

Final Minutes of the
Chew Valley Area Forum
 26th November 2018, 6.00pm
 The Library, Chew Valley School, BS40 8QB

Present

Name	Organisation Represented
Chris Head	Chair of the Forum and Executive Director of West of England Rural Network
Cllr Tony Heaford	Vice Chair of the Forum and Publow with Pensford Parish Council
Gary Adams	Head of Corporate Finance, B&NES
Cllr Rodney Andrews	Chew Magna Parish Council
PC Jon Beswetherick	Avon and Somerset Police
Mike Bowden	Corporate Director, B&NES
Cllr Heather Clewett	Stowey Sutton Parish Council
Cllr Chris Craig	Compton Martin Parish Council
Sara Dixon	Locality Manager, B&NES
Cllr Mark Dury	Whitchurch Village Council
Cllr Lynne Easton	Chew Magna Parish Council
Cllr Charles Gerrish	B&NES Ward Councillor, Keynsham North and Cabinet Member for Finance and Efficiency
Mike Hammond	Resident
John Harvey	Clerk to Stanton Drew Parish Council
Dr Chris Lewis	Resident
Cllr Paul May	Cabinet member for Children and Young People and B&NES Ward Councillor for Publow and Whitchurch
Cllr Colin Moore	Ubley Parish Council
Cllr Paul Myers	Cabinet Member for Economic and Community Regeneration
PC Stuart Peard	Avon and Somerset Police
Cllr Vic Pritchard	B&NES Cabinet Member for Adult Care, Health and Wellbeing
Cllr Liz Richardson	B&NES Ward Councillor, Chew Valley North
Cllr Tim Warren	Leader – B&NES and B&NES Ward Councillor for Mendip
Cllr Karen Warrington	Cabinet Member for Transformation and Customer Services
Anna Wheeler	City of Bath College
Alison Wells	Community Engagement Officer, B&NES

Apologies

Name	Organisation Represented
	Chew Medical Practice
Jane Eagon	Resident
Cllr Richard Ireland	West Harptree Parish Council
Cllr Rosemary Naish	Clutton Parish Council
Denise Perrin	West of England Rural Network

		Action
1.	Welcome from the Chair, Chris Head. Notes of previous meeting (24th September 2018) and matters arising and apologies	
1.1	CH welcomed those present and said he was pleased to see so many members of B&NES Cabinet present. He reminded those attending to sign in.	
1.2	Apologies as above.	

1.3	The notes of the previous meeting were agreed as a true record.	
1.4	<p>CH said the Forum had been advised on drop-in events for the Council's Local Plan. Two further dates have been added as follows:</p> <p>Stockwood Library, Bristol – 3rd December 1.00pm – 5.00pm. This event is focussing on transport issues but also the Whitchurch Strategic Development Location (SDL). This event has been organised by Bristol City Council but B&NES officers will also be in attendance.</p> <p>Temple Cloud – 5th December, Temple Cloud Village Hall, 4.00pm – 7.00pm. The event also publicised as serving Clutton parish/residents and main focus will be on Local Plan 'non-strategic' housing options (one of which includes locations at Clutton & Temple Cloud) plus Whitchurch SDL and transport issues relating to A4/A37/S. Bristol link</p>	
1.5	CH asked that the JSP is a future Agenda item.	AW/SD
1.6	CH said events to mark the 50 th Anniversary of the Chew Valley Flood had taken place and a commemorative book funded by the Pensford, Woollard, Publow and Stanton Community Trust was published today. It is possible to get copies at Pensford Post Office – they are £5. The project is now entering its next phase looking forward on how to prevent flooding.	
1.7	SD suggested a copy of the book to go to the new Community Library at Bishop Sutton. CH said there is archive material in Bath, with schools and at the West of England Rural Network. This includes audio-visual films. The other information is held in Taunton, so it is good to have some locally.	
2.	Update from the Police	
2.1	CH welcomed Stuart Peard and Jon Beswetherick. Jon is the new Neighbourhood Beat Manager for Pensford and Chew Valley. SP said he has left a report on tables which will also be circulated after the meeting. There have been two, non-dwelling break-ins at Clutton and High Littleton. A three tonne digger was stolen in the break-in at Clutton. This was an organised criminal gang operating in the area. There were two dwelling burglaries at West Harptree and Nempnett Thrubwell. These were isolated houses and ransacked on a Sunday evening – so do ensure you have some form of crime prevention in place such as timers for lamps and curtains drawn.	
2.2	In the run up to Christmas, Police will be delivering a newsletter to Neighbourhood Watch groups with advice. Also to retailers to encourage them to check that their CCTV is working, keep an eye out for people hanging around and encourage staff to check whether visitors are genuine customers.	
2.3	SP introduced Jon Beswetherick who joined the team last week. JB said he has been a police officer for 11 years mainly at Trinity Road in Bristol. He has lived at Chewton Mendip and now lives in Midsomer Norton. He will be supported by PCSOs Nigel Bragg and Dave Hobbs.	
2.4	JB said a priority is road safety including speeding and drink driving. Any intelligence on this would be welcome. He would encourage people to report any suspicious activity as it could be key to a wider picture.	
2.5	VP said there was a non-dwelling burglary at Weaver's Yard in Farrington that	

