



**Note of the meeting of the Bath City Forum
held on Monday, 27th November, 2017
in Council Chamber - Guildhall, Bath**

Meeting Attendance

In Attendance
Councillor Patrick Anketell-Jones
Councillor Rob Appleyard
Ashley Ayre
Richard Baldwin
Lisa Bartlett
Councillor Colin Blackburn
Jeremy Boss
Councillor Anthony Clarke
David Dixon
Roger Driver
Councillor Charles Gerrish
Mark Hayward
Michael Hill
Caroline Kay
Steve Kendall
Robin Kerr
Penny McKissock
Donna Parham
Councillor Lin Patterson
Rosie Phillips
Councillor Joe Rayment
Leslie Redwood
Residents
Councillor Dine Romero
George Samios
Councillor Shaun Andrew Stephenson-McGall
Councillor Karen Warrington
Virginia Williamson

Apologies Received from
Councillor Andrew Furse
Councillor Bob Goodman
Sally Harris

Gareth Lloyd
Councillor Michael Norton
Councillor Christopher Pearce
Dr Christopher Roche
Councillor Peter Turner

1. Welcome, Introductions and Apologies

Councillor Colin Blackburn (Chair) opened the meeting and welcomed the public and forum members.

The apologies received were noted in the minutes.

2. Police Update

Chief Inspector Steve Kendell presented an update on the latest crime statistics for Bath.

The trends nationally show a 13% rise in reported crime in the last 12 month period, the Avon and Somerset force has seen a rise of 6% and B&NES has seen a 4.5% rise.

The B&NES area has shown improvements in the last 3 months with crime reducing by 2.3%. The City Centre saw a drop by 48 offences (-6.6%), Outer Bath dropped by 63 offences (-14%), South Bath rose by 66 offences (+23%) and West Bath (-4.9%).

The requests received by the Police totalled 44,000 in B&NES in the last 3 month period. The satisfaction rating was at 82.6% for B&NES and 76.7% for the Avon and Somerset force area.

There have been successes in drug cases, arrests have been made and these are to be heard in court soon. The Christmas Market in Bath is being patrolled and the early indications are that the City is coping well with the increase in visitors.

Questions:

Jeremy Boss – What is driving the crime rate up in the South Bath area?

Response – The last quarter saw an increase in thefts by 34 incidents.

Cllr Lin Patterson – How are the Police coping without a Police Station in the City?

Response – the Police have premises at Midland Road in Bath and a front office at the One Stop Shop and we manage well. If a viable City Centre option were to become available we would welcome a return as this helps with our visibility.

Virginia Williamson – Are you able to give more context on the break-ins that have taken place in the bear flat area?

Response – The local Sergeant would be able to provide these details, I do not have these available this evening.

Cllr Patrick Anketell-Jones – What can you tell us about the situation with Domestic Violence in Bath?

Response – This is a priority area for the Police and we work closely with partners in the City. The reported numbers for cases is steady.

3. Changing Together - The Council's Budget Challenge and Pressures'

Ashley Ayre opened the presentation (attached) by explaining the additional pressures that have risen since this time last year and the savings target is now £58 million. B&NES Council will become a smaller organisation over the next two years.

Councillor Charles Gerrish took over the presentation and opened the questions and comments session.

Questions and comments:

Councillor Rob Appleyard – Is the investment that has been made in leisure facilities part of 'invest for funding' strategy?

Response – No, the investment has been made to give people the opportunity to improve their health and wellbeing.

Councillor Shaun Stephenson-McGall – Where recycling has been mentioned in this presentation the focus is on saving the Council money, there has been no mention of the importance of saving the planet.

Response – We agree that the environment is important and every effort needs to be made to encourage everybody to do the right thing.

George Samios – The figure quoted of a 14% increase in children going into care sounds high, what are the reasons.

Response – The starting point is very low, with all additional cases there are court fees. Some of the complex cases can require care packages that very expensive.

