

CABINET MEETING 20th May 2021

STATEMENTS FROM PUBLIC AND COUNCILLORS

1. Malcolm Baldwin – Parking Issues
2. John Chapman – Disable parking
3. Cllr Jess David – Weed control
4. Bob Goodman – Environmental matters and the city of Bath

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS - COUNCILLORS

M	01	Question from:	Councillor Karen Walker
<p>In response to the pandemic, the Bath Christmas market was cancelled in 2020.</p> <p>Many residents, shop owners and visitors have commented on social media both for and against having the market in Bath.</p> <p>The Christmas market was first seen on the streets of Bath in 2000 and has been a great success over the last 20 years, bringing in visitors from a wide variety of towns and cities.</p> <p>To achieve a happy medium, could the Christmas Market be permanently moved to The Royal Avenue, Royal Victoria Park?</p> <p>There is plenty of space for stalls to set up in safe, socially distanced way. Chalets can be situated on the very wide pavements.</p> <p>I am keen for locals and visitors to experience The Christmas market at its best, especially with The Ice Rink also situated on The Royal Avenue, the addition of a fairground to the Park would also bring the magic of Christmas back to Bath for all to use.</p> <p>The Royal Avenue Victoria Park is located close to Charlotte Street carpark and to a drop off point for coaches. The Royal Avenue is only a short walk into the city centre for those who wish to use facilities such as the shops and restaurants.</p> <p>Please could you consider my request to re-locate the Christmas Market to the Royal Avenue, Royal Victoria Park?</p>			
Answer from:			Councillor Kevin Guy
<p><i>Plans for Bath Christmas Market 2021 will be presented in a Report to Cabinet on 23 June 2021, which will outline the recommendations for approval.</i></p>			

M	02	Question from:	Councillor Colin Blackburn
<p>Could the Cabinet Member please tell me how much the costs were that were awarded against us in the Locksbrook Rd and Olly Barkley planning cases that were both lost at appeal?</p>			
Answer from:			Councillor Tim Ball
<p><i>Olly Barkley is related to 31 Third Avenue, Bath and costs were paid in the sum of £3,807.</i></p> <p><i>With regards to Locksbrook Road, this relates to application 18/05047/FUL which was allowed on appeal, but it does not appear that costs were awarded.</i></p>			
M	03	Question from:	Councillor Colin Blackburn
<p>We will every year have planning appeal applications. Inevitably sometimes we will lose these cases. Could the Cabinet Member tell me where have we allocated a provision of planning costs against us in 21/22 budget?</p>			
Answer from:			Councillor Tim Ball
<p><i>The Planning Service has a budget of £40,000 for 2021/22 for dealing with appeals and their associated legal costs, which includes provision for costs awarded against the Council.</i></p>			
M	04	Question from:	Councillor Robin Moss
<p>The Government has announced an additional £17M in funding for mental health services in schools & colleges. While this welcome, a substantial proportion of young people who would benefit from support have opted out of school or college. In addition the confidentiality & independence essential for such a service may be compromised by being provided 'in house'.</p>			

There are independent services that exist, such as 'Off the Record' & 'One CT Keynsham' that provide counselling & mental health support services outside of the educational ring fence but may not be eligible for this funding.

Will the Cabinet Member:

- (1) Write to central government to advocate for the independent sector to be included in the eligibility criteria for this money?
- (2) Outline what support B&NES will provide for our own local independent mental health support services for young people?

I declare an interest as an unpaid trustee of 'One CT Keynsham', I also have professional experience in this field as I used to manage an advice & counselling service for young people.

Answer from:	Councillor Dine Romero
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(1) Write to central government to advocate for the independent sector to be included in the eligibility criteria for this money?

The criteria for this funding has been set out by central government .

The £17 million announcement (<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/schools-and-colleges-to-benefit-from-boost-in-expert-mental-health-support>) is specifically for the following:

- *7 million - Extending the Wellbeing Education Return programme that Local Authorities were funded to deliver September 2020 to March 2021. In B&NES, we have offered our provision to any school and some independent schools have taken it up.*
- *9.5 million to fund new Senior Mental Health Lead training. The funding for this only covers state schools. An*

independent organisation could submit a plan to deliver this training. The relevant link is: [Establishing high quality training provision for senior mental health leads in schools and colleges - Contracts Finder](#) . In B&NES the independent sector are supported to be actively involved in the Voluntary Sector Network (VCS) and this network are represented on the multi-agency emotional health and wellbeing sub- group.

