

## **CABINET MEETING 11<sup>th</sup> October 2017**

### **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.

#### **Public –**

1. David Redgwell - Bus Services / Mass Transit Proposal
2. Cllr Joe Rayment – agenda items 12, 13 and 14
3. Caroline Ambrose – Bath Central Library
4. Cllr Richard Samuel – agenda items 12 and 13

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS - COUNCILLORS

<b>M 01</b>	<b>Question from:</b>	Councillor Eleanor Jackson
In the light of this press release (3rd October 2017 'B&NES to invest in new community libraries') what are your plans for Radstock Library, and who is going to run it? Are you interested in locating it in Westfield Parish Council's new community centre in West Hill Road when it is built?		
	<b>Answer from:</b>	Councillor Karen Warrington
<p><i>The Council is working with Hope House Surgery to incorporate a Library facility in the new building in Radstock, we will be working with local community groups to arrange how this can be run by the community.</i></p> <p><i>The Council is interested in talking to Westfield Parish Council regarding any proposals it may wish to put forward for consideration as a Community run library.</i></p>		
<b>M 02</b>	<b>Question from:</b>	Councillor Tim Ball
<p>The Government holds a strict separation of executive and judiciary that has worked well for centuries. The Council runs an executive and regulatory system that is supposed to give separation between the two.</p> <p>It is very apparent that one Cabinet Member (executive) regularly sits on a regulatory committee. The ruling conservative Group have 37 members – plenty to cover these roles.</p> <p>Will the Leader of the Council give assurances that, in light of the need for transparency and clear definition of the separation of executive and regulatory functions, no Cabinet Member from now forward will sit on a regulatory committee?</p>		
	<b>Answer from:</b>	Councillor Tim Warren
<p><i>The Council's regulatory committees are not performing a judicial function. They are performing an administrative function but must, nevertheless, adhere to the principles of natural justice. These are that each party has the right to a fair hearing and the right to be heard by an impartial tribunal. Membership of both the Executive and a regulatory committee does not automatically give rise to an interest under the Council's Code of Conduct for Members or the Council's Planning Code of Conduct. The Code reminds members that they "can be biased where the Council is the landowner, developer or applicant if you have acted as, or could be perceived as being, a chief advocate for the proposal. (This is more than a matter of membership of both the proposing and planning determination committees, but that through your significant personal involvement in preparing or advocating the proposal you will be, or perceived by the public as being, no longer able to act impartially or to determine the proposal purely on its planning merits.)"</i></p> <p><i>The requirement is therefore that members of the planning committee need to be, and</i></p>		

*to be seen to be, impartial and open-minded, and provided this is so, a Cabinet Member may sit on a regulatory committee.*

<b>M 03</b>	<b>Question from:</b>	Councillor Will Sandry
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Could the Leader please confirm whether he was satisfied with the business case for the salary of the West of England Combined Authority Chief Executive?

<b>Answer from:</b>	Councillor Tim Warren
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*The West of England Combined Authority retained appropriately qualified and experienced external consultants to carry out a thorough evaluation of this role and to benchmark proposed remuneration with similar roles across other public sector organisations. It is necessary to attract and retain candidates with the skills required and the remuneration offered was proportionate and competitive.*

**Supplementary Question:**

Are you really comfortable that in these challenging financial times a post has been created with a massive salary, when you said there will be no massive cost associated with West of England Combined Authority?

<b>Answer from:</b>	Councillor Tim Warren
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*The salary of the West of England Combined Authority Chief Executive is smaller than MPs salary. It is justified salary considering that amount of money coming to the West of England Combined Authority and responsibility involved.*

<b>M 04</b>	<b>Question from:</b>	Councillor Richard Samuel
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Can the Cabinet Member confirm (a) whether the Council's formal prior consent was required to the demolition of dwellings as part of the regeneration scheme at Foxhill given the net losses of social housing proposed and (b) when that consent was given?

<b>Answer from:</b>	Councillor Paul Myers
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*The terms of the transfer agreement between the Council and Curo (previously Somer Community Housing Trust) establishes the rules under which Curo can dispose of the assets transferred from the Council and provide clear parameters for disposals and repayment to the Council. The Council's formal prior consent is not required to the demolition of dwellings.*

*Disposals that allow for the regeneration of an area providing affordable housing and meeting wider socio-economic and community benefits are excluded from any requirement to reimburse the Council (clause 2.7.3 of the Deed of Covenant for the transfer of housing stock between Somer and the Council, March 1999).*

**Supplementary Question:**

Will you publish the relevant clauses from the stock transfer agreement that the relevant

sections referring to consents to demolish contained in the Deed of Covenant for the transfer of housing stock between Somer Housing Association and the Council?

<b>Answer from:</b>	Councillor Paul Myers
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*A response will be provided within 5 clear working days.*

<b>M 05</b>	<b>Question from:</b>	Councillor Tim Ball
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- Can the Cabinet Member explain why hard up families in the West of Bath are having to endure difficulties in getting their children to secondary school due to cut backs in the number 20A bus service?
- It is noted that the A4 bus to Ralph Allen has a flat fare of £2 each way and the bus does not run on days Ralph Allen is closed. The cost of this service is £20 per week per child making it unaffordable for some families with 2 or more children travelling.
- Will the Cabinet Member explain why children have been left standing at bus stops as buses go by full up, leaving them to walk on dangerous roads to school and making them late?
- Will the Cabinet Member explain why cut backs were made to the 20A service when it was known full well that more children who used to go to BCA from the West of Bath were now going to either Ralph Allen, St Gregory's and the Studio School?
- Will the Cabinet Member give assurances that the 20A service will be reviewed to ensure that, when BCA closes next year, there will be sufficient capacity for the extra children going to other schools?