Councillor Dine Romero – Last year there was a discussion around tourism tax, are there any plans to continue looking at this possibility? How likely is it that likely is it that the government will listen and how quickly can we expect this to happen?

Response – The Council Leader has meetings planned with Central Government in the near future to look at how Local Authorities can be given new income raising powers that can be used to meet the local needs; this includes looking at tourism tax.

Councillor Dine Romero – What can we expect to see as the alternative meals on wheels offering? Will this just be a drop off service?

Response – The final decision has not get been agreed, we have looked at the option of working with Age UK as the care element of the service is seen as important.

Caroline Kay – The slides in the presentation show overall totals that do not add up from the information shown on the slides.

Response – These are illustrations, there are areas such as Council Tax rises, revenue from Heritage and our Property Company that all need to be included.

Caroline Kay – Local Authorities across the UK are struggling, how can we tell how B&NES fits into the scale of the impacts versus others? Are the efficiencies that we are seeing comparable when you take into account the level of assets that B&NES have available to them?

Response – The presentation shows a table on Council Tax which illustrates what B&NES charges compared to others. A combination of factors make this year's positions tougher, other authorities went earlier in making the cuts and we are playing catch up. B&NES does benefit from the income from visitor numbers but also has the downside of having to pay for higher numbers of aging residents and the way our high quality special schools offering attracts people from outside the area.

Robin Kerr – Bath is now the most populated city in England with its student population making up proportionally 25% of the people living here. The students are paying no council tax and the government are not compensating B&NES for this missing income. The government need to understand the impact on communities, there needs to be a student accommodation document that sets out a strategy that also deals with the loss of business rates. What are the Council doing about this and is there dialogue taking place with the Universities?

Response – The Leader of the Council is working with the University Cities of England in putting forward a joint case to government. The Universities are talking to the Council, this is important as there are more HMOs, more Students and the loss of the rate support grant.

Councillor Lin Patterson – What additional reduction in council offices will we be seeing?

Response – The move of the one stop shop to the podium will free up space in Manvers Street for other uses.

Councillor Lin Patterson – How are people to be supported in staying well if funding is to be reduced?

Response – Support from within communities will be required and different approaches will need to be taken.

Councillor Joe Rayment – This year the presentation that has been given is an improvement on last year. I do think that the idea that this is a consultation on the budget does not feel right. From what I see we are in a real financial mess and are being forced to make 300 people lose their jobs. Are we considering a referendum for a high increase in Council Tax?

Response – It is too early in the process to say what the level of Council Tax increase will be. If however we did hold a referendum the cost would be around £200,000 and it is not certain that residents will be in agreement. Additionally the delay caused would lead to a hold up in collections that would result in losses that we would never get back. We will consider the option to increase the Adult Social Care Precept.

Councillor Joe Rayment – The recycling methods that we have always adopted could be changed so that we look at sorting increased levels of recyclables downstream?

Response – We will look at the contract for recycling when it comes up for renewal. We all should encourage and educate our neighbours into doing everything possible to maximise recycling.

Councillor Dine Romero – It is looking likely that residents will be looking at a 5% overall Council Tax Bill increase, 2% on Council Tax and 3% on Adult Social Care. There needs to be effective lobbying of central government to compensate for the additional burdens that are happening now with Adult Care numbers and extra place needed for Children needs.

The introduction of a Metro Mayor seemed to imply that the full business rate retention would be given as part of the deal, could it be calcified if this is still only a pilot period or if it is being implemented fully?

Response – The business rate retention scheme was introduced after WECA came into being, this was not offered as an upfront benefit.

B&NES did join the pilot scheme for the localisation of business rates, by joining we have benefited through immediate growth gains. There is still going to be an evolution of national policy that will determine how the rate will be revenue neutral.

The lobby of government will continue and we are highlighting a number of areas such as, student numbers, tourism levy, charitable business rate relief, permitted development rights and special education needs.

George Samios – As a headmaster in the City I see the discussions with children about the importance of recycling and they see this is the right thing to do.