- *Link programme to improve partnership. The aim remains the same: to bring together local leaders in education and mental health to identify the support required by children and young people in your area, so they get the help they need, when they need it.*
- *A Schools Wellbeing Charter. This is a National Charter and awaiting further national guidance.*
- *A roundtable to support the adoption of suicide safer universities*

The £17 million is intended to up-skill staff in schools to support children and young people at universal level.

(2) Outline what support B&NES will provide for our own local independent mental health support services for young people?

In Bath & North East Somerset we used our previous funding to:

- *Deliver the national Anna Freud training (we commissioned Oxford Health to do this)*
- *Fund a series of themed network meetings responsive to issues schools raised – led by Public Health and Education Psychology service*
- *Offered a free and confidential helpline appointment-based support service for schools wanting to talk about individual children's concerns – staffed by the Education Psychology service.*

This model was agreed by the multi-agency emotional health and wellbeing sub-group, to include public health colleagues, CAMHS, educational psychology, college and the VCS network. This group is a sub-group of the Children and Young People's

Subgroup (CYPP) which is a sub-group of the Health and Wellbeing Board.

As much was delivered by the Council, we have been able to extend the offer from March 2021 until the end of this academic year.

Now we know there is additional funding we will review our offer and consider how we deliver ongoing support that meets the needs of schools.

Our current local plans regarding the £17 million fund are as follows:

- 7 million - Extending the Wellbeing Education Return programme that Local Authorities were funded to deliver September 2020 to March 2021*

All schools are encouraged to appoint a Senior Mental Health lead who can help them take a whole school approach to supporting children and young people's mental health and to support staff in understanding emotional health and wellbeing issues that impact on pupils.

The Department for Education has sent out a request for expressions of interest to deliver this. As yet the details are not confirmed but we know that courses will be quality assessed by the Department for Education in the summer with a view to running in late September.

Schools will be given a portion of the money which they can use to buy-in support from a directory of quality assured trainers.

Public Health colleagues have registered interest in becoming quality assured to deliver this training across our schools. The option to put in a course proposal is open to 3rd sector groups.

- Link programme to improve partnership*

This programme is led by B&NES, Swindon and Wiltshire Clinical Commissioning Group. We are expecting information

regarding the revised programme shortly.

M 05

Question from:

Councillor Liz Hardman

With the half term holiday just over 2 weeks away, have any plans been put in place to ensure those children in receipt of Free School Meals (FSM) will receive FSM vouchers or FSMs during the holiday period?

Answer from:

Councillor Dine Romero

The council has agreed to provide FSM vouchers to pupils entitled to FSM by benefit during the May/June half term week.

The Lead Member has prioritised access to FSM and has released a press statement to that effect on 18.05.2021.

The voucher system will be the same as it has been during the previous holiday periods, so it will provide continuity to parents who have used this before.

The voucher value will be £20 per pupil.

The schools have been advised that the scheme will be operational, but further communication will be required to specify the exact dates and details of when parents will receive vouchers and when new applicants can apply. Officers will be providing this information shortly.

M 06

Question from:

Councillor Paul May

Now WECA has a new Mayor and BANES has a new Council Leader, will you commit to work with the new WECA Mayor to protect all of the green belt in our area?

Answer from:

Councillor Kevin Guy

I look forward to working closely with the new WECA Mayor on all functions which are relevant to the Bath and North East Somerset Council area.

M 07

Question from:

Councillor Paul May

Will you use your power to ensure that WECA consults on the SDS the same way that BANES has committed to consult on its new Local Plan?

Answer from:

Councillor Kevin Guy

In light of the Council's commitment to ensuring its residents and communities have a say in the decisions that affect them, we will stress to WECA the importance of engaging with our residents on the SDS whilst it is at a formative stage and in line with our Community Engagement Charter. In any event, we are committed to ensure that our residents will continue to be engaged as both the SDS and our own local plan progress.

