

COUNCIL MEETING 24th MARCH 2022

COUNCILLOR STATEMENTS

Councillor statement (item 15)
(attached)

- Cllr Hounsell Visitor accommodation policy locally and nationally

Rachel Stokes statement

Good evening everyone. My name is Rachel Stokes and I represent the Keynsham Road Safety Campaign. Our petition calls for an extension of the proposed 30mph section of the Wellsway up to the 'Keynsham' sign, and the installation of a pavement to connect properties at Uplands with the pavement at Courtenay Road.

For those of you not familiar with Wellsway, it is the only 1 of 5 major routes into Keynsham that is not currently 30 mph. The section we are concerned with is only 700 metres long but contains a dangerous blind bend with 11 residential properties to either side of the road. Reducing the speed limit from 40mph to 30mph on this section would vastly increase the safety of all road users, but, would only add 13 seconds to each journey.

The Highways department claim this section should remain 40mph because it is 'rural'.

- If Uplands is 'rural', why do we pay a precept to Keynsham Town Council of around £100 per year?
- Although there is no up to date information, a traffic study in 2018 of this 'rural' road found that it was used by around 11,000 vehicles a day.
- One field (less than 300m long) separates the Uplands residential area from the rest of Keynsham.

Highways officers have been using the guidance for Rural Speed Management when considering this road; the official designation given by the Office for National Statistics for this section of road is C1 - **Urban: City and Town**.

The guidance for C1: Urban City and Town speed limits is very clear. It says that 30mph is the standard speed limit for urban areas.

The guidance says: For a 40mph limit to be appropriate, the road must be of **good width with buildings set back from the road** – at the Uplands junction there is a building less than 150cm from the road.

The guidance says: roads suitable for 40mph **must cater for the needs of non-motorised road users**. Cyclists on this stretch of road regularly take their lives in their hands and it is only a matter of time before we see another serious incident. **'Pulling out of Uplands Junction is quite a challenge' said Andy Wait – 13th March 2021.**

The guidance says: roads suitable for 40mph **must have adequate footways and crossing places**. There is no footway along this section, and not a single crossing.

The Highways department claim there is 'limited activity' to either side of the road. Every day there are around 50 residents who have to pull out onto a blind bend and hope for the best. Every day, farm traffic, B&B customers, delivery vehicles, cyclists, off-road motorcycles and 4 x 4 enthusiasts pull out onto a blind bend and hope for the best. It is, quite obviously, only a matter of time before there is a major incident resulting in a fatality at this junction. One of this council's core policies is to promote a major shift to mass transport, walking and cycling to reduce emissions. At 30mph, with a pavement, this road would be perfect for pedestrians, hikers and horse riders. Instead of Bathnes having to pay for these residents to use the Safer Routes to School scheme, they could walk their children to the local school less than a mile away.

If a planning application was submitted for the junction of Uplands and Wellsway it would be rejected. The Highways Department would say that at 40mph, oncoming traffic does not have enough distance to stop. At 30mph, with longer stopping distances and less chance of death upon impact, the junction would be deemed safe enough for the application to be approved. For the sake of 13 additional seconds, Wellsway road users are subjected to an unacceptable level of risk. It is worth bearing in mind this quote from the Think! Campaign from 2009: "...if you hit a child at 30mph they have an 80% chance of living, but if you hit them at 40mph they have an 80% chance of dying."

Despite our repeated requests for meetings on site, the decision makers have not visited the road. The decision on the speed limits on Wellsway was not, by their own admission, informed by any data on composition of road users, average speeds, or accidents. The 700 people who have signed our petition see it and use it all the time and know it to be extremely fast, extremely busy, and extremely hazardous for all road users. They say: 'I feel I am taking my life in my hands trying to pull into this road', 'If no action is taken we will see serious injury or death'. Government guidance and common sense say that 'fear of traffic can affect peoples' quality of life'. This council's motto is 'Improving People's Lives' – please don't ignore this opportunity to improve the lives of Wellsway road users.

Over two years ago, 53 of your constituents made their concerns and wishes abundantly clear – they voted unanimously for this section of Wellsway to be reduced from 40mph to 30mph. Now, nearly 700 of your constituents have made their concerns and wishes abundantly clear. How long can the council, for the sake of only 700 metres,

for the sake of only 13 seconds, ignore the legitimate concerns of these constituents and the evidence presented by this campaign?