<b>Answer from:</b>	Councillor Mark Shelford
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- *Students who meet criteria set by Government for Council assistance for school transport have passes bought for them to use the RA4 service. The distance limits set by Government also take into account route safety (see also bullet point 4 below).*
- *The RA4 (not to be confused with the A4 operated by Bath Bus Company) operated by Abus is a commercial school service and fares are set by the operator at a level which makes the service viable to operate. As noted above the Council pays for passes for some students to use this service.*
- *I am aware that there is a limited level of capacity on the circular 20A/C service, as this service has to meet the needs of a range of users around Bath and uses small vehicles due to constraints on the size of the roads it passes along. ; Whilst the level of provision of bus services for students is primarily a matter for bus operators, the school and parents, as noted above the Council does provide support to children who meet the eligibility criteria and if students face dangerous routes to school then this would qualify them to receive a scholar's pass to travel to school.*
- *The Council continues to provide annual support of £247,578 for the 20A/C service, which seeks to meet the needs of a range of users across the city. Bath University also contribute to the cost of the service, and as a result there is in an additional service each hour during University term time between Twerton and Bath University. As referenced above, there are also other commercial bus service options available for children from the west of Bath, including the RA4 to*

*Ralph Allen School, and the service 42 which passes BCA, St Gregory's School and is close to the Studio School. A further range of journeys are possible for students travelling via the City Centre where there are connections to the 228 service that serves Ralph Allen School, and the 41 which is widely used for travel to St Gregory's.*

- *It is intended (subject to WECA) that service 20A/CD should be retendered during 2018. The service would be reviewed as part of this, including consultation with customers and stakeholders in the usual way. This may provide an opportunity to address some of the transport issues related to the closure of BCA.*

<b>M 06</b>	<b>Question from:</b>	Councillor Tim Ball
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Will the Cabinet Member comment what progress is being made to deliver a fully integrated urban traffic control system to all the traffic light systems in the city of Bath?

<b>Answer from:</b>	Councillor Mark Shelford
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*Bath has a Urban Traffic Control System installed in 1999. Since its inception the system has seen both hardware and software upgrades to further enhance it including installation of a private fibre network, Variable Message Signs and signs that display numbers of available car park spaces. The Urban Traffic Control system coordinates most of the signal facilities within the Bath city boundary and is continually assessing the traffic flow data obtained from a series of sensors in the carriageway. This data is then used to optimise the traffic signal settings to minimise vehicle delays and stops, keeping congestion and therefore pollution to a minimum considering the maximum capacity of the network and total flows on the network.*

*As the network evolves due to developments and increases in traffic flows within the city, additional pressure will clearly be placed on our road network. The Council is always actively exploring ways we can improve traffic flow on our highway network, for example Highways & Traffic officers are currently reviewing the operation of the traffic signals in Dorchester Street, seeking ways to improve the junction at Freezing Hill Lane, and reviewing the operation of the bus lane on the approach to the Odd Down Park & Ride. However, the best long term solution to tackling congestion is to reduce vehicle numbers using our highway network by reducing the amount of through-traffic in our city and providing more attractive alternative modes of transport such as walking, cycling, light rail or other public transport.*

<b>M 07</b>	<b>Question from:</b>	Councillor Tim Ball
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Would the Cabinet Member agree that a fully integrated urban traffic control system of all the city's traffic lights would help greatly in reducing some of the dangerous nitrogen dioxide levels that bring bad health to many residents?

<b>Answer from:</b>	Councillor Mark Shelford
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*As noted in my previous answer, Bath has a Urban Traffic Control System installed in 1999.*

*Improving the flow of the traffic and minimising 'stop/start driving' will assist in the reduction of nitrogen dioxide emissions.*

*However, in isolation, this measure is unlikely to deliver a sufficient reduction to meet the object standard of 40 micrograms per metre cubed in areas such as the London Road in Bath and therefore additional measures are needed, as noted in my previous answer, to both improve air quality and reduce traffic congestion.*

<b>M 08</b>	<b>Question from:</b>	Councillor Andrew Furse
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When will the lockable bollard, which is supposed to prevent vehicles driving down Gravel Walk, be repaired? What mechanism will the Council put in place to allow access to permitted vehicles whilst preventing general access? Gravel Walk is a pedestrian route, which is currently being used as an informal car park with damage being caused to the gravel surfacing.

<b>Answer from:</b>	Councillor Mark Shelford
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*We can confirm that our area highway inspector has ordered the replacement socket with locking mechanism so would hope to have it replaced within the next couple of weeks. The highways team are engaging with the local residents association to develop a suitable approach to restricting vehicular access to Gravel Walk which hopefully will be implemented as soon as there is full agreement.*

<b>M 09</b>	<b>Question from:</b>	Councillor Neil Butters
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It is understood that the option of a southern by-pass around Saltford is not to be taken forward. Can the Cabinet Member please explain why the option of a southern orbital road was ever put into the first draft of the Joint Transport Strategy when the Atkins study in 2006 rejected the idea for the same reasons as given now?

