will not be able to take any questions or comments regarding the West of England Mayoral Elections or any issues raised by the campaigns.</i></p>	
1.3	<p>LR said this is the first of our official 2017 Forum meetings and we have a series of interesting and important topics to discuss together over the coming year. These will include an opportunity to meet staff from Virgin Care and discuss the topic of Young People, which has been raised by Somer Valley Forum members as being of importance to them.</p>	
1.4	<p>The Connecting Communities Forums are designed to ensure that local voices are heard and therefore, our meetings are a mix of topics that you have indicated are important to you and information or consultations that key agencies in the area wish to bring to us. It is important that we include these items on our Agendas as it enables Forum members to influence future plans and policies. One of the key aims of the Forums is to recognise that Bath and North East Somerset consists of diverse areas and that a 'one size fits all' approach to delivering services is not always appropriate.</p>	
1.5	<p>All Forum members are welcome to put forward ideas for future Agenda Items and when these are raised, they are recorded. All the Forums have got a Director Sponsor from the Council and Somer Valley is fortunate to have Andrew Pate, Strategic Director for Resources. Any issues raised at the Forums that need to be escalated are taken by Andrew to senior officers and Councillors</p>	
1.6	<p>Often, it is important that all the Connecting Communities Forums receive information at the same time and so Karen and myself meet regularly with officers, the Cabinet Member and other Forum Chairs to discuss and set each Forum Agenda.</p>	
1.7	<p>The Forums are an opportunity to start discussions but also, during the informal session, to raise any concerns you may have around policing, highways or any other topics of interest to your group or community. We particularly want to share and celebrate success, so if you would like to give a presentation on your work, or give an update on an event or project, please let us know.</p>	
1.8	<p>Our main topic this evening will be a presentation on Flooding. This will be delivered jointly by the Council's Flooding Team and the Environment Agency who will explain more about their respective roles. The topic is of great importance to this area in terms of sustainability and development. Many of you will remember the severe flooding that took place in the area prior to the construction of a major flood alleviation tunnel which was completed in 1977. While this has helped reduce flooding in Midsomer Norton's High Street, outlying areas of the town and surrounding communities are currently rated at increased risk of flooding from Wellow Brook. There are many images and videos of flooding in the area last Spring and Summer on local media sites.</p>	
1.9	<p>We also have some informative updates for you in this first half of the meeting, so please give a warm welcome to all our guests this evening.</p>	
2.	<p>Updates including Q&As</p> <p>Local Police Matters</p>	
2.1	<p>LR welcomed PC Matt Bendall and PCSO Louise Jones from the Peasedown</p>	

	<p>and Paulton Beat. They said crime figures for the Somer Valley have been relatively low with 251 crimes in the last three months. These are mainly burglary, domestic violence and anti-social behaviour (ASB) in all villages. However, there has been particular concern around ASB in Gullock Tynning in Midsomer Norton with nuisance from motorbikes. Police are stepping up patrols in this area.</p>	
2.2	<p>MB said there have been 25 burglaries, including sheds but some were not locked.</p>	
2.3	<p>SB said that two different telephone numbers have been promoted for reporting rural crime – which is the right one? MB said he would need to look into it and report back. The rural crime number is mainly for farmers. 101 is the number to use for non-emergencies.</p>	Police
2.4	<p>PM said he has spoken with young people in Midsomer Norton following reports of ASB in Gullock Tynning. They do not like being moved on and it does move the problem elsewhere. They say they are just hanging about because they are bored. He would like to see agencies and organisations having a more joined up approach. He is trying to set up hubs and engage with hem. He wonders whether youth and community could be a future Forum topic?</p>	
2.5	<p>AS raised concern about cannabis use in the skate park. MB said this would be seized if police see it. There is a known drug issue but others are not known. Agencies used to go out to speak to young people about it but this has stopped.</p>	
2.6	<p>RB said B&NES still has a contract with Project 28 – he will ask them to go out and speak with the young people. He will also raise it with the B&NES youth workers. MB said the key areas are the skate park and Hollies Garden.</p>	RB
2.7	<p>PM said he is also concerned about an increase in homeless people coming to Midsomer Norton from Bath as there are no facilities, such as Julian House, to support them. TT said a homeless person came to his door asking to be put up. MB said that if this happens again, he should call the police.</p>	
2.8	<p>RH said he called the police yesterday regarding people parking on the pavement. The police did attend but people are still doing it – they are preventing the disabled and children in pushchairs from accessing the pavement.</p>	
2.9	<p>ME said that ASB and graffiti seem to be increasing in Midsomer Norton. MB said he would encourage local people to report this to them so they can catch them.</p>	
2.10	<p>MB said he will pass on the points raised at tonight’s meeting.</p>	Police
	<p>Review of Electoral Arrangements of Bath and North East Somerset Council by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England</p>	
2.11	<p>LR introduced Jon Poole, the Council’s Business Intelligence Manager, to give a presentation. See Appendix 1 for further details.</p>	
	<p>To note update on Changes to Waste and Recycling Services (paper update)</p>	