Response – Thanks for the efforts that you are making.

George Samios - The message that the most vulnerable people are being taken care of is good to hear and is linked to the point I make about funding for schools.

School funding over the next two years sees an extra £3.5 million being shared across the area. If however the choice is made to move to the new formula for allocation of the funding the five most deprived schools in the area will lose out on £200,000. It is now up to Councillor Paul May to make a decision.

Response - The decision is scheduled on the forward plan, the Council does not make the decision alone, and the schools forum will be involved with this. Councillor Gerrish said that he will look to see what can be done on this.

Virginia Williamson – How can the Council Consultation be widened to involve the harder to reach residents and get a cross range of organisations and residents better informed?

Response – This presentation is only the starting point and we recognise that the process will take further engagement sessions that will look ahead to further years. Getting a wide range of people involved is important and the third sector group and the area forums are part of the overall methods we will use.

Rosie Phillips – the setting of expectations needs to be carefully managed when delivering awareness. The broader picture needs to be looked at and avoidance of just listening to the loudest voices only is needed.

Response – The role of the Council is changing and a broader role for the community will be required. We want greater engagement with proactive and positive groups.

Ashley Ayre – All of the Divisional Director Plans will be published and will go to scrutiny in January 2018, a range of plans for savings will be going to the panel. Any proposals for alternative savings will need to be set out with the financial implications.

Councillor Shaun Stephenson-McGall – This year's plans from Bristol Council were set out in November 2017 line by line. We should aspire to reach this level of detail for the next years round at around September 2018. As Adult Social Care is such a large part of the budget it would be encouraged if the cabinet member could attend these meetings to give greater levels of detail.

Response – This year saw late pressures from social care and the overspend which was only identified in August 2017.

Councillor Shaun Stephenson-McGall – Have the two MPs been invited to give their opinions on the budget?

Response – Yes, the NES MP has already met and the Bath MP is meeting next Friday.

Councillor Shaun Stephenson-McGall – Have the changes that are being made to parking charges within residential zones in Bristol been looked at?

Response – This is something that we will be looking into.

4. Agreement of the minutes of the last forum meeting - 20 September 2017

Robin Kerr felt that the note included from the Fire Service regarding the number of inspections carried out on party house was not sufficient. Robin continued in suggesting that the October report that had been provided needed to be substantially improved with respect to 'Party Houses', providing detail of the number of inspections which have taken place and what remedial action has been considered necessary in order to bring the danger in these potential death-traps within the kind of risk considered acceptable in hotels and guest houses.

The minutes were agreed as an accurate record by Cllr Colin Blackburn and seconded by Cllr Colin Appleyard.

A request was made for papers to be made available earlier for meetings.

5. CEF and CIL Group update

The working group met on 24th November 2017 and has recommendations to make on the Community Empowerment Fund and the local portion of Community Infrastructure Levy.

The working group plans to meet two weeks before each meeting of Bath City Forum. A different member of the group will report the recommendations back in rotation.

The Working Group members are:

Cllr Colin Blackburn

Roger Driver

Cllr June Player

Robin Kerr

Cllr June Player

Caroline Kay

Cllr Rob Appleyard asked if the information on each project would be presented in detail to the Bath City Forum.

Cllr Colin Blackburn explained that the working group had been given the task by the Bath City Forum to decide on the recommendations from the applications that had been completed and make recommendations for the Forum to agree.

Cllr Rob Appleyard felt that the forum should be given the opportunity to see each application in greater detail and asked for a motion to defer all decision to a later meeting to allow for greater transparency and challenge.

Cllr Dine Romero asked if having two elected members from the same ward on the working group was the right and correct for balance.

Cllr Colin Blackburn explained that all forum members had been given the opportunity to come forward to be part of the working group and the take up was disappointing. The members that are on the working group have made fair assessments of the projects that they have looked at and have been impartial in the work they have carried out.

Cllr Rob Appleyard asked to join the working group for future meetings. It was agreed this would be fine and the dates of future meeting will be shared.