<b>Answer from:</b>	Councillor Mark Shelford
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*The option of a Saltford bypass has not been ruled out within the draft Joint Transport Study, rather the updated report suggests that further detailed study is required before a decision is taken, for example assessing options to provide bus priority on the approaches to Saltford. Various transport ideas and options were considered in the initial phase of the Joint Transport Study aimed at both addressing existing traffic and transport issues on our network and the additional travel needs that will result from the growth in people and jobs that will take place in the years ahead.*

<b>M 10</b>	<b>Question from:</b>	Councillor Tim Ball
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Can the Cabinet Member state how many times litter picking has been scheduled for wards outside of the City Centre, how many times these schedules have been broken and how many full litter picks have actually taken place in Twerton Ward in the last six months?

<b>Answer from:</b>	Councillor Bob Goodman
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*We aim to be in each zone approximately once every 6 weeks*

*The team have visited Twerton on 4 scheduled occasions in the last 6 months, and the next / current scheduled cleanse in 4/5/6 October. In addition to this there have also been 133 service requests via council connect, of which 74 related to litter or street sweeping. All have been responded to.*

*There is a single manned van which empties bins and cleanses Twerton high street daily. Deviation from cleansing schedules only occurs when there is a requirement to direct resources for urgent response work.*

<b>M 11</b>	<b>Question from:</b>	Councillor Will Sandry
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In March 2016, Council agreed to give consideration to “the feasibility, in planning terms, of introducing additional measures which could limit the development of purpose-built student accommodation in areas with already high densities of student accommodation or HMOs”. What progress has been made since March 2016 and when will communities be protected from predatory applications by investment firms?

<b>Answer from:</b>	Councillor Bob Goodman
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*As Cllr Sandry will know, I am acutely aware of the concerns many Bath residents have over the significant number of applications for new student accommodation in Bath over recent years at a time when we all want to see as many new affordable homes built as possible.*

*The recent adoption of the B&NES Placemaking Plan gives the Council some greater control over the location of new student accommodation than it had previously.*

*Alongside the JSP, work has begun on the new B&NES Local Plan and this includes updating evidence on the past growth in student numbers, forecast future growth (working with the Universities), the impact on student HMOs, and the existing supply and potential demand for Purpose Built Student Accommodation. Options for planning policies in response to these assessments are due to be published as part of the new Local Plan options consultation scheduled for November 2017 to January 2018. This will inform the preferred policy approach in the draft plan which is programmed to be published next year. The evidence obtained as part of the new Local Plan may also help in the interim to inform decisions based on the existing Core Strategy /Placemaking Plan.*

**Supplementary Question:**

Would you agree that it would be at least 18 months before any form of protection about the location of purpose built student accommodation can be provided within the city?

<b>Answer from:</b>	Councillor Bob Goodman
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*It is an exercise that has been currently undertaken. My request is to put together all*

*the sites which currently have consent for purpose built accommodation but have not been built up. There is also piece of exercise which will add to overall numbers that both universities perceive will grow and we are also looking closely whether there is enough accommodation.*

<b>M 12</b>	<b>Question from:</b>	Councillor Andrew Furse
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Will the Council be allowing a period of tolerance for mistakes – such as bins which have been slightly overfilled meaning the lid is not quite closed – in the way residents present waste following the change in rubbish collections on 6 November?

<b>Answer from:</b>	Councillor Bob Goodman
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*Yes there will be a period of tolerance as the new waste collection system 'beds in'. We appreciate that the changes may be a gradual learning curve for some residents, our priority first and foremost will be informing and educating whilst still emptying bins. Residents may need help to show them how to recycle more so that they don't leave side waste in future for example. In respect of lids not quite closed, advice will be provided to the resident when we collect it, via a sticker/tag. However, in the rare cases where the lid is so far open that it makes lifting and emptying the bin into the lorry dangerous or liable to tip rubbish into the street, then we will not be able to empty this. We will ensure we have let the resident know the reason we have been unable to collect.*

<b>M 13</b>	<b>Question from:</b>	Councillor Richard Samuel
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How much has the Council spent in total on the development of proposals for Bath central library including the costs of the public consultations?

<b>Answer from:</b>	Councillor Karen Warrington
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*The majority of spend to date has been on the overall Modern Libraries project and isn't allocated specifically to Bath Central Library. Spend of approximately £25,000 includes specific project costs of; legal, consultation material and publicity costs to promote comprehensive consultation.*

#### **Supplementary Question:**

It is my understanding that Council holds sublease on the Podium from Waitrose with break clause that is exercisable by Waitrose. Has the Cabinet considered that risk in current proposals?

<b>Answer from:</b>	Councillor Karen Warrington
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*The Council is in conversation with the management of the Podium and those issues would be taken into account.*

<b>M 14</b>	<b>Question from:</b>	Councillor Richard Samuel
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Can the Cabinet produce the latest figures as to how the overall reduction in customer services expenditure of £800,000 will now be achieved?

