

## **BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET**

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

Monday, 18th September, 2017

Present:- **Councillors** John Bull, Brian Simmons, Neil Butters, Alan Hale, Peter Turner, Patrick Anketell-Jones, Ian Gilchrist, Michael Evans and Tim Ball (in place of Richard Samuel)

#### **24 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

#### **25 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE**

The Chairman drew attention to the emergency evacuation procedure.

#### **26 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS**

Councillor Richard Samuel sent his apologies and was substituted by Councillor Tim Ball.

#### **27 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were none.

#### **28 TO ANNOUNCE ANY URGENT BUSINESS AGREED BY THE CHAIRMAN**

There was none.

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

The following people made statements to the Panel:

Celia Mead – Bath Alliance for Transport and Public Realm made a statement to the Panel regarding the principals of the Alliance on congestion, public realm and transport issue.

In response to a query about specific plans, the representative explained that the Alliance have an overall plan and members who have experience in delivering projects. Regarding the WECA Mayor, it was hoped that he could bring resources and expertise to the table.

Patrick Rotherham – Federation of Bath Residents Associations made a statement to the Panel regarding Air Quality. *A copy of this statement is attached to these minutes and kept on the minute book for this Panel.*

In response to a query about the views of traders, Mr Rotherham explained that he does talk to traders and many have found that traffic reduction is good for business and that a lot of traffic in the city is through traffic so would not benefit traders anyway. Regarding Milsom Street, he explained that he felt if it was pedestrianised, this would reduce pollution on George Street. There was some discussion about other measures to discourage cars travelling through Bath such as restricting on street and off street parking. Officers commented that TRO can cost between £3k and £15k. In response to a query about non Bath residents and how a cut in parking facility could affect them, Mr Rotherham stated that the health problems caused by Air Quality are the overriding issue.

Hal Macfie – Keynsham resident made a statement to the Panel regarding Keynsham buses. *A copy of this statement is attached to these minutes and kept on the minute book for this Panel.*

Councillor Liz Hardman handed in a petition regarding a highways issue in Ham Lane, Paulton where part of the road was resurfaced on one side. The petition calls on the Cabinet Member to urgently re-schedule the works to resurface the whole of Ham Lane. Councillor Bull passed the 125 signature petition to the Cabinet Member for Transport and Highways, Councillor Mark Shelford.

Councillor Butters explained a similar example regarding the road connecting Peasedown and Wellow. He raised the issue of possible miscommunication between officers and contractors, Councillor Hardman stated that she felt that there is sometimes a mismatch of expectations.

## **30 MINUTES**

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

## **31 KEYNSHAM BUS (NUMBER 38) ROUTE**

Councillor Bull asked the representatives from the bus companies to introduce themselves and address the issue.

James Freeman – First Bus (West of England) introduced himself and his colleague Andrew Sherringham. He explained that nobody likes removing bus services but the 38 is a victim of changing travel patterns and services. He explained that there are 3 buses an hour from Keynsham to Bath and the X39 (Bath to Bristol) every 12 minutes. He further explained that the Park Estate is served twice an hour. He explained the current bus services in the area and stated that it may not be ideal but it means that there is a sustainable operation that covers its costs and is the least bad option.

Alan Peters – Abus – explained that he had instigated the changes due to metro bus changes in Bristol and the work in Keynsham Town Centre (which meant the loss of the Park Estate pick up point for two years) all of which meant Abus started to incur a loss on the 349 service which was the mainstay of the company. The current service – 2 buses an hour to Bristol with connections to Bath came as a result of a meeting with BANES and First Bus.

Martin Curtis – Bath Bus Company - explained that the company is totally commercial and runs the Air Decker (Airport Bus) which is almost running 24hours per day. He explained that generally the service is growing, especially from Bath.

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

Councillor Hale asked what plans were in place to service the new developments in Keynsham, including Bilbie Green. He also asked if the X39 could be diverted through Keynsham. James Freeman (First Bus) explained that the X39 could not be diverted as the service is heavily used and this would cause disruption. Alan Peters (Abus) explained that Abus Saturday journeys run by Bilbie Green, he said that it was disappointing that there is not connecting road in the back of the development. He was not sure how the other developments in Keynsham will be served. Martin Curtis (Bath Bus Company) explained that he had looked at the housing development and it is not bus friendly at all.

Councillor Hale asked if, in future, Councillors could get advance notice when a route is going to be lost. Alan Peters explained that the period of notice give to the Council was shorter then he would like but it had to be done this way due to the heavy losses. James Freeman (First Bus) added that it is good to talk in advance but bus companies work under restrictions.

Regarding the Chandag Estate, James Freeman (First Bus) explained that it is directly served by the 665 or users walk to Wellsway and get the 178, overall the 178 is gaining patronage. Councillor Butters mentioned that there may be scope for a user group in this area. James Freeman stated that it is always better to talk to people, he referred to the Keynsham Bus Guide and asked if Keynsham Town Council would like to distribute leaflets.

The Chair thanked the representatives from the bus companies for attending the meeting.

## **32 AIR QUALITY ACTION PLAN**

Cath Brown, Team Manager Health and Environment and Robin Spalding, Senior Public Protection Officer (Environmental Monitoring) introduced the item to the Panel and gave a presentation which covered the following:

- Bath Air Quality Action Plan and National Air Quality Action Plan Feasibility Study
- The Issues we face
- Bath Air Quality Action Plan Review and Update 2017/18
- Air Quality Management Area

- Air Quality Action Plan in Bath
- Annual average NO2 levels at hotspots (2016)
- Which vehicles contribute how much NOx emissions?
- Proposed Actions
- Themes
- Consultation Process
- Post Consultation
- Feasibility Study for the National Air Quality Plan
- The National Air Quality Plan for Nitrogen Dioxide
- New legal duty
- Dates
- Feasibility Study
- Risks
- Opportunities

Panel members made the following points and asked the following questions on the local context:

Councillor Bull asked what was new in this plan that was not in the existing one. The officer pointed the Panel to the consultation document including a list of measures developed with stakeholder groups.