Cllr Patrick Anketell-Jones asked to the decision on CIL funding for the junction of Marlborough Lane be recommended for cabinet approval as it had been through the process that is laid out. Patrick provided background on the history of this highway scheme and called for it to be recommended.

Caroline Kay felt that the working group had been delegated the task of making the recommendation back to the forum and these should be taken as advised. Caroline added that the reports back and paperwork can be improved for future meetings. The Forum was asked to understand that there will be more projects that will only be made possible in the future if a patchwork of funding is used to meet the needs.

Councillor Shaun Stephenson-McGall explained that the Ward Councillors in Bath all have Highways issues that they would like progressed and the priority grid for these needs to be referred to.

Councillor Anthony Clarke explained that this scheme is categorised as high priority and is of benefit to at least three wards.

Mike Hill felt the working group has been empowered by the forum to make these recommendations and we must allow progress to be made otherwise nothing will get done.

Rosie Phillips felt the forum has signed up to a process and we must be allowed to get on with the work as long as the criteria are being followed.

Leslie Redwood felt the Bath City Forum needs to show residents that they are delivering projects for the good of the City; we need to get on with this and start to see the benefits coming through.

The Chair, Councillor Colin Blackburn at this point felt that the forum needed to take a vote on the motions to take forward or defer the decision making process.

The Bath City Forum Members were asked "Do we defer the decisions that have been brought by the CIL / CEF Working Group to this meeting for recommendation"

For – 3 votes

Against – 8 votes

Abstentions 2 votes

It was therefore agreed that the Bath City Forum would make decisions on the three projects brought to the meeting.

The applications for the CEF were:

Application 1: Supply and install a CCTV camera for Bath Spa Railway Station Tunnel

Applicant: Adam Reynolds, Cycle Bath

Summary: The bid is for £1,092 which is half of the cost for the purchase and installation of a new CCTV camera at Bath Spa Railway Station Tunnel. The CCTV will help to mitigate the numerous bicycle thefts that occur in this area. This funding is a one off cost, any ongoing maintenance and monitoring will be adopted by Southgate Centre.

Project Cost: £2,184.00

Funding Requested: £1,092.00

Matched Funding: £1,092.00 – Ward Councillor Initiative Funding has been allocated.

Outcome: The panel agreed unanimously to award funding of £1,092.00. Additionally if signage for the camera will be required a small contingency of £108.00 was agreed if needed. The group felt that the project met the requirements of the criteria.

The forum members voted and the outcome was:

For: 13 votes

Against: 1 vote

Abstentions 1 vote

This project was therefore recommended to go ahead.

Application 2: Proposed New Disabled Toilet Facility at Bath City Football Club

Applicant: Sally Harris, Community Director, Bath City Football Club

Summary: Bath City Football Club wish to provide a disabled access toilet in their clubhouse at Twerton Park. The club is now in a community ownership model and has plans for greater levels of development that will benefit the local community overall.

Project Cost: £7,687.64

Funding Requested: £6,000.00

Matched Funding: £1,687.84

Shortfall: £2,156.18

Outcome: The panel agreed unanimously to award funding of £3,843.82, this is on the condition that the full amount can be matched. The group felt that the project met the requirements of the criteria.

The forum members voted and the outcome was:

For: 12 votes

Against: 0 vote

Abstentions 3 votes

This project was therefore recommended to go ahead.

The application for the Bath CIL was:

Application: Contribution to the Marlborough Buildings / Cavendish Road Highways Scheme

Applicant: Stephen Little / Thomas Hayward

Summary: Marlborough Buildings and Cavendish Road have been identified as a dangerous junction that needs to be improved for drivers and pedestrians. There has been extensive consultation and plans put forward over the last fifteen years.

Project Cost: £245,000

Funding Requested: £70,000

Additional Funds: The Highways Maintenance Block and the Capital programme budget will fund the rest of the project.