**Answer from:**

Councillor Karen Warrington

*The majority of the information being sought is contained within the business case and accompanying documents relating to the options for Bath Library which went to cabinet in July, and the business case accompanying the Cabinet decision relating to Midsomer Norton library. The remainder of the savings are anticipated to be achieved from the Community Libraries programme, details of which are contained within the Cabinet report being discussed at this meeting.*

*The majority of savings will come from a reduction in staffing resource across the whole of customer services; the reduction represents around 20% of the overall establishment. This will be achieved by implementing new ways of working and bringing the two services together. It is anticipated this will be done through natural turnover in staffing numbers.*

*Some savings will be achieved through reduced building and support costs as the community run libraries are implemented. Professional expertise required to run both services will be retained.*

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS - PUBLIC

**P 01**

**Question from:**

David Dixon

Could the Cabinet Member confirm how the moneys received from affordable housing contributions from developers in the 2016/17 financial year are to be spent and how potential £2.4m still due from pending developments will be spent?

**Answer from:**

Councillor Paul Myers

*Commuted sums cannot be pre-allocated against a development until they are held by the Council but when received will play a valuable role in delivering new affordable homes across Bath & North East Somerset. The sums currently held will be incorporated into the capital programme as required.*

*The Housing Enabling Team are working up a programme of new affordable housing developments and projects that require subsidy of over £4.7m and include rural development, specialist provision for single people, redevelopment of the empty sheltered housing site at St Chads, Midsomer Norton, bringing empty properties back into use, delivering additional affordable housing on major development sites and*

*supporting bespoke and specialist housing delivery.*

*Our current 2016-21 capital programme spend and commitments total £3.13m to date.*

*As a development comes closer to delivery, the Enabling Team work with the housing association and the HCA to determine the most effective funding stream/s to bring a scheme forward. This may include the use of the Council's Capital programme for affordable housing to meet some of the funding requirement.. Local priorities and smaller projects are frequently funded entirely by the B&NES Capital programme.*

<b>P 02</b>	<b>Question from:</b>	Andy Halliday
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Could the Cabinet Member confirm how many events the Library Service or other Council Departments have planned for taking place in the recently reopened Library Exhibition Room in October, November, and December 2017?

<b>Answer from:</b>	Councillor Karen Warrington
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*The Event space re-opened on the 10<sup>th</sup> October 2017.*

*Bookings to-date include:-*

- National Libraries/Black History information will be on display boards and surrounding area during this week*
- Hairy Maclary story time Sat 14th October - National Libraries week*
- Andrew Lane, Author of Young Sherlock Holmes series (8-14yrs) Saturday 21 October*
- Confirmed hire for one week end November*
- Baby Bounce & Rhyme commences from Wed 11th fortnightly (will be held in the exhibition room if no other bookings)*
- Preparing for Halloween activities/events*

<b>P 03</b>	<b>Question from:</b>	Andy Halliday
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Last week many Councils across the UK participated in "Get online" week - helping residents to get online experiences. Why was it decided that this year BANES didn't take part?

<b>Answer from:</b>	Councillor Karen Warrington
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*We do have IT volunteers at Bath Central Library who are available at certain times to assist customers using the Peoples Network computers with any IT related issues. This is exactly the type of event we will be able to better support once the services are integrated.*

*For those that follow the events that are delivered by the Library Service you will note that there is almost always some activity being promoted. "Get online week" isn't something we participated in this year.*

<b>P 04</b>	<b>Question from:</b>	Dionne Pemberton
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Can Councillor Warrington name a council in England where the main city library has been successfully integrated with a One Stop Shop?

<b>Answer from:</b>	Councillor Karen Warrington
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See [Summary Answers](#) – *Love of books*

<b>P 05</b>	<b>Question from:</b>	Dionne Pemberton
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Can Councillor Warrington give clear and specific reasons why B&NES has not lawfully consulted residents about whether to integrate our main city library with a One Stop Shop?

<b>Answer from:</b>	Councillor Karen Warrington
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See [Summary Answers](#) – *The Location*

<b>P 06</b>	<b>Question from:</b>	Luke John Emmett
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The DCMS recommend all councils make full use of all the new funding opportunities for libraries. In March 2017, while 33 councils shared the £4million Libraries Innovation Fund B&NES did not make an application. Can Councillor Warrington give a list of which library funding opportunities B&NES has sought in the past two years?

<b>Answer from:</b>	Councillor Karen Warrington
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*The Council continues to monitor available grant opportunities and will make applications when they offer the best opportunities to improve service and would welcome proposals from local community and other groups which could form the basis for future bids.*

*In August of this year we made an application to the Engaging Libraries Fund.*

<b>P 07</b>	<b>Question from:</b>	Luke John Emmett
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As officials have not followed any of the DCMS LGA best practice processes for making

decisions about library developments, can Councillor Warrington give her reasons for asking cabinet to recommend a development driven by ad hoc savings targets and council convenience rather than local needs?

**Answer from:**

Councillor Karen Warrington

See [summary Answers](#) – *integration of service*

**P 08**

**Question from:**

Andrew Grant

Did B&NES consider adding library and/or council services to the development brief for North Quays?

**Answer from:**

Councillor Karen Warrington

*At the outset of the libraries review, relocating a combined service (and/or other council services) to Bath Quays North was considered, however the option was discounted on the grounds of high cost and deliverability within the agreed timescales.*

**P 09**

**Question from:**

Andrew Grant

With 500,000 annual footfall to the library and 150,000 to the One Stop Shop, what are the estimated relative losses and gains of income for traders and businesses located in the vicinity of Lewis House and The Podium?