	is not recorded in the report – are the Police aware of it? JB confirmed they are – a vehicle was stolen and spotted in two Mendip locations but abandoned in Hartcliffe. SP said Dundry Hill is used to quickly access the lakes and Cheddar but the criminals are probably from South Bristol.	
2.6	VP asked why criminals steal vehicle number plates. SP said they can then switch them on stolen vehicles. JB said they can also use them to commit fuel offences.	
2.7	PM said that as a Ward Councillor for Midsomer Norton, he is aware of issues around illegal drug taking and selling. He has urged local residents to report this to Police as there is not enough intelligence to pursue it. He would urge other Forum members to report any similar activity to the Police as he is aware this is an issue across the UK. For rural communities, activity may be taking place in car parks and field entrances. If you do not wish to report it to local police, it can be done anonymously via Crimestoppers https://crimestoppers-uk.org/ or call 0800 555 111.	
2.8	CH said doctors' surgeries may be a good place to promote this. PM agreed and said it is not solely about clamping down on dealers but working with organisations such as Developing Health and Independence (DHI) so that those affected can get the support they need.	
2.9	CH thanked the Police for attending.	
3.	Priorities for discussion in 2019	
3.1	CH said a programme for the coming year will be agreed but to let him, Alison or Sara know if there is anything you want to discuss.	
4.	Working Together: Our Budget, Our Plans and Our Communities	
4.1	See Appendix 1 for the Budget Presentation and questions and answers arising. Following the budget presentation there was a discussion on the Council's Consultation processes as follows:	
4.2	LE said it is not just about getting feedback but listening to residents. PM agreed but said that in return, he would like residents to read information provided by the Council – many do not and are misinformed when they make representations.	
4.3	CH said the Wigan Deal is divided into 6 sections for delivery and Bath and North East Somerset has 6 Forums – it may be possible to have local delivery as well.	
4.4	TW reminded the Forum that the Clean Air Zone consultation closes this evening.	
4.5	LE said the Council probably receives most feedback from unhappy residents which may skew the overall picture.	
4.6	CH said he is happy to represent the Forum on a group to take this forward – if there is another interested Forum member, let him know.	
4.7	CH said that further information on the timeline for the budget and opportunities to provide more feedback would be circulated to the Forum.	AW/SD

4.8	CH also reiterated that there will be changes to the ward boundaries in Chew Valley with Chew Valley North and South merging into a single ward with two elected representatives.	
4.9	TH said that the Council has a lot of valuable property in Bath and asked if it ever disposes of any? CG said the Council receives around £17m of revenue from rent on this. The Council does dispose of property that is not delivering the best return on investment and reinvests in others that are more profitable.	