2.12	A paper briefing was tabled and circulated to Forum members electronically on 28-3-17. SD said that if anyone has any comments, these should go directly to the Waste Services team via Council Connect.	All
2.13	KW said that most present will have had a letter with their Council Tax stating the type of bin to be received. This contains a paragraph saying to notify the Council if they are not happy with the type of receptacle offered. She said some residents from Peasedown have done this but the reply from the Council has been that a bespoke service cannot be provided.	
2.14	AS said we recycle so refuse is low and the bin proposed too big. Does this mean they cannot have something different? KW said you can request a bag but you probably won't get it.	
2.15	PM said in discussions about this, his understanding has been that receptacles will be provided according to need. The aim is to encourage those who don't recycle to do so.	
2.16	BP said we don't want rubbish generated to expand to fill the space available. The container should be as small as possible to stop people putting more in.	
2.17	SB said she would support KW in raising this – both of them have had enquiries from residents about it. The wheelie bins will not work where there are terraces and steps, or on gravel. The officer she spoke with went through the criteria and it seems flexibility on the receptacle you can have is unlikely. PM said he would speak with SB and KW separately about the issue.	PM
2.18	RH asked whether recycling will still be collected weekly. It was confirmed that it will be. It was noted that this is often dropped on the street, then not picked up. If people are to be encouraged to recycle, then the refuse teams need to do the job effectively.	
	To note update on Joint Spatial Plan (paper update)	
2.19	A paper briefing was tabled and circulated to Forum members electronically on 28-3-17	
	B&NES Community Empowerment Fund	
2.20	LR introduced Cllr Paul Myers to give a briefing on this. See Appendix 2 for further details	
3.	Any Other Issues	
3.1	LR asked if anyone any other items they wished to raise. TT said he would like to congratulate Sue Hill on the acoustics in this room – it is a great venue and more Forum meetings should be held here.	
3.2	KW said we are so fortunate in the Somer Valley to now have local places where we can go to watch films, live music, comedy – places like the Victoria Hall who are hosting us this evening and Midsomer Norton Community Trust which also offers a regular programme of events. Please do pick up leaflets to see what's on.	
3.3	KW said that Peasedown Party in the Park would be taking place on 10 th June. As well as being a popular community event with stall and entertainment, it	

	also raises funds for which local organisations can bid and includes a community award for a deserving resident.	
3.4	LR invited AW to speak about the Council's Funding Bulletin. She said this is one of three updates circulated electronically to the same mailing list of over 600. It contains information on the latest funding opportunities and links to a longer document – the Funding Journal – which has further information on a very wide range of funds available. The other publications are the Learning Bulletin and Interagency Bulletin. Let her or Sara know if you want to be added to the list to receive these. They can be found on the Council's website here .	ALL
3.4	LR invited SD to speak about the Interagency Meetings. She said these are meetings held across B&NES on a regular basis which bring together local agencies and voluntary organisations to share information and network. They are held over a lunchtime and are very informal. There is one for the Somer Valley and it meets around three times per year. If you are on the mailing list for the funding bulletin, you will receive notification of the Interagency Meetings as well.	