**Answer from:**

Councillor Karen Warrington

See [Summary Answer](#) – *Number of users*

**P 10**

**Question from:**

Gill Kirk

When many residents do not even have confidence in the existing One Stop Shop “booth” for confidentiality, what is Councillor Warrington’s understanding of how privacy can be guaranteed for distressed residents who need benefits / CAB / other confidential or sensitive services at a central desk in an open plan library?

**Answer from:**

Councillor Karen Warrington

See [Summary answer – Layout and Design](#)

**P 11**

**Question from:**

Gill Kirk

Does Councillor Warrington believe that asking residents to tick a box for either The Podium or Lewis House represents a lawful, meaningful and comprehensive consultation about whether to integrate services? On February 7th, residents served B&NES with a pre-litigation notice of judicial review, for failure to lawfully consult about whether to move and collocate Bath Central Library. In response, B&NES dropped its plans and agreed to consult lawfully, on 14 February. Yet the recent consultation did not ask residents whether they support service co-location, only where they prefer the location of a co-location.

**Answer from:**

Councillor Karen Warrington

See [Summary answer](#) – *The location*

**P 12**

**Question from:**

Caroline Ambrose

The central case for integrating Bath Central Library with the One Stop Shop is to deliver savings of £800k pa. As none of this £800k is connected with Bath Central Library, can Councillor Warrington explain her opposition to downstaffing and downsizing the One Stop Shop in situ thus achieving the same saving without the £2.8m capital cost?

**Answer from:**

Councillor Karen Warrington

See [Summary answer](#) – *The Business Case*

**P 13**

**Question from:**

Caroline Ambrose

As staff employed at the One Stop Shop are paid more than Bath central Library workers, does Councillor Warrington believe residents should be paying more for less qualified service?

**Answer from:**

Councillor Karen Warrington

*All job roles within the Council are evaluated using an independent evaluation system. Within the new combined service all job roles will be reviewed by an independent panel in line with established Council policies and procedures.*

**P 14**

**Question from:**

Sophie Hooper Lea

Accessibility experts and Chartered Surveyors Bevans praised The Podium's "currently large and spacious area" and "excellent horizontal circulation". Patently the design will change should this site become integrated. Is Councillor Warrington able to assure

disabled users there will be no reduction in accessibility for disabled user groups in an integrated Bath Central Library?

**Answer from:**

Councillor Karen Warrington

See [Summary Answer](#)

**P 15**

**Question from:**

Sophie Hooper Lea

At the council meeting of February 14th, Alex Lea drew the cabinet's attention to 2017 research from the National Literacy Trust and Experian that assessed Bath as one of the constituencies with 'entrenched problems with literacy' i.e. where at least one ward has significant literacy need. Alex provided details and the following links appeared in the papers for the meeting. Given that 212 constituencies (40% of the total of 533) have a higher literacy score than Bath, what actions have been taken to remedy this since February?

[http://www.literacytrust.org.uk/assets/0003/7673/Constituency\\_literacy\\_score\\_table\\_-\\_by\\_rank\\_-\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.literacytrust.org.uk/assets/0003/7673/Constituency_literacy_score_table_-_by_rank_-_FINAL.pdf)

<https://www.experianplc.com/media/news/2017/86-of-english-constituencies-have-entrenched-problems-with-literacy>

**Answer from:**

Councillor Karen Warrington

See [Summary answer](#) – ***Love of Books***

*In addition the Council has initiated a number of specific initiatives to improve literacy levels, These include;*

- Since October last year positive targeting of events for those families where communication and literacy is challenged via Early Years providers, Childrens Centres, Foster Care Team, voluntary organisations supporting families and schools eg Harry Potter event, Summer Reading Challenge, Book Start Bear's Adventures and evaluating the success of this*
- Piloting a Literacy Award for Early Years providers and Schools – bronze, silver and gold incentives for schools targeting membership to the library service and a planned offer of visits to library on a regular basis*
- Working for the next academic year with Art's Council funding and Boomsatsuma (<https://www.boomsatsuma.com>) on a project called Human Writes which has identified 3 young Poet Laureates from Bath and NES schools who will be performing and leading sessions in Youth Hubs and Schools to bring poetry and*

*performance to children and young people who would not otherwise engage with library services and reading initiatives*

- *Purchase of Sensory Packs, to add to existing accessible resources to support children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND).*
- *Continuing the Book Start Programme – this is initiated by a book gift from Health Visitors at birth of a child, reinforced by Registrars at birth registration, further gifting of books at pre-school via Early Years providers, enhanced by a social media account which follows Book Start Bear. This is supported by parent and baby/toddler story times and Baby Bounce and Rhyme in libraries. A range of clubs in libraries which make books and resources fun eg Lego Clubs*
- *Over the past year work with RNIB to establish support for those with visual impairment, provision of resources for homeless support, contact centres, DHI, Virgin Care, CURO etc to enable clients to access books and learning appropriately*

*This question highlights the importance of integration for One stop Shop users. It will encourage usage of library resources from low income families, vulnerable groups and those who are in isolated situations and help to improve life chances through an increase in reading and access to information.*

<b>P 16</b>	<b>Question from:</b>	Vishaka Robinson
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The Bath Central Library consultation closed prior to the stated deadline of midnight on Friday 15th September. Why was this?