M 08

Question from:

Councillor Paul May

Many small rural parishes in North East Somerset have to fund grass area maintenance and upkeep from their precept yet see press releases committing BANES to spending capital sums on similar areas in Bath City. Will you undertake a survey or audit to establish the needs of communities across BANES to prepare a fair future programme?

Answer from:

Councillor David Wood

We do not spend capital sums on grass cutting.

We do undertake cross cutting across the whole of B&NES and work with Parish Councils to understand local needs. We have had various requests from rural areas to cut grass less frequently in specific places to support biodiversity.

We will write to all Parish Councils to understand better if there are any areas of grass cutting they have concerns about.

M 09

Question from:

Councillor Paul May

Are you going to keep the mobile library service going during your administration?

Answer from:

Councillor Dine Romero

The mobile library continues to be an important and accessible service in our communities to enable our residents to access library services as well as our council and partner services online.

In line with the Government's advice it has not been possible to operate the mobile library service during most of the last year but instead we arranged a modified Covid-safe home library service to support our communities.

We are pleased to announce that the mobile library service was reinstated on 20 April 2021 using a revised route and from 21 June it will be back to its full operation.

M 10

Question from:

Councillor Paul May

Having been supported by the conservatives in declaring an ecological emergency can you outline how this will be implemented by the council officers in the next twelve months?

Answer from:

Councillor Sarah Warren

Considerable action is underway in Bath & North East Somerset, building on our long and strong history of work on biodiversity, landscape and ecology locally and within the West of England. As I reported to Council in January, officers conducted an urgent review of work across services and have been working hard to deliver on the commitments made since then. Officers are now developing the action plan for next two years. This will be reported in more detail to Council in the joint annual climate and

ecological emergency report in the autumn.

The next year will include, but will not be limited to:

- Completion of the development of strengthened planning policies within the Local Plan Partial Review, including biodiversity net gain, natural environment and green infrastructure policy and guidance;*
- Work to implement West of England Joint Green Infrastructure Strategy;*
- Implementation of ecological emergency and biodiversity net gain awareness training for key staff to further enable delivery;*
- Implementation of the B&NES Tree & Woodland Delivery Plan in pursuit of the target to plant 100,000 trees by May 2023;*
- A wide-ranging programme of community engagement to support further action on the ground across the community;*
- Continued delivery of the Pollinator Strategy to identify locations for reduction of cutting of grass, shrubs and hedges to increase biodiversity and food for pollinating insects;*
- The development of Bath and North East Somerset partnership working to bring together key local stakeholders and groups to provide leadership and wider action planning and delivery.*

M

11

Question from:

Councillor Paul May

Your long term commitment to young people is recognised and supported. Can you confirm how many schools are now Academies and how many are in multi-academy trusts? The answer reinforces the need for the Council to be the voice of parents and pupils with special reference to closing the educational gap post pandemic. Will you be prepared to outline to the Scrutiny Committee how this can be achieved?

Answer from:

Councillor Dine Romero

All schools in B&NES are academies apart from one secondary school and six primary schools. The council remains committed

to supporting those schools that wish to stay maintained.

All academy schools in B&NES, apart from 3 standalone academies, are part of a multi-academy trust.

The council remains committed to working alongside partners to improve the attainment gap for disadvantaged pupils in B&NES. Several pieces of joint work to address this are being implemented in B&NES. Officers will present a scrutiny paper to PDS to provide a fuller briefing on these projects. As a cabinet member, I will be working alongside partners to support these projects and attend the Schools Standards Board to champion this work area. As Lead Member I will always speak up for parents and pupils.

M

12

Question from:

Councillor Paul May

Will you continue the commitment to creating an educational/skills role within the former Culverhay site?

Answer from:

Councillor Dine Romero

The council remains committed to delivering education provision at the Culverhay site. Following consultation, the council has established education preferences for the site. Council officers are working with Learn@MAT to develop a bespoke building to house a permanent Alternative Provision School on the site.

Alongside this, officers and I will be holding meetings with partners and stakeholders to look at options for a provision that offers a vocational curriculum through into college.