AGM

5.	Notes of the previous AGM (4th December 2018) and matters arising	
5.1	The notes were agreed as a true record. There were no matters arising.	
6.	Chair's Annual Review	
6.1	CH said this was circulated with the papers and contains useful information on the topics discussed over the course of the past year. We had a number of good sessions and the last meeting was particularly impactful. Youth provision and young people is a topic we should return to. CH thanked Alison and Sara for producing the review.	AW/SD
7.	Review and Amend, if required, Terms of Reference	
7.1	SD said that she would like to suggest City of Bath College and Chew Valley Medical Practice as new members of the Forum as they are regularly represented. TW formally proposed and all were in agreement.	AW/SD
9.	Election of the Chair and Vice Chair positions	
9.1	CH said that Tony Heaford is standing down as Vice Chair. He thanked him for his contribution to the Forum and presented him with a small gift. TH said that Chris Head has been a great leader and it has been a pleasure to support him. TH said he was part of the group that assisted with the formation of the Forums and has been pleased to see them develop successfully. He will continue to attend the meetings but gives apologies for the next one.	AW/SD
9.2	CH handed over to Sara Dixon for the election. SD said that nominations had been received for Chris Head as Chair and Cllr Heather Clewett as Vice Chair. SD said Heather is a Councillor with Stowey Sutton Parish Council and has worked on a number of projects over the years including the Bishop Sutton play area and community library. She invited Heather to say a few words. HC said that she has been attending Forum meetings for several years and been really impressed by the topics and discussion. KW proposed her as Vice Chair and all agreed.	
9.3	CH thanked the Forum for re-electing him and electing HC. TW thanked CH for his work as Chair and TH for his work as Vice Chair and HC for agreeing to stand.	

Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for 25th February 2019, 6.00pm at Chew Valley School.

This will be followed in March by the pre-election period (purdah) in the run up to the local elections in May. The Forum will reconvene after this.

Presentation: Working Together: Our Budget, Our Plans and Our Communities

Presenters: Cllr Charles Gerrish – Cabinet Member for Finance and Efficiency
Mike Bowden – Corporate Director

Slide	Comment
Title Slide	Working Together on... Our budget, our plans and our communities
Slide 1 – Introductions and Welcome	MB said he is pleased to be the senior officer link between this Forum and the Council and regularly attends. He said the Council is keen to build a stronger relationship between officers, Councillors, residents and businesses. He handed over to Cllr Charles Gerrish.
Slide 2 – Overview	CG gave an overview of what the presentation would cover.
Slides 3 and 4 – Feedback from last year and key issues from last year	One of the key issues raised at last year's Budget Presentation was lobbying of Government to assist the Council in resolving its challenges. The Council has passed a formal document to send to Government. The Council's key message is protecting the most vulnerable.
Slides 5 and 6 – This year's finances – 2018/19 and Council Tax	This slide shows where each £1 raised from Council Tax is spent. The Council also collects the funds on behalf of the Police, Avon Fire Authority and precepts on behalf of Parish Councils and the Charter Trustees of the City of Bath.
Slide 7 – Income	This pie chart shows where the Council gets its income – Council Tax accounts for just 26.2% of this.
Slide 8 – Council Tax spent	This table illustrates how each £1 of Council Tax is spent. 81.6p in every £1 is spent on Adult and Children's Social Care. This leaves little to spend on the other services the Council delivers. The Council is fortunate to generate income from attractions such as the Roman Baths which equates to £80 off every Council Tax bill, so the whole district benefits. However, the table does demonstrate how little is left to spend on highways, potholes etc.
Slides 9 and 10 – The last 12 months	Over the last 12 months, the Roman Baths had a record number of visitors and the Victoria Art Gallery has already met its annual target. There was also an increase in revenue from the Council's property portfolio. The Council has launched its own housing company and is developing homes from its old offices in Keynsham – 200 enquiries on these have already been received. The profits will form part of the Council's revenue. However, despite successes, the Council has had to reduce services such as grass cutting on land we do not own. The Council has also withdrawn its Arts Development service and reduced the amount of office accommodation it uses due to lower numbers of staff. It may be possible to sub-let some of this space to generate income. The Council has also renegotiated the cost of some social care places.
Slide 11 – We have also	The Council has agreed its 'ask' of central Government which will help it to become more self-sufficient. This includes a request for powers to levy a