Break

4.	Notes of Previous Meeting (21st November 2016)	
4.1	These were agreed as a true record.	
5.	Matters Arising	
5.1	There was a question around progress with the Tourism Workshop. LR said there would be further information soon.	S&P
6.	Community Resilience: Managing Flood Risk – How can communities get involved?	
6.1	LR introduced Jim McEwen and Jim Collings from the Council's Flood Team and Jody Grabham from the Environment Agency, to discuss the important issue of flooding, the work they do with local communities to help prevent it and how it is managed when it does occur. See Appendix 3 for full details.	
6.2	LR thanked them for their presentation and asked whether the Forum feels that Emergency Planning and Places of Safety would be a good item for a future meeting. There was general agreement on this.	S&P
7.	Dates of Next Meetings	
7.1	LR said there would be a gap until the next meeting to allow for the West of England Mayoral Election and Annual Parish Meetings. She said planned topics for the rest of the year include Health and Dementia and Young People. She and KW will be meeting with staff from off the Record to plan this meeting. LR thanked SD and AW for supporting the meeting. Tuesday 11 th July – Conygre Hall, Timsbury Tuesday 19 th September Wednesday 29 th November	

Actions

	Responsible
Clarification on correct number for rural crimes	Police/S&P
RB to contact Project 28 and B&NES youth workers re support for young people	RB
Points raised with Police to be fed back to relevant Beat Teams	Police
Any comments on changes to Waste and Recycling to go to Waste Services via Council Connect. PM to speak with Ward Councillors re concerns raised in Peasedown St John.	ALL/PM
To receive the e-newsletters (Interagency Bulletin, Funding Bulletin and Learning Bulletin), please let Alison Wells or Sara Dixon know.	ALL
Update on Tourism Workshop at July Meeting	S&P
Emergency Planning and Places of Safety as future Agenda Item	S&P

Presentation: Local Government Boundary Commission for England for Bath and North East Somerset

Presenter: Jon Poole, Business Intelligence Manager, B&NES

To view the presentation visit:

http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/boundary_review_presentation.pdf

The presentation was also circulated to Forum members electronically on 28-3-17.

JP said that further information and statistics are available on the Council's [website](#).

Slide	Comment
Slide 1	Title Slide
Slide 2	<p>There are two boundary reviews taking place – one on the parliamentary constituency boundaries, which is out of our hands and being done separately by the Boundary Committee for England.</p> <p>The second, which we will be discussing tonight, is the review of electoral arrangements within Bath and North East Somerset – ie the wards that make up the district and not the parliamentary constituencies.</p> <p>It is routine for the Local Government Boundary Commission to do this and it has been some years since Bath and North East Somerset was last reviewed.</p>
Slide 3	<p>This map shows that the number of electors to Councillors is slightly out of kilter in some areas – the green areas show under-representation and the purple over-representation. The Commission will also take into consideration future population projections when making their decision.</p>
Slide 4	<p>The first stage of the process is to look at how many Councillors there should be then where the boundaries of the wards should be. The boundary for the Bath and North East Somerset district will not be changed and neither will the boundaries of individual parishes. However, the review may look at changes to the boundaries of wards within parishes.</p>
Slide 5	<p>The Boundary Commission will work out the number of Councillors they believe the Council should have and then divide the electorate by this to get the number of wards. They will decide where the boundaries to the wards will be but will give consideration to decision making structures, the scrutiny process, partnerships in place and where community interests and identities lie.</p>
Slide 6	<p>The Boundary Commission will then look at how the wards are drawn up and will start with a blank sheet. They are not wedded to any existing ward boundaries but are interested in views around where people feel they belong.</p>
Slide 7	<p>This slide shows the timetable for the process. The Boundary Commission are currently gathering information to determine the size of the Council. A working group has been set up for this.</p> <p>18 May 2017 – Council decision on numbers</p>

	<p>June 2017 - submissions on council size July – August 2017 consultation on wards December 2017 – March 2018 Consultation on final proposals April 2018 – Final recommendations</p>
Slide 8	<p>Anyone can put forward a view to the commission as part of the consultation. They are keen to receive reasoned proposals. They will not necessarily take school catchment areas into account. The final representation goes to Parliament.</p>
Slide 9	<p>Contacts at the Commission and at Bath and North East Somerset.</p>

Questions and Answers

- Q1: I have been in touch with David Owen at the Commission. He said he is happy to take comments by e-mail but based on what – there is no draft to comment on?
- A1: A draft of the proposed boundaries should be available by the end of the summer but there is no briefing regarding the number of Councillors – it is something that people will have different views on.
- Q2: What are the percentages shown on the map?
- A2: The difference between the number of Councillors and the electorate.
- Q3: So Peasedown is 23% under-represented?
- A3: Yes – there have been a number of new houses here.
- Q4: Is development taken into account?
- A4: Yes – estimates are made of future demographics based on proposed developments.
- Q5: Is it correct that the Commission do not like to split Councillors over parish boundaries.
- A5: The Commission has said that it prefers not to but will split a parish if they need to. They use the parish boundaries to guide the process at the start.