M

13

Question from:

Councillor Paul May

Your predecessor bravely changed the south Bristol link road into a transport corridor. Will you meet the communities of South Bristol to understand the anxiety and ecological impact of building a two-mile road through green belt fields has been causing?

Answer from:

Councillor Sarah Warren

I am always happy to meet with residents to hear of issues of concern to them.

M 14 **Question from:** Councillor Paul May

On the edge of a big city like Bristol, rat runs and indiscriminate parking are a nightmare for some communities. Will you review the proposal submitted by me on behalf of my two Parishes, Whitchurch village and Pensford, for priority changes within the former Liveable neighbourhood scheme?

Answer from: Councillor Sarah Warren

Following the invitation for ward Members to submit applications for Liveable Neighbourhoods in three tranches, 39 applications were received in February 2021, with a further 7 applications received in May 2021. The February applications have been reviewed and subjected to a prioritisation process and this work is ongoing for the applications received in May. The results of the prioritisation process will be considered at the June Cabinet meeting.

M 15 **Question from:** Councillor Vic Pritchard

Following your correct decision to scrap the pursuit of planning consent on the behalf of ADL, the Council's arm length development company, together with a commitment for the land to remain in Council ownership and not sold to avaricious developers, do you personally consider ADL to be an avaricious developer?

Answer from: Councillor Richard Samuel

The proposal to set up a local authority wholly owned company to develop, deliver, own and manage property as well as new development on a case by case basis, was put forward and approved by the Cabinet on 2 December 2015.

This Cabinet has continued to support the objectives that are captured in the legal agreements for the company, the objectives

recognise the potential financial impact, housing supply, affordable housing provision, sustainability and market differentiation of the company to enable and contribute to the delivery of the Council's strategic vision.

The Council continues to work with ADL but in relation to the Englishcombe Lane site a decision has been made not to implement the planning consent for the site submitted by the last administration and instead examine options for a smaller lower impact development that provide social benefit.

M 16

Question from:

Councillor Vic Pritchard

In her promotion of e-scooters, Joanna Wright, the former Cabinet Member for Transport, stated that e-scooters would form the first and last miles of a journey. In the fight against obesity, does the new Member for Health & Wellbeing accept this as a commendable approach?

Answer from:

Councillor Dine Romero

First and foremost, the Council prioritises active travel to meet a wide range of policy objectives, including tackling obesity through increasing levels of physical activity as part of promoting a healthy environment. However, car use for short journeys remains stubbornly high, so we must be innovative in our approach and offer a range of solutions to meet people's travel needs. The e-scooter trial offers the opportunity to test and evaluate if e-scooters can make a positive contribution to the transport mix in Bath, where topography is regularly offered as a reason not to adopt active travel habits. On street rental scooters support increased walking levels by enabling longer journeys that walking alone would be prohibitive for, without defaulting to car use. Voi, the e-scooter operator in Bath, conducted an in-app survey in March-April 2021 of their UK users (using a question flashing up immediately after a ride had finished), which revealed that over 20% of e-scooter trips replaced car use. There is also some anecdotal evidence seen on social media from individuals who have limited mobility but who have benefitted from the B&NES e-scooter trial to become more mobile. Data collected from the trial will enable the Department for Transport to decide if e-scooters should be legalised for general use, including private e-scooters.

In terms of specific link to addressing obesity, as yet there is little robust evidence about e-scooter use as this is such a new transport mode. It is also important to note the need for an integrated systems approach to obesity prevention considering the

importance of calorie intake as the main driver of weight gain, rather than less physical activity. There are a number of measures we are taking to encourage people to maintain a healthy weight including through provision of community-based weight management programmes which incorporate healthy eating as well as encouraging physical activity. As part of this whole systems work there is evidence that the quality of the local environment is a contributing factor to excess calorie consumption and inactive lifestyles. Local authorities are in a unique position to promote a healthy weight environment through encouraging physical activity in daily lives, enabling active travel as well as helping people access and choose healthier food options on our high streets. For most people, the easiest and most acceptable forms of physical activity are those that can be incorporated into everyday life, such as walking or cycling, and e-scooters may play a role in helping to facilitate this. Switching more journeys to active travel has benefits for the environment and the local economy, while at the same time having substantial mental and physical health benefits.