	<p>'Tourism Tax' on visitors in the form of a modest fee for overnight stays – other Councils are asking for similar powers. Air B&B is a growing issue with properties being bought specifically for this purpose. As a result, there is a loss of family homes and in some cases, nuisance caused and limited safety measures – all with no business tax levied.</p> <p>The two Universities in Bath result in a loss of both Council Tax and Business Rates. It is calculated that the Council loses £3m in Council Tax as students, quite rightly, do not have to pay but the landlords do not either. The Council estimates that 3,000 homes in the district have been lost to houses of multiple occupation for students. Some business premises have also been lost to development as student accommodation, resulting in a loss of business rates.</p> <p>The Council is working with the Local Government Association on this and the Government announced in their Autumn Statement support on business rates for small retailers affected by on-line sales with Councils to be recompensed for the subsequent loss of business rates.</p>
Slide 12 – A special thank you: together, we	<p>Fix My Street has proved popular with residents and Parish Councils for reporting small, local issues. It facilitates faster reporting of issues direct to the relevant officers and a direct method of feedback from the Council. In the last month, 687 issues reported have been addressed.</p> <p>4 Community Libraries have opened – unlike other authorities, Bath & North East Somerset Council has supported improvements to library services by working in partnership with the community. The libraries are situated in Bishop Sutton, Paulton, Timsbury and Weston. The Council is also working with a group in Oldfield Park and is keen to work with local communities to improve a range of local services.</p> <p>Thanks to the efforts of residents, there has been an increase in recycling rates from 40% to 60%. We all know neighbours who may still not recycle all they could, so please do support them. It costs the Council £1,000 for every lorry load of refuse sent to landfill but £100 of income is generated for every lorry load of recycling, which benefits all residents.</p>
Slides 13 and 14 – The year ahead 2019/20 and The National Context	<p>This sets out some of the funding the Government is allocating. This includes £84m over 5 years for Children and Young People's social care. However, B&NES is not one of the 20 Councils that will benefit from this.</p> <p>There is funding from the West of England Combined Authority (WECA) for roads – the improvements at the '2-headed man' at Marksbury has resulted in faster journey times.</p>
Slide 15 – Our budget 2019/20	<p>The Council has identified £10m of savings but still has £6.1m of savings to find. This is after a 1% increase in Council Tax to support adult social care. Over 3 years, Councils can increase Council Tax up to 6% to specifically support social care. The Council has taken 5% in previous years so the maximum of this precept for the coming financial year is 1%.</p> <p>The Council has not announced a Council Tax rise as yet but it is realistic to expect one.</p>
Slide 16 – 2019/20 Budget Savings	<p>This slide sets out how the Council hopes to achieve savings which includes, renegotiating with its suppliers. The Council has had some success with this but it is not easy due to inflation.</p>