Thank you for listening.

Bob Goodman statement

This speech will be substantially different to the that I intended to deliver.

It has been almost 7 years to the day that my mum died, I remember it not only for that reason but the way that events changed my life. In the evening of that day I was asked for the third time if I would stand as a councillor in the Combe Down ward . I had only a few weeks before said NO because I had no political ambition what so ever and believe that local Government should not involve politics. But with the loss of my mum I was being told Yes 'told' by her looking down from above.... " don't be silly Robert you must because you care too much for the City not to do so" .. and so the adventure began.

How absolutely shameful it is that I find myself having to come to this Council meeting to defend 'Free Speech' being dictated to by this Administration and the Chief Executive that I will not be allowed to speak unless I send in what I am going to say.

The Leadership does not believe in transparency, I already had to resign as a Trustee of Avon Wildlife Trust because I dared to criticise the administration on their appalling response to both the Climate and Ecologist Emergency and we have also seen the response to other Cllrs when they stand up and be counted.

One has to ask what this Liberal Democrat council are worried about , in all my speeches to Council or Cabinet I have told it as it is, but they clearly can not defend the indefensible.

I have been truly amazed at the response that I have had from residents of the City who feel poorly represented and from Councillors and yes even those in the Lib Dem group has been truly astonishing.

We can all see what a dictatorship can do with the destruction of Ukraine, those Ukrainians are truly amazing and far braver than I am but I can do my bit by standing up for democracy in the face of bullying tactics that we are facing.

The residents of Bath will not tolerate the way this Council is behaving, if it's not the betrayal of Tufa Fields , the debacle over the Mountain Bikes at Entry Hill , the way in which they have allowed their Development Company to go unchallenged and Now to prevent Free Speech is beyond belief.

If this Administration think they are going to prevent me speaking the truth on the short comings of this Council then they are Sadly mistaken.

I hope Cllrs at this meeting will take on board what is happening to my City and ignore Party Politics and stand up for their residents.

I hope this outrageous decision to prevent free speech will see the demise of this Administration.

All I can say is ... I'm so glad there is the Freedom of Information Facility.....!!!! When the truth will come out.

David Redgewell - Statement for Banes full Council 24th March 2022 and Banes Cabinet meeting 31st March 2022.

Public transport services in the West of England Mayoral Combined Transport Authority and North Somerset council bus service improvements plan - with bus service cuts across the west of mayoral transport Authority and North Somerset.

We are very very concerned about the level of service and frequencies that first group west of England buses are going to operate across the city region and into rural areas of Somerset ,Wiltshire and Gloucestershire from 24 th April 2022.

D 2 Bath Spa bus and coach station to Midford, Norton St Phillips, Rode, Beckington and Frome reductions on Saturdays.

Reductions in services 1 Bath city centre to Southdown.

services 3 services reductions.

and 3 a services withdrawn.

services change on route 39 x39 with services starting from Newton St Loe in the morning.

Changes to the Bath Spa bus and coach station to Weston, Kelston, Bitton, Oldland Common, Cadbury Heath, Warmley, Kingswood, Hillfields, Staple hill, Downend, Bromley Heath Uwe bus station, Bristol Parkway, Patchway and Cribbs Causeway bus and coach station.

Services changes - early mornings journeys.

Services 92 Bristol city centre to Whitchurch estate which the West of England Mayoral Combined Transport Authority has put out to tender between Knowle and Whitchurch.

Services Weston super mare to the chew valley which West of England Mayoral Combined Transport Authority and North Somerset council have put out to Tender along with the Weston super Mare to Chew Valley bus service.

One of the main problems out of Bath Spa bus and coach station is the link to Employment in North Bristol fringe and to the Towns in south Gloucestershire of Thornbury, Yate and Chipping Sodbury. with only the Stagecoach West 620, 69 services Bath Spa bus and coach station to Lansdown, Wick, Pucklechurch, Yate bus station, Chipping Sodbury Tetbury and Stroud bus and coach station every 2 hours.