M	17	Question from:	Councillor Grant Johnson
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What monitoring is taking place to assess the impact on air quality of traffic displaced by the CAZ on areas outside the zone?

When the CAZ was originally proposed it was suggested that distribution hubs would fulfil the last mile for delivery to businesses within the zone. How many hubs have been established?

Answer from:	Councillor Sarah Warren
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What monitoring is taking place to assess the impact on air quality of traffic displaced by the CAZ on areas outside the zone?

The Council has an extensive network of air quality diffusion tube monitors which have been placed in locations to monitor the impact of the CAZ, both inside and outside of the boundary. A map showing these locations can be found at this [link](#)

The Council is committed to publishing results of air quality monitoring on a quarterly basis and the report relating to the first 3 months of the CAZ will be published in late Summer.

When the CAZ was originally proposed it was suggested that distribution hubs would fulfil the last mile for delivery to businesses within the zone. How many hubs have been established?

The Council has been awarded £800k by central government in April 2021 to develop and implement an Expanded Only Mile Delivery (OMD) service in Bath, comprising:

- Purchase of 6 new cargo bikes to undertake distribution and delivery activities in line with Only Mile Delivery principles.*
- Installation of a locker station to act as central consolidation hub.*
- Ongoing locker and E-Cargo bike maintenance for up to three years, to ensure core activities are fully funded in nascent stage of scheme establishment.*
- Supporting infrastructure encompassing office and communications equipment (including software).*
- Delivery charge subsidy for eligible businesses for two years, to ease transition for eligible businesses away from current delivery practices (i.e. non-compliant LGV use) to E-Cargo bike distribution practices*

In addition there will be support for the continuation of the Last Mile Delivery pilot scheme for a further year, recognising the impact of Covid-19 on the pilot scheme's inaugural year of operation, and focusing on expanding its usage by local rather than national businesses. This will also enable an additional distribution hub to be added. The project is now in the initiation phase and progress updates will be made available.

Supplementary Question:

How does the cabinet member think residents will interpret the spending of £800,000 on six bikes and a locker in Bath and do you think this will genuinely support businesses?

Answer from:	Councillor Sarah Warren	
<i>I will give you an answer in 5 working days from today.</i>		
M	18	Question from: Councillor Grant Johnson
<p>Since launching an online consultation asking for residents' feedback on the new recycling centre charges, I have been overwhelmed with negative responses to the proposal. Former Lib Dem councillor, Dave Dixon (himself an ex member of the B&NES Cabinet), has stated that the advice he received as Cabinet member was "any service reduction or increased charges at the household waste and recycling centres WILL result in increased fly tipping". He goes on to ask "Has Cllr Dave Wood ignored this or has the advice magically changed?"</p> <p>These charges have generated huge anger amongst residents who fear that their areas will be blighted by fly tipping and who object to paying extra for a basic service when they have already had increases to their Council Tax. I therefore repeat Dave Dixon's question and ask:</p> <p>Has the advice that increased charges at waste and recycling centres will result in increased fly tipping been ignored, or has it changed?</p> <p>Will you acknowledge that you were wrong to introduce these charges and will you now take action to withdraw them?</p>		
Answer from:	Councillor David Wood	
<i>An answer will be provided within 5 clear working days after the meeting.</i>		
Supplementary Question:		

The Leader of the Council said earlier that charges for waste would be confusing for residents. But I think that doesn't mean justice. Does this Cabinet agree that they need to start thinking of residents first before blaming their (residents) ability to follow your half-baked ideas?

Answer from:

Councillor David Wood

Thank you very much for question. The Council is willing to change its mind based on new evidence. I have not seen any evidence that the decision that was made was the wrong decision to make, in light of the financial context that we found ourselves in at the time, however circumstances have very clearly changed since that took place. And the idea of bringing charges, which now becomes clear, may will be reversed off the back of a government consultation will be extremely confusing for all concerned. So, it is absolutely the right thing to do to both respond to the circumstances, and to make it very clear that we listen to residents when they speak to us with a very strong voice.