	<p>Reducing spend on Youth Services sounds harsh but a new staff mutual is being established which means they will be able to attract external funding which the Council is not able to access. Youth Workers will continue to be supported with this.</p> <p>The Parish Sweeper scheme will cease. This only applied to 16 Parishes and involved subsidising them with funding to pay for their own sweeper. The scheme was not equitable and will be phased out over 3 years so the affected communities have time to adjust.</p> <p>If funding from the Government is phased out, the department of the Council that benefitted has to bear the loss. This includes a Public Health Grant which is being reduced. However, there are good news stories such as a fall in the number of teenage pregnancies.</p> <p>Shared services include working in partnership with North Somerset Council on Audit West. This also helps generate income by offering the service to Parishes.</p> <p>The Council will review the use of agency workers and contractor spend.</p> <p>In terms of the capital programme, this will focus on substantial developments rather than the smaller, time consuming projects.</p>
Slide 17 – The long-term challenge remains	<p>Over the next 5 years, the Council needs to save a further £50m. This can be offset by increases in income and Council Tax. However, it will be a challenge for any future administration. The Council has saved £55m between 2013 and 2018.</p> <p>The Government will withdraw its Revenue Support Grant to Councils in 2020/21.</p> <p>Demand and demographic pressure refers to the fact that people are living longer, with more complex needs, requiring more support from Local Authorities.</p>
Slide 18 – Cumulative Budget Gap	<p>This table shows that the likely gap in funding and demand for services until 2022/23.</p>
Slide 19 – Demand Pressure: Looked after children	<p>In the last 5 years, the number of looked after children has increased by 40% to 191. Of these, the 21 with the most complex needs cost £3.2m alone. They often have to travel outside B&NES for specialist care. The Council has lost some local foster carers so are having to make use of agencies which have higher costs. The Council has a statutory duty to provide these services.</p>
Slides 20 and 21 – Our Plan	<p>The Council wants to be self-sufficient. It has been supported by national funding which will cease – instead, we want the Government to help us with powers to do things differently. For example, the Council has the highest number of Listed Buildings in its district outside Westminster. Owners of these do not pay a fee for planning applications even though the Council has to employ staff to deal with them, so the ability to charge is one of the requests to Government.</p> <p>There are some services that the Council will have to stop delivering and a need to re-focus.</p>

	<p>The switch to LED Street Lighting has reduced the electricity bill.</p> <p>There will be further integration with the CCG (Clinical Commissioning Group) and they are also looking at how to make savings. An example is a unit at the RUH to deal with minor falls at home. A team will assess whether the patient can remain there with support, which saves on an ambulance being called and a hospital stay.</p> <p>The Council will increasingly become an 'enabler'. It was the AGM of SWAN this week and they thanked their volunteer drivers who contribute to people being able to continue living in their own homes. This is an example of a community organisation supported by the Council that benefits us all.</p>
Slide 22 – Looking further ahead – our priorities	<p>The Council's priorities are:</p> <p>Protecting and caring for our most vulnerable Nurturing residents' health, safety and wellbeing Providing ways for everyone in the community to reach their potential</p>
Slides 23, 24 and 25 – More of this please!	<p>Compassionate Communities: A number of our voluntary organisations are coming together, building a database of support available and making sure GPs have access to this. Many of those attending doctors' surgeries are not physically ill but do need support – some are lonely or in need of mental health support. Frome has already successfully adopted this model and it links with existing initiatives in Keynsham.</p> <p>Recycling: Schools have become involved in energy saving initiatives which results in lower bills for them. Community@67 is a community facility situated in a deprived part of Keynsham offering a range of activities and services, including training in the use of IT which helps people access a range of on-line information and services.</p> <p>Project Search: This is a Council supported apprenticeship scheme for young people with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND). Of a group of 9, 8 have now found employment. This reduces the number of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET).</p>
Slide 26 – We need to be clearer about	<p>The Council needs to be clearer about what can be delivered realistically within foreseeable resources. Cllr Myers will speak further on engagement with communities at the end of this presentation.</p> <p>Wigan, another Unitary Authority in the North of England, has published 'How We Work Together' which sets out what residents can expect from the Council but also what the community can do to assist.</p> <p>We already have a Parish Charter which helps clarify the roles of the Council and the parishes and aims to reduce duplication.</p>
Slide 27 – Protecting and caring for our most vulnerable	<p>These slides set out some examples of how the Council and community might work together. The Council will support people with health and care needs to stay in their own homes. The community can help support this by being good neighbours – checking on the elderly and vulnerable and making sure they have human contact.</p>
Slide 28 – Nurturing	<p>The Council will support health and safety, public health and refuse collection. Residents can assist by promoting health and prevention as well</p>