<b>Answer from:</b>	Councillor Karen Warrington
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*The consultation did not close prior to midnight on Friday 15th September.*

<b>P 17</b>	<b>Question from:</b>	Vishaka Robinson
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With only four librarians left across the whole of BATHNES and Ian Savigar admitting zero librarians is a possibility, how will the council provide specialist library services?

<b>Answer from:</b>	Councillor Karen Warrington
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See [Summary Answers](#). – **Number of Users**

<b>P 18</b>	<b>Question from:</b>	Paul Stansall
The One Stop Shop has a footfall of 150k. Bath Central Library has 500k. Assuming both remain the same, this represents more than 33% uplift in current footfall to the Podium. What are the additional statutory emergency escape, public lift, ambulatory toilet and disabled toilet requirements for this increase?		
<b>Answer from:</b>		Councillor Karen Warrington
See <a href="#"><u>Summary Answer – The Location</u></a>		
<b>P 19</b>	<b>Question from:</b>	Paul Stansall
Can Councillor Warrington please confirm The Podium Shopping Centre management's view on the feasibility of implementing additional statutory public services for a possible 150k increase in footfall?		
<b>Answer from:</b>		Councillor Karen Warrington
See <a href="#"><u>Summary Answer – Number of Users</u></a>		
<b>P 20</b>	<b>Question from:</b>	Mary English
Can Councillor Warrington provide a breakdown of the public floor space m2 currently occupied at Lewis House by each of the council, public and voluntary organisations she anticipates would relocate to Bath Central Library?		
<b>Answer from:</b>		Councillor Karen Warrington
See <a href="#"><u>Summary Answer – Layout and Design</u></a>		
<b>P 21</b>	<b>Question from:</b>	Mary English
Library users need quiet study spaces. Will the One Stop Shop be enclosed from floor to ceiling within The Podium to ensure it is totally soundproofed?		
<b>Answer from:</b>		Councillor Karen Warrington
See <a href="#"><u>Summary Answers – Layout and Design</u></a>		
<b>P 22</b>	<b>Question from:</b>	Rachel Ifans

Ian Savigar told the September Scrutiny Panel library services within Bathnes are "not fit for purpose". Can Councillor Warrington confirm the specific issues Ian Savigar was referring to here?

**Answer from:**

Councillor Karen Warrington

*It is no secret that the way libraries are used is changing, with increased use of digital services and fewer library issues, there is a similar theme across customer services and the use of One Stop Shops. The Council's proposal to invest £2.8million is aimed at helping address this issue and this is the context in which this discussion took place.*

**P 23**

**Question from:**

Rachel Ifans

If Bathnes mission is to put residents first, why have all requests for the council to meet with librarians and Save Bath Libraries been declined?

**Answer from:**

Councillor Karen Warrington

See [Summary Answer – The Location](#) – The cabinet member has met with SBL on 21st August & Library staff on 19th September.

**P 24**

**Question from:**

Ian Plain

I note that a Payment has been approved of £16.2M with respect to the South Quays development. Little information is detailed about this payment and I would like to know if this is a payment that is now due to the loss of the key tenant BMT. It is felt by many residents and Business people in Bath that this payment should have been discussed at full council as well as Cabinet as there is no mention in the original budget. Especially in light of the current Budget shortfall. Please could it be explained why it was felt that a Single Member decision was felt appropriate for a sum of this value?

**Answer from:**

Councillor Charles Gerrish

*The February 2017 budget report, approved by Council, includes provisional funding for commercial estate investment £53.6M and Bath Quays regeneration delivery £57M, both subject to business cases demonstrating investment return.*

*Previous Decisions E2838 and E2903 have approved funding of £2.0M to progress the project to planning and full business case; with planning permission now granted the Council has received further professional advice on the need for this development. This advice concluded that there is a shortage of grade A office space in Bath. The supply of good quality office space in the city centre of Bath has declined from around 360,000 sq ft in 2011 to only 55,000 sq ft in 2016. The most significant addition over the past 12 months has been the refurbishment of 20 Manver Street. 20 Manver Street has*

*provided over 45,000 sq ft of high spec office space. This development was the first major speculative development in Bath for a number of years and was fully let during the initial stage of construction achieving rents of up to £31 per sq ft.*

*The SMD reference E2991 gave full approval for funding to enable the direct Council delivery of over 45,000 sq ft of net lettable grade A office space which will generate a commercial return to the Council so it can invest this in supporting front line services. This decision does not include any payments to BMT who are no longer involved in the office development. The council will be marketing the development during the construction period to secure tenants for the new office space*

<b>P 25</b>	<b>Question from:</b>	Ian Plain
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I note an undisclosed sum possibly approximately £9M has been agreed for the purchase of an undisclosed Office Building outside of the area, again detailed in the Single member Decisions. The reasoning behind this “fast” purchase and I assume the reason it was a single member decision was, and I quote “The urgency arises as a result of the seller of the property demanding that the Council exchanges contracts and completes the transactions within a very short timescale.” But I note from the documents that the leases have expired and reversionary leases are in place, also a Rent free period is noted but this is to be “topped” up by the vendor. I would have expected a value of this investment to be detailed and also if the sale is already in hand details of the property. I am concerned as for the council to be driven to make purchases by the sellers wanting a fast sale is in business never a sensible path to take.