Briefing on the Community Empowerment Fund

Presenter: Cllr Paul Myers – Cabinet Member for Policy, Localism & Partnerships

PM said his Cabinet post had been created to see how it might be possible for B&NES to work more closely with the town and parish councils, community groups and third sector organisations.

He will be visiting town and parish councils to discuss this but did not want to do this empty-handed. The basis of the funding allocation is 50p per head based on the population figures in the 2011 census. Bath will be included as well. The total fund value is around £90k and it is approximately a 50/50 split between Bath and the parished areas. The Bath City Forum will look at projects for Bath. The idea is that it is match funded in terms of cash or volunteer time. Small parishes with low populations will receive £250 minimum.

All town and parish councils will receive a letter with further details soon. Some will have set their budgets already but I hope they will have ideas and volunteers to take projects forward. The idea is that the funding is broadly spent on public realm projects.

I also hope that parishes will want to work together – they could share someone doing something on several days a week for example.

It is ambitious but I hope that ideas and schemes are shared at Forum meetings – as we have more themed Forum meetings, ideas may come forward.

My ability to put a case for more funding in a future year will be based on the success of the scheme this year.

Questions and Answers

Q1: Is this a one off fund?

A1: Yes – for this year – there is no commitment beyond this at present.

Comment 1: I suggest that the Somer Valley Forum gets all its town and parishes to come up with projects.

Presentation: Community Resilience: Managing Flood Risk – How can communities get involved?

Presenters: Jim McEwen - Engineer - Drainage, Highways, B&NES
Jody Grabham – Environment Agency
Jim Collings - Lead Local Flood Authority Manager, B&NES

B&NES Flood Team Presentation

To view the presentation visit:

http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/bnes_flood_team_presentation.pdf

Slide	Comment
Title Slide and Slides 2 - 6	<p>JMc thanked the Forum for inviting them and said it is really useful to attend these meetings to talk to communities about the work of the team and hear from them with local knowledge.</p> <p>The 2010 Flood and Water Management Act requires different flood risk authorities to help manage the risk - the Council is one and the Environment Agency is another. The Lead Local Flood Authority is the Council.</p> <p>The Council and Environment Agency look at water courses – there are some tributaries in this area that have a flood risk. The landowner has responsibility for maintenance if it is not a main river.</p>
Slide 7: Lead Local Flood Authority	This slide shows the duties of the Council. Being a consultee on planning applications is one of them. The Flood Team would review any big development to advise the planning department. Development should not increase flood risk.
Slide 8: Flood Risk Management Authorities	This shows the responsibilities of the various authorities and what they do. The sixth element is you – everyone has a role to play.
Slide 9: Map	Shows the main rivers and areas with surface flooding risk. It is possible to look on line at https://flood-warning-information.service.gov.uk/long-term-flood-risk to check your flood risk.
Slide 10: images of some schemes	Explains more about the role of the Council as lead flood authority. It shows images of a scheme to address surface flooding in Keynsham and examples from the Somer Valley – there was a flash flood in Midsomer Norton in June 2016. Draining improvements have also been undertaken in Timsbury. It's not always possible to stop flooding but agencies do try to alleviate it. Work is prioritised depending on where flooding occurs (eg houses, garages, gardens). There is a list of 6 months' work at present.
Slide 11: Map	In the Somer Valley, there are 6 locations where culverts have screens to protect from leaves (illustrated on map). These are cleared before heavy rains are forecast. There is no legal requirement to do this and the majority are managed locally. If you know where the water courses in your community are and the risks associated, the Flood Team would like to hear from you. If there is a problem area, do nearby residents and Town/Parish Councils have a system to engage with the landowner to address it?