residents' health, safety and wellbeing	as recycling correctly and getting involved in local litter picking.
Slide 29 – Providing ways for everyone in the community to reach their potential	The Council will promote a strong local economy, affordable homes and local transport. It will focus on supporting young people to develop their skills. The community can assist in a range of ways including volunteering. The Council is particularly keen to encourage more people to foster which helps prevent local young people going into care further away.
Slide 30 – Summary	The Council has achieved a lot and has a plan.
Slide 31 – Questions? What would a 'Bath and North East Somerset Deal' look like?	<i>See below for questions raised following the presentation.</i>
Slide 32 – Next steps and looking ahead	<p>This sets out the forthcoming timeline for the budget and the NHS Commissioning Alliance up to the local elections in May.</p> <p>There will be a reduction in the number of Councillors from 65 to 59 and changes to Ward Boundaries and Polling Stations.</p>
Slide 33 – Consultation on Consultation	CG handed over to Cllr Paul Myers. PM said that, a few months ago, members of the Bath City Forum raised concerns regarding the Council's consultation process and put forward an alternative. However, the Council needs to take account of the views of the other Forums as well. You will be aware of press coverage on issues such as the East of Bath Park and Ride; Foxhill redevelopment; proposed Bath Library relocation; the Clean Air Zone and other issues. What may seem to the Council and its partners a straightforward proposal can escalate in unforeseen ways. For example, ceasing to cut grass on land the Council does not own may seem like a common-sense decision when funding resources are limited. However, it causes issues where small pieces of land on housing estates are not adopted. When matters escalate, communications often break down and serious complications, such as judicial reviews, may result.
Slide 34 – Consultation Landscape = Complex	<p>This diagram illustrates the various parties involved and how relatively simply issues can become complex. The Council is seeking to understand how it can make things better and how we can work together, recognising statutory duties and process as well.</p> <p>PM said he would be interested to hear what experiences Forum members have had with regard to Council consultation – what you like and dislike about the way in which the Council consults.</p> <p>He is seeking 2 volunteers from each Forum to sit with officers and talk it through.</p>

Questions on the budget following the presentation

Q1: Assuming it were to go through will the Bath Clean Air Zone (CAZ) affect revenue?

A1: Any revenue raised from charges would first go towards the zone's on-going operating costs. Any surplus revenue would have to be re-invested in projects

that encourage clearer transport and travel in and around Bath.

Q2: Might the Clean Air Zone also come with bigger costs?

A2: The costs for implementing the Clean Air Zone are being met from central government funding.

Q3: What modelling has been done for Brexit given the income from tourism?

A3: The Local Government Association are providing advice to local councils. The fall in the pound has led to an increase in visitors from abroad and from UK visitors staying in the UK.

Q4: A significant number of carers come from overseas - are you concerned that the care sector could implode as a result of Brexit?

A4: We do share these concerns and lobbying has taken place through the LGA. It is recognised that caring should not be seen as a low-skill profession.

Comment 1: Carers may have qualifications that may not be recognised here in future.

Comment 2: There has been a massive increase in people with mental health needs but not all organisations can cope or are qualified to address these.

Response: We are dependent on external funding to deliver services and work closely with organisations such as DHI (Developing Health and Independence). There is some funding from the Government to assist but demand is outstripping supply.

Q5: You mentioned a 40% increase in looked after children – this seems high – why the increase?

A5: There are a number of factors, including unaccompanied asylum seeking children and an increase in children with significant health conditions. Our numbers were low to start with, but the increase has now brought us up to the national average. It is hard to pin-point a single factor but we are a small population so one or two large families can impact the percentages.

Comment 3: You said that 82p in the pound is spent on adult and children's social care but need to make a £50m saving over the next 5 years. By the time you get to this, you will only be delivering care and tiny bit of something else.

Response: We hope not – we hope to generate more income for example through our housing company. We are being very pro-active in this respect.

Comment 4: The Wigan Deal was presented to the Clinical Commissioning Group and is a powerful story. Getting communities to work better together and the 'invest to save' model are critical.

Response: Yes adult social care in particular is a national problem. We understand that the Government is bringing out a green paper on this issue. We are still waiting for this but it could change things.