I am aware that the purchase of commercial property can make sound sense and does allow the receipts from these to be used for services, But I have concerns as South Quays is a long way of generating revenue and a rushed purchase of an office which the seller wished to “dispose” of quickly and is now 17 years old do not on the face of it sound like sound investments. A 17 year old office could and in most cases if not recently been refurbished be out of date and of limited appeal. I assume at some later date the details will be published as to what this property is.

<b>Answer from:</b>	Councillor Charles Gerrish
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*Provisional approval was granted by the Council at the time of approving the budget. Draw down of this provisional amount was subject to further approval based upon an individual business case concerning any specific property acquisition.*

*An investment opportunity was introduced to the Council. It was competitively marketed and a number of parties submitted bids alongside the Council, which went to two rounds. The Council’s offer was accepted by the Vendor and heads of terms agreed subject to usual pre-conditions for purchases of this nature. Two pre-conditions related to timing matters: this meant that surveys (therefore Valuation, Building, Environmental and measured surveys) were to be cleared within 10 working days; and formal member approval was cleared within 15 working days. In order to satisfy these pre-conditions the urgency procedure was followed.*

*At the time of the acquisition the current leases were in operation as the reversionary leases did not commence until 30th September. A reversionary lease is one that is dated to commence at a date in the future; in this case September.*

*Concerning the age of the property, as part of the Council's enquiries, a pre-acquisition building survey was commissioned. This comprehensive document included such items as the findings from inspection of roofs and also included a commissioned mechanical and electrical report and drainage survey. It also provided likely budget repair costs. The Tenant itself had recently undertaken refurbishment of the accommodation. In addition, the Council commissioned a formal valuation from an external professionally qualified commercial property valuer, to supplement the purchase report produced by our acquiring commercial agent.*

*The Council satisfied itself that appropriate due diligence was undertaken prior to completion of the acquisition which took place on 10th August 2017. In dealing with this transaction certain financial and business information was and continues to be exempt (By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972).*

*This acquisition, on the Bristol Business Park, was made in response to the Council's need to generate additional secure net income in order to support the funding to deliver front line services. This particular acquisition of a prime freehold office investment, located in a prominent position on one of Bristol's premier business parks, has also secured a tenant with a Dun & Bradstreet credit rating of 5A1, representing a very low risk investment profile at a net initial yield of 5.7%.*

<b>P 26</b>	<b>Question from:</b>	Jenny Speller
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It's great that B&NES has set itself a goal to increase Bath Central Library use by lower income residents. As the council has identified that the restricted opening hours are one of the key barriers mentioned, will Councillor Warrington be extending the library opening hours so that more working people can get to the library after work?

<b>Answer from:</b>	Councillor Karen Warrington
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*The Council will be working with Communities to design a layout that meets the needs of all groups. Noise levels in the One Stop shop would only be measured if they were deemed excessive and this is not the case.*

<b>P 27</b>	<b>Question from:</b>	Jenny Speller
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What is the maximum measured noise level in the One Stop Shop?

<b>Answer from:</b>	Councillor Karen Warrington
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See [Summary Answer – Number of Users](#)

<b>P 28</b>	<b>Question from:</b>	Vipul Patel
I'd like to ask the Cabinet, and officers, to provide a list and details of all consultants (past, present, and planned) for current projects including details of the start and end dates and respective budgets.		
<b>Answer from:</b>		Councillor Tim Warren
<p><i>The question asks for 'a list and details of all consultants (past, present, and planned) for current projects, including details of the start and end dates and respective budgets'. The Council does not hold this information in that form and so would not provide this information if requested under the Freedom of Information Act. Having considered this question as such a request and taking into account any data protection implications and the resources required to provide this, it would not be an appropriate use of the council's resources to provide this information in answer to this question.</i></p>		

#### Summary Answer:-

Due to the large number of connected questions being asked about libraries, it has been decided that it would be more informative to provide a single response.

The proposals to integrate Customer services and the Library in a single location have drawn on national best practice and are in accordance with the views of the Libraries Task Force and the Department of Culture, Media and Sport. Their advice suggests that Council's nationally should consider looking at service integration and also colocation with partners to make libraries sustainable in the future. We have shown in Keynsham that this works in principle but there are many good examples of combined library and One Stop shops or other services. Some examples include Wigan (Which is often recognised as an excellent council); Northamptonshire, Cardiff, Newcastle and Dagenham to name a few have combined Library and One Stop Shop offering Information and Advice services.

#### Love of Books

We feel passionately about encouraging a greater love of reading and supporting less well-off users to access information, which is why we've committed to retain our library services in Bath when many other authorities are closing theirs. The way people are using libraries is changing and we need to reach out, in particular to those communities that traditionally make less use of library services. Combining both services under one roof will mean that more people from a wider range of backgrounds will have better access to digital technology, books, knowledge, information, creative events and skills opportunities along with face to face support.

The Council is aware of the various reports on literacy levels and, as mentioned earlier in this response will be encouraging more people to use the combined library service to

improve the life chances for all. In addition the Council has continued to run a programme of events and outreach work with partners, schools and the wider community. Once the new facility becomes fully operational the Council will continue to encourage a wide range of users to make greater use of library services.