M 19

Question from:

Councillor Robin Moss

It is reported nationally that businesses providing residential social care are struggling. ADASS warned of the risk of 'catastrophic failure' of the service, LGIU reports of 13.4.21, 23.3.21 et al paint a similarly gloomy picture.

The additional cost of providing PPE during the pandemic, occupancy being lower than business model planned levels & problems with recruitment & retention, all this in the backdrop where action by central government on funding & payment has been promised for a number of years, but has never materialised.

In light of these reports, what discussions are taking place with local residential suppliers in B&NES about their situation and if any support is needed.

Are you confident that there are adequate safeguards & services in place to support vulnerable residents who use these services?

Answer from:	Councillor Alison Born		
<p><i>The messages coming out of ADASS and LGIU are pressing issues locally in our care homes and across the South West. Unfortunately, the pandemic has been particularly traumatic for care homes. Leading to lower occupancy in care homes, recruitment challenges and high levels of stress and weariness amongst the staff and a very worrying and isolating year for residents.</i></p> <p><i>This is leading to new people needing care looking towards home care placements over care homes. In part this is not an unwelcome change as we are at all times seeking to find ways to support people in their own homes for longer. This supports independence and reduces funding pressures for both the LA and the individual where an individual is self-funding. However, it has led to higher levels of vacancies in care homes than would normally be experienced.</i></p> <p><i>Since May 2020, central government has provided a range of financial and other assistance to Local Authorities to support Adult Social Care providers of both care homes and home care.</i></p> <p><i>This funding has for the greater majority gone directly to providers alongside a small central fund which the LA has coordinated through a Covid plan with multi-agency partners to fund a B&NES wide recruitment programme, third sector support to the wellbeing and mental health of staff and residents and funding for deep clean processes.</i></p>			
M 20	Question from:	Councillor Robin Moss	
<p>Please can you provide a figures for reported incidents of fly-tipping over the last 12 months.</p> <p>Can these be broken down into monthly stats, Bath separately from NE Somerset?</p>			

In addition, you are quoted as saying that the evidence is that an increase or imposition of charging at recycling centres does not necessarily lead to an increase in fly-tipping. Please can you reference this evidence.

Answer from:

Councillor David Wood

Reported incidents of fly incidents in the last 12 months. We were not able to separate them between Bath & NE Somerset.

<i>From 17/05/2020 - 16/05/2021</i>	
<i>Month</i>	<i>number of fly tipping incidents reported</i>
<i>May-20*</i>	<i>137</i>
<i>Jun-20</i>	<i>280</i>
<i>Jul-20</i>	<i>262</i>
<i>Aug-20</i>	<i>242</i>
<i>Sep-20</i>	<i>273</i>
<i>Oct-20</i>	<i>266</i>
<i>Nov-20</i>	<i>223</i>
<i>Dec-20</i>	<i>143</i>
<i>Jan-21</i>	<i>243</i>
<i>Feb-21</i>	<i>237</i>

**from 17/05/2020*

Mar-21	314
Apr-21	190
May-21*	100
Total	2910

* until
16/05/2021

Other Councils charge for these materials and have seen no discernible increase in flytipping directly attributable to the charges, including Dorset <https://news.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/2018/05/16/charges-at-the-dump-cause-fly-tipping-time-to-think-again/> and North Somerset who introduced charges in 2017, and whilst they did see an increase in flytipping incidents between 2016/17 and 2017/18, this cannot be directly linked to the introduction of charges, as the regional trend across the Southwest as a whole was an increase in fly tipping during the same period.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS - PUBLIC

P 01	Question from:	Chris Beezley
<p>The WECA Bath Active Travel Schemes spreadsheet claims that the need for the proposed North Road bus gate and cycle route to and from the University of Bath was “Identified through engagement with the University of Bath” and B&NES is reported to have claimed at the December meeting of its Active Travel and Accessibility Forum that “The University have been consulted and are supportive of the North Road route”.</p> <p>Both claims have been unequivocally denied by senior University management.</p> <p>Will B&NES therefore withdraw these misleading claims?</p>		
Answer from:		Councillor Sarah Warren
<p><i>An answer will be provided within 5 clear working days.</i></p>		