



**Note of the meeting of the Bathavon North Forum  
held on Thursday, 22nd November, 2018  
in Kaposvar Room - Guildhall, Bath**

**Meeting Attendance**

<b>In Attendance</b>
Catherine Campbell
Wendy Christine Chambers
Richard Clist
David Dixon
Mark Hayward
Duncan Kerr
Andrew Macmillian
Chris Major
Maureen Millbank
Councillor Paul Myers
Councillor Geoff Ward
Emily Wright

<b>Apologies Received from</b>
Councillor Alison Millar

**1. Welcome, Introductions and notes from the last meeting**

Hugh Baker thanked everybody for their attendance and gave the apologies for absence.

The notes from the previous meeting were agreed as an accurate record.

**2. Rural Broadband**

Duncan Kerr (DK) (Team Manager Business Growth for Bath and North East Somerset Council) explained that Bath and North East Somerset Council are working with broadband providers to convince them that there is enough of a requirement for a gigabit voucher scheme in rural areas.

Geoff Ward (GW) felt that within the Bathavon North Ward there are a number of workers that could benefit from being able to work from home; this would see the added benefit of a reduction in the number of car journeys that need to be made. There is also an impact on house prices where high speed broadband is not assessable.

DK explained that the fibre installation is a worm holing agreement that works with the land owners.

GW is interested in knowing how you get a scheme actively up and running.

DK explained Connecting Devon and Somerset (CDS) consider areas that are rural enough to be included in the scheme, these need to be larger block areas non-commercial areas in CDS. Procurement has had its issues and the programme is extended, it is possible for the Gigaclear programme to deliver connections to the premises.

There is a gigabit broadband voucher scheme for businesses which offers up to £3,000 towards the installation costs for upgrading their service, there are successes already in the Chew Valley area. The cut-off date for vouchers falls in the next 3-6 months and then delivery will follow.

DK advised that care is needed not to end up paying for two different providers; the commitment to be signed up to a new scheme needs consideration.

DK offered parish councils the opportunity to invite him along to their meeting if they wish to discuss their local needs

Further details on CDS can be found at:-

<https://www.connectingdevonandsomerset.co.uk/work-begins-new-fibre-broadband-network-bath-north-east-somerset-north-somerset/>

### **3. Police Update**

Sargent Andrew Macmillian introduced himself and gave an update on how the police are approaching their work in the local area. There is a keenness to be more visible and be seen out and about so that the community concerns can be heard. The use of electric bikes and foot patrols will allow for the public to access the local officers and provide input. Officers are now equipped with laptops and 4G mobile devices that allow them to work from a variety of locations.

There has been concerns raised about the response times of the police, when the public see poor delivery they lose the interest in reporting incidents. There is a new system that the police are now using which looks at where the crime patterns are emerging and deploys the response in accordance.

There is a dedicated farm watch unit in place locally and they have a two tier response mechanism that is used to follow up on reported incidents.

Communities are an important source of information for the police neighbourhood teams, the public are asked to report crime through the 101 number and asking for the Bath neighbourhood team.

### **4. Bath Clean Air Zone**

Cathryn Brown and Chris Major provided a presentation and discussed the proposed clean air zone for Bath.

A number of points were raised these included.

- Wider assistance will be offer to those people that are affected by the scheme and work in Bath
- The consultation has already seen over 6,100 responses recorded.

The point was raised that the working classes will be penalised the most as they have a high reliance on the bus options that are presently high in cost and poorly delivered. If nothing is done to improve public transport in advance of the start of the scheme then the worst off will really suffer.

Additionally the offer of grants to help replace vehicles will be out of the reach of poorer people as they will not be able to afford the repayments.

- The buses in Bath are run in a commercial market and First Bus have high costs that they need to cover when agreeing to provide each route and service. The subsidies that presently exist are not sufficient to change thing dramatically but we are keen to look at offering additional support where we can.

The question was asked about how the schemes infrastructure will work.