Doing nothing or downsizing of either service would have a number of consequences that are not acceptable, if we do nothing then we cannot meet our objectives, and we cannot meet the financial challenges we face without seriously impacting the quality and availability of both services in our 3 main population centres. Integrating both services does not diminish either but provides an opportunity to extend services to more people.

### **The business case**

The financial case for integrating both services remains strong. The Council announced last week that although it was on track to save £42m it had to save a further £16m by 2020. The investment of £2.8m that the Council will make in the Podium will save £393,000 per year from 2020 as part of the wider modern Libraries programme that will save almost £800,000. This saving remains an important part of the Council's approach to balancing its budget focused on supporting the most vulnerable in our society.

In this tough climate our objective is to avoid both our Library service and the One Stop Shops becoming unsustainable. Integration is a sensible way forward; it protects both services and increases the benefits for the whole community, whilst contributing towards the Council's overall financial position.

### **The location**

The final location will be agreed by the Cabinet but officers have recommended that the Podium is chosen as the location for the combined service based on over 9 out of 10 respondents supporting this option. The consultation was both extensive, in accordance with best practice guidelines and widely publicised. The Council has continually involved DCMS and sought its views during the consultation process; it also took legal advice and is happy that it has carried out lawful, meaningful and comprehensive consultation. Local people had most of the summer and early autumn to respond via the website with paper copies of the questionnaire distributed via the libraries and also available in the Chronicle newspaper. The questionnaire material stated that the consultation would finish on the 15<sup>th</sup> September, although no specific time was given. The online consultation closed at 12am on the 16<sup>th</sup> and the Council accepted all paper consultations that were posted either on the 15<sup>th</sup> or prior to the 15<sup>th</sup>. In addition to the online consultation comments from other meetings have been taken in to account in the final recommendation, these include representations at Cabinet on the 19<sup>th</sup> July, a meeting with SBL representatives on the 21<sup>st</sup> August, the full council debate on the 14<sup>th</sup> September and questions raised by the CTE scrutiny panel in the 18<sup>th</sup> September. In addition the Cabinet Member met with Library staff on the 19<sup>th</sup> September to discuss the proposals and any concerns.

It is also important to recognise that the process of engagement has not yet finished. The design process will include looking at all statutory requirements with the Architects leading this process. Once the final location has been agreed the Council has committed to engage with a representative cross section of the community to assist in the design of the layout to ensure that it meets local needs and will be successful in encouraging wider use of the facility especially from young people, disabled people,

those from more deprived backgrounds as well as those established library users. This cross section of the Community will also include representatives from Save bath Library and staff groups. The views of the disabled community will be actively sought to ensure that it meets their need. We can therefore reassure disabled user groups that there will be no reduction in accessibility. Indeed having a single facility under one roof will benefit disabled users currently having to travel to two different locations. This is an occurrence which is increasing due to the roll out of Universal Credits for all working age customers.

### **The layout and design**

The layout of the new facility has yet to be fully determined although the Council is confident that both services can be accommodated appropriately in the design of the total space, especially following the movement of the local History reference books and materials to the Guildhall earlier in the year. The current space occupied by partners in Lewis House is not comparable as they will be accommodated in the newly designed layout, which may mean different space allocations; This is something that will be agreed during the design and engagement phase with the architects. Partners are aware of the proposals and they all understand the implications of moving to the Podium, if agreed by the Cabinet. Partners are supportive of the Council's efforts to encourage many of their customers to make better use of Library services and resources which will often further complement other support and services they are receiving.

Currently the existing Podium is open plan and copes very well with a wide range of users. There is nothing to suggest that adding in customer services will change any of this. Indeed the redesign of the layout will take into account the needs of all of the users including those that traditionally need quiet spaces as well as users of the One Stop Shop that would need to have confidential conversations. The results of the consultation showed that many users of the One Stop Shop that were either supportive or unconcerned about the relocation to the Podium and this reflected in 92% support for keeping a combined facility in the Podium.

This is now an exciting opportunity to look in detail at how the space can be used and we will be looking for innovative ideas during the engagement phase.

As has previously been stated the Council will be working with a wide cross section of the community to determine the layout and any concerns can be addressed as part of that work.

### **Number of users**

One of the consequences of implementing Universal Credit is that this is expected to reduce the footfall for customer services and along with some users of local history material now going directly to the Guildhall will mean that there will not be a 33% increase in users directly as a result of combining both services. The Council has no intention of reducing the number of librarians in the overall library service as a result of combining these services in Bath. Whilst there will be a reduction in staff across both services over the next couple of years this is anticipated to be via natural means and can be accommodated without diminishing either service's professional experts.

However the Council does hope that the number of library users does increase as a consequence of this integration and improvements to services. Therefore the Council has committed to investing £2.8m which will include improvements to the layout, new

digital technology and more modern facilities for use of the whole community. It will also include improvements to access arrangements when options are identified with the Architects and through the engagement process.

At this stage there is no plan to change Library opening hours which include both Saturday and Sunday opening times in Bath.

The Council cannot speak on behalf of the Podium management and anybody wishing to know their views are recommended to speak to them directly. The Podium management is aware of the Council's proposals.

Bath remains a very small, compact and walkable city and therefore the Council does not believe that there will be any loss or gain of business as a direct result of integrating these services. Out of almost 4,000 comments offered as part of this consultation this was not an issue of concern. The Council's investment in encouraging more people to access library services can only be positive for the wider business community