	Jim passed over to Jim Collings
Slide 12 – 18: Flood Reps	A way of helping is to have local 'Flood Reps' in each parish. There are 30 of them at present across B&NES but more are needed - particularly for Somer Valley where numbers are low. There is more information on their role in the slides. It should be someone from within the local community, familiar with the area and is not a risky job – they just need to report information to the Council and disseminate information to the community. Slide 18 shows the communities in the Somer Valley without a flood rep at present.
Slide 19: blocked gullies etc	The Flood Team is not involved with gullies, drains etc. These need to be logged with Council Connect for a Highways Inspector's assessment.
Slide 20:	Further sources of information are illustrated
Slide 21:	Contact details

Environment Agency Presentation

To view the presentation visit:

http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/flooding_presentation_-_environment_agency.pdf

Slide	Comment
Slide 1	Image of 1974 floods in Midsomer Norton
Slide 2	Overview of presentation
Slide 3	Map of flood risk from local rivers
Slide 4	Second image of 1974 floods in Midsomer Norton
Slide 5	Image of the Midsomer Norton tunnel which means the risk of a repeat of the 1974 floods has virtually gone.
Slide 6	The Midsomer Norton tunnel today - the inlet is near the cricket ground and the amenity channel is by the Somer Centre. There is a webcam and 24 hour call out. There is also technology in place to advise the EA when it is blocked.
Slide 7 – what to do when it floods	The EA's statutory role is to issue flood warnings. Radstock and Midsomer Norton have flood walls and the aim is to get the water away from the towns as quickly as possible.
Slide 8 – flood warnings	There are various types of these – Chew Magna has flood boards which are physically put out when a warning is issued.
Slide 9	There is advice on preparing for flooding on the Government's website: www.gov.uk/prepare-for-flooding
Slide 10	You can register on the site for free to get flood warnings
Slide 11	Parish and Community Flood Plans give information on where to

	congregate in the event of a flood and where vulnerable people live to help the EA and emergency services.
Slide 12	There are also Flood Wardens in some areas and these are more hands on than the Flood Reps. Chew Magna has a really good plan in place, together with Flood Reps and Wardens.
Slide 13	Local knowledge is a key resource
Slide 14	Outlines the benefits of having a flood plan and reps.
Slide 15	A quote from the Cumbrian Fire Service on a community with a Flood Plan
Slide 16	Information on how to call, tweet or text with information.
Slide 17	End slide

Questions and Answers

- Q1: I am a riparian owner in Midsomer Norton – why aren't all such people contacted to say they need to do their bit to remove trees, foliage etc.
- A1: It is all about flood risk – there is no requirement to remove items if they are not causing risk.
- Q2: I have heard there is only one emergency rowing boat in the whole of B&NES – is this true? A high number of Midsomer Norton's population lives next to a river.
- A2: Fire and Rescue would know about equipment like this for emergencies. The EA does have boats at Warmley but these are largely used for weed cutting. We do work closely with the Emergency Services on management plans.
- Q3: The Neighbourhood Plan shows extra housing development for Midsomer Norton – houses keep being built because there is considered to be a low risk of flooding due to the tunnel but what is the tipping point?
- A3: We do work with Planning. There is a limited flood plain in Midsomer Norton and Radstock, although surface flooding does occur. The team look at run off when planning applications are submitted.
- Comment 1: There was flood plain at Chilcompton but developers put a cover on it – now water flows to Midsomer Norton. The estates were also built on flood plain.
- Response 1: Water will not go through the town but be diverted. Is cumulative development the concern? The Flood Team has objected to development on these grounds in the past and work with developers on mitigation where permission is granted. We are consulted on any development of 10 properties or more.
- Comment 2: We sometimes get complaints that the level of the river in Midsomer Norton does not seem high enough.
- Response 2: There is a sluice by the White Hart – the Town Council would like a gate, which is possible if funding can be found.
- Comment 3: The EA is supposed to clear it.
- Response 3: No – we do not have funding for this.
- Q4: How much would it cost for a gate?
- A4: Between £500 and £1,000 – we can check.
- Comment 4: There is concern about rocks being brought down to the town by the river.

Response 4: It is up to the landowner to maintain.

Q5: Don't the EA own?

A5: No – it is probably the Council – Public Open Space

Comment5: Our work is to protect houses from flooding.

Comment5: Peasedown St John has a Flood Rep – we will ask the Clerk to make sure they are registered with you.

Q6: How often do you operate the sluices to make sure they work?

A6: They are inspected annually and there is a 5 – 10 year maintenance programme. We also set the height for the sluice and don't want it too high.