- There will be signage that will be in place within the city and also much further out so the route in are covered from as far afield as the M4 and Warminster.
- Only the vehicles that are non-compliant will have to pay. This will only be once in a 24 hour period.
- It will be the driver's responsibility to pay the charge if they enter the zone in a non-compliant vehicle.
- It is expected that all of the bus companies will be compliant before the scheme goes live.
- Drivers will have enough opportunity to manoeuvre away from entering the zone.
- The link of high polluting vehicles and health issues is the reason for this scheme.

Has there been forecasting carried out on impact on the HGV's?

- Yes and the impact is seen to be small.
- National fleets change relatively quickly and have the ability to move vehicles around.
- There is a risk that large companies will just decide to pay.

How high are the levels of pollution on George Street in Bath?

- Yes this street has high levels
- A group called Bath Hacked has validated data that shows the highest contributor to nitrogen dioxide levels are diesel cars with 43%

When can the public expect to see the results of the consultation published?

- The data is being analysed as we are receiving it
- We expect to release a report in advance of the December 2018 cabinet meeting.

A comment was made that some people presently think the impact will be on greater number of vehicles that are to be included in this option.

What will happen to the Council if you do not go ahead with a CAZ?

- There is a risk of the Council being fined for non-compliance.

The park and ride service opening hours are not sufficient.

- There are proposals that the hours will be extended, this could see early start times and last buses as late as 11pm or midnight.

Why not look at electric trams or stopping all vehicles to the city?

- We have a remit to achieve compliance in the shortest possible time.
- Other ideas to complement the scheme are on the radar.

If this option does not achieve what it needs to what then? Bus gates?

- The proposal that we put forward has to have a likely to achieve compliance rate.
- The levels of uptake and behaviour change will dictate how we do.

Why not offer free school buses for all of our children?

- The cost would be around £5 million to do this.

The point was raised around the health threat that I cited as the reason for a CAZ being needed. Where people have pre-existing conditions the threshold that is put in place may not really make any difference to them.

- A report has been conducted in London that shows that there is an evident difference in the risk to Children if nothing is done.

Has there been dialogue with Wiltshire Council?

- Yes, there have been discussions.

When will the grants programme be available to those who need to apply?

- This will come after the sign off for the scheme has been agreed. It will be after June 2019 but before the scheme goes live.

## 5. Consultation

Councillor Paul Myers explained that the Bath City Forum had opened discussions on how the Council carries out Consultation earlier this year.

This has led to all of the forums being asked to put forward representatives for a one off workshop on Consultation and Communication.

A slide was used that demonstrated the complexities that exist in the consultation arena.

**The points below were captured: -**

- The good and the bad examples from the past need to be drawn out.
- An understanding of what is liked and what is not liked in the process.
- When a good idea has to happen it needs to be planned.
- Opposition to it is perceived to be a waste of time and we seem to stay where we are now.
- Views vs. pull out points has to be meaningful
- When a single option is put forward this becomes more of an agreement on yes or no.
- Variations in options need to be set out. Not doing this sets yourself up to fail.
- A general process is needed with compliant options
- Don't describe to detail to the public early enough this can create short circuits
- Set out how an option is to be achieved

- Decide if a focus group early on will help
- People can appear misinformed, example, “if we drive into Bath we will get fined”
- The way people see an issue should be recognised £9 CAZ + £15 Days Parking = £24 to come to work
- 1000 people looking into a field, it not easy to change their views
- Avoidance actions will be taken when people don't like what they see as likely outcome.
- Questions are manipulated to get the answers that you want.
- Council Officers write the questions
- Councillors hear multiple points of view
- Earlier debates, then look at all of the options, then decide on the option/s which you wish to consult on.
- Do you know enough to make the right choice when there is no easy answer?
- Cabinet need to have the correct question given at the right quality

**Examples of bad consultation: -**

- Feeling of no consultation
- Big planters put in the public realm
- Reaction from the public on cycling needs
- Initially being listened but the feeling that this does not do any good

Hugh Baker and Richard Clist agreed to be the representatives for Bathavon North Forum at the workshop that will be held in January 2019.

**6. Future Agenda Items**

Suggestions for forum future agenda items:-

- Support for elderly people
- Presentation from Barry Gilbertson on the Buffer Zone and Setting of the World Heritage City.