Councillor Ball stated that linking traffic lights would help as traffic would flow through quicker. The officer agreed that traffic signal sequencing plays an important role and has been referred to Highways.

Councillor Gilchrist asked if the Council had a policy on electric cars. The officer stated the Council has been waiting for the outcome of some trials which will include options (such as sockets in lampposts) regarding electric cars.

Councillor Bull asked if it was possible to do anything unless a clean air zone is adopted, the officer stated that this would be controversial and the public would need to see evidence, traffic surveys are being undertaken to gather evidence.

Panel members made the following points and asked the following questions on the National Plan:

Councillor Hale asked if there are plans for any other areas outside the city. The officer stated that there are other areas of concern and measures can be considered but this must not delay the London Road issue.

Councillor Turner asked about data mining. The officer explained that he could ask contractors about this.

Councillor Butters stated that the data on London Road was hard to interpret and asked if there will be a further survey. The officer stated that there will be surveys for the feasibility study and also the Air Quality annual status report and there will also be ANPR data.

The Chair thanked the officers and asked them to report back in March 2018.

### 33 LIBRARY CONSULTATION UPDATE

Ian Savigar, Deputy Director Customer Services, introduced the item to the Panel and gave a presentation which covered the following:

- Modern Libraries Programme
- Integrating Library and One Stop Shop
- Bath Library
- Midsomer Norton
- Keynsham
- Community Libraries

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

Councillor Bull asked if the plan to integrate the Library and the One Stop Shop is driven by savings or service improvement. The officer explained that it has to be seen as both because there is a change in need and the current service is not fit for purpose.

Councillor Robin Moss asked about Radstock Library and also asked about parishes who had not expressed an interest. He added that there has to be a case for a change in service and he was not sure the case had been made. The officer explained that there would be a separate paper on Radstock Library but that the principals were the same. Regarding parishes, he explained that it was on the agendas for the November forums. Councillor Bull stated that there had only been consultation regarding Bath and parishes will have to fund their own consultation. The officer stated that some parishes have taken this on already.

Councillor Ball stated that the Panel should see the Library Consultation results as soon as possible. The officer stated that he would do his best.

Councillor Anketell Jones asked if there were any funds to upgrade disabled access regarding libraries. The officer explained that this is the next phase and either location would need changes to be made.

The Chair stated that the following list of questions is a contribution from the Panel to the Library consultation:

1. What is the objective of the proposal to combine Bath Central Library with the One Stop Shop? Is it to meeting the budgetary savings target or to improve our services to the public?
2. What happens if branch libraries fail to get financial support from local communities?
3. Are other consultees aware of the Keynsham model for combining the library and One Stop Shop?
4. How can the facilities provided by the present meeting room be continued?
5. What difference would the experience by of existing library users as a result of the planned merger with the One Stop Shop?
6. Would books be as easy to access in the new Central Library as in the past?

7. How can some of the issues about disabled access raised by the Bevan report be met by adaptation of the facilities and signage?

## **34 PARKING REVIEW**

Chris Major, Group Manager Transport and Planning, introduced the item to the Panel and gave a presentation which covered the following:

- Parking Strategy Engagement
- Background – What is the need?
- What does it do?
- What are the benefits?
- Engagement documentation
- Process and next steps

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

Councillor Bull stated that the Panel had not seen the consultation papers and suggested that the item be brought back to the Panel meeting in November 2017 for final comments.

Councillor Ball mentioned the emerging coach strategy and the problems with Coach parking on Lower Bristol Road. The officer confirmed that this is being worked on and there are some challenges, enforcement is used where possible.

Councillor Butters asked about technology in car parks, he gave an example of a car park in Portsmouth that uses ANPR, the officer explained that there is often a difference between private and Council car parks.

Councillor Anketell Jones stated that this is a timely document as there is much development planned in Bath over the next 10 years. He added that parking places and economic vitality must be considered alongside air quality issues. The officer confirmed that he is trying to strike a balance between competing demands.

## **35 CABINET MEMBER UPDATE**

Councillor Mark Shelford, Cabinet Member for Transport and Highways updated the Panel on the following:

- Coach Strategy – consultation has been launched regarding a new permanent site at Oddown Park and Ride.
- Air Quality – we now have a lever to make some changes.
- Parking Strategy – relevant information will be supplied to the Panel for their November meeting.
- Tram study – due anytime
- A420 – there has been a meeting with the Mayor regarding a junction near Tog Hill.

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

Responding to a question from Councillor Butters, the Cabinet Member explained that there is no solution yet on the 6/7 bus route.

Regarding Widcombe Subway, the Cabinet Member explained that a last potential solution is being discussed.

Councillor Anketell Jones asked that consultation be delivered to residents regarding the potential coach drop off point at Green Park. The Cabinet Member agreed.

Councillor Ball thanked officers regarding the 5 and 20 bus routes.

### **36 PANEL WORKPLAN**

The Panel noted the workplan with the following items requested for the November meeting:

- Domestic Abuse Update
- Alternative technology for vehicles
- Parking Strategy
- Trams

The meeting ended at 7.30 pm

Chair(person) .....

Date Confirmed and Signed .....

**Prepared by Democratic Services**