Outcome: The scheme will see benefits city wide, there are local improvements that residents who live within the ward where the scheme is situated. Residents from across the City use this busy stretch of road so therefore a wider impact will be gained.

The panel agreed unanimously to award funding of £70,000 be awarded to this project. The group felt that the project has wide community support and has met the requirements of the criteria.

The forum members voted and the outcome was:

For: 11 votes

Against: 1 vote

Abstentions 3 vote

This project was therefore recommended to go to cabinet for approval.

6. Other Updates

Fire Service

The Fire Service provided a written operational update (attached).

Co-opted Members

Recruitment will take place in January 2018 for the co-opted vacancies for the Bath City Forum. The first group that were appointed to the forum in January 2016 will need to confirm if they will be continuing in their roles for a further two years. Co-opted members are asked to contact Mark Hayward with their intentions.

Community Governance Review

Councillor Shaun Stephenson-McGall asked if his request that an item on Bath holding a Community Governance Review had been discussed.

It was explained that this item has not yet been added to the forward plan to be included in a future meeting. Shaun pointed out that the minutes of the last meeting had expressed the request to hold a discussion and include experts that could provide advice.

Bath City Forum Development

Councillor Colin Blackburn explained that he and Rosie had started discussions on ways to improve the usefulness of the items that the Bath City Forum look at bringing to the agenda. The initial thoughts are that items need to avoid duplication of items being discussed elsewhere, be of interest to residents and have genuinely useful outcomes for Bath.

The working groups that have been set up were discussed and it was explained that these groups had not always worked effectively and there needs to be consideration given to which groups wish to continue. There needs to be an appetite from each group with structures to report back into the main forum meetings.

It was suggested that a forward plan for future meetings is brought together and that the working groups be added as a future item for a fuller discussion.

Councillor Colin Blackburn asked that forum members send any thoughts on what they would like to see on the agenda at future meetings and on any recommendations they have for improving the format of the meetings. These are to be e-mailed to Mark Hayward.

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Bath & North East Somerset

Bath Communities Forum

Fire Service Summary

October 2017

Neighbourhood Map:



The Communities Forums are unique areas set up by the Local Authority. Each Communities Forum is made up of several Wards.

Community Fire Safety Activity:

Total of last Three months

August 2017 - October 2017

Home fire safety visits	127
Education Institutions visits	3
Off Station Community Events	9

Fire Incidents:

	Nov 2015 - Oct 2016	Nov 2016 - Oct 2017	Change
Deliberate vehicle fires:	13	9	-4
Deliberate small fires:	46	65	19
Deliberate large non-vehicle fires:	21	10	-11
Accidental dwelling fires:	49	44	-5
Other fire incidents:	71	67	-4
Non-fire incidents:	207	278	71
False Alarm incidents:	718	712	-6
Total number of incidents attended:	1125	1185	60

Station Managers report:

Crews have attended University residential premises to observe and provide advice on fire evacuation training and to advise on cooking safety. Our Technical Fire Safety department have inspected a number of "party houses" and they have been added to the routine inspection programme. Work has commenced to programme in visits to local foodbanks so that Home fire safety visit referrals can be attained for those who would benefit this will be ongoing over the winter months. Community resilience volunteers will be continuing with river walks helping to keep members of the public safe when near water. Post Glenfell fire inspections to High Rise properties has been completed by crews and Technical fire safety staff with advice being given to occupiers.

National Campaign Theme:

As the nights start drawing in Avon Fire & Rescue Service are working with universities, the police and key agencies to deliver safety messages concerning water, fire and personal safety.

How to contact us:

Fire Station: Bath
Station Manager: Gareth Lloyd
Station Address: Cleveland Bridge
 Bath
 BA2 6PU
Email: Gareth.Lloyd@avonfire.gov.uk
Telephone: 01179 262061

Local Contact:

Watch Manager Tom Coombs, bath Fire station. 01179262061 ext 8120.
 thomas.coombs@avonfire.gov.uk

In an emergency: 999 or 112
For non emergency: 01179 262061

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