By using services 19 Bath Spa bus and coach station to Downend, connections could be made to Yate on the Y2 Bristol bus and coach station to Eastville, Fishponds, Downend, Bromley heath Coalpit Heath, Yate and Chipping Sodbury, and the 19 connections at Patchway for Aztec west and Thornbury.

People from Bath use bus for Employment in the Yate and Thornbury areas so the West of England Mayoral Combined Transport Authority needs to put out emergency tenders for these services.

The only alternative being the first group Great western railway service from Bath Spa, Oldfield park, Keynsham, Bristol Temple meads, Filton Abbey wood, Bristol Parkway and Yate.

Some trains on this route are being withdrawn in May.

Services in Greater Bristol are also being reduced on the Network and especially services number 2 2a on the Stockwood to Cribbs Causeway bus corridor, one of the city region investment corridors.

There is a problem that we will invest in the city region transport corridors.

Bath Spa bus and coach station, Peasedown St John, Radstock, Westfield, Midsomer Norton, Paulton Chilcompton, Shepton Mallet and Wells bus and coach station - and Street, Glastonbury, Wells bus station, Farrington Gurney, Clutton, Pensford, Whitchurch, Hengrove, Knowle, Bristol Temple Meads station and Bristol bus station but with very reduced bus services especially in the evenings and Sundays.

If services are being reduced now with a £150 million pound covid 19 bus service recovery grant then in October the situation will get worse.

Without further government funding from the Department for transport to the West of England Mayoral Combined Authority and North Somerset council - under the levelling up white paper on Mayoral Combined Authorities, North Somerset council needs to join the West of England Mayoral Combined Authority as the mayor Dan Norris will have more powers on Planning and Transport.

The other question is whether Gloucestershire County council joins as well which has been discussed in the past. We need a governance review for the West of England Mayoral Combined Authority as the planning and Transport Authority - and all public transport Network staff transferred to the West of England Mayoral Combined Transport Authority from Banes South Gloucestershire council and Bristol city council including all bus infrastructure and interchanges and bus and coach stations.

We also need a bus service review of the South of Bristol bus Network and support bus services from Keynsham, Whitchurch, Hengrove, Knowle, Hartcliffe, Withywood, Bishopsworth, Bristol Airport looking at the support services and the Chew valley with Transport hubs at Pensford Whitchurch and Bristol Airport.

And a Keynsham and Kingswood review of services including interchanges facilities at Keynsham and cherry gardens as part of the services review for support bus services.

We are very very concerned about park and ride services.

Unlike the other west country local Authorities we are still running non stop Park and ride services.

Bath city centre to Odd down does not need evening and Sunday services when services buses to Peasedown St John, Radstock, Westfield, Midsomer Norton, Paulton, Shepton Mallet and Wells bus station pass the site and could operate into the site .

or the Bristol city centre to Brislington park and ride services.

where services 178 Bristol bus station Bristol Temple Meads ,Arnos vale, Brislington, Keynsham, Marksbury, Timsbury, Paulton, Midsomer Norton, Westfield, Radstock.

39, x39 Bristol bus and coach station Temple meads ,

Arnos vale Bristlington, Keynsham ,Salford Newbridge Weston and Bath and coach station could call

349 Bristol bus and coach station Bristol Temple meads Arnos vale Bristlington Keynsham buses could call.

Park and ride service sare costing a lot of public money and we should review the way the West of England Mayoral Combined Transport Authority and North Somerset council deliver park and ride service and with Banes council.

We need a marketing campaign for buses and public transport with the West of England Mayoral Combined Transport Authority and North Somerset council on buses and trains and Tourist information centre in Bath Spa bus and coach station and Bristol bus station.

On rail, we are concerned at the Department for Transport services cuts

About the loss of the Great Malvern to Brighton services which calls at Malvern links Worcester Forget street shrub hill,

Ashchurch for Tewkesbury, Cheltenham spa, Gloucester central, Cam and Dursley, Yate Bristol Parkway, Filton Abbey wood, Bristol Temple Meads, Keynsham, Oldfield park, Bath Spa, Bradford on Avon, Trowbridge, Westbury, Warminster, Salisbury, Romsey, Southampton central Fareham, Havant, Chichester, Worthing and Brighton.

And cross Bristol and Bath train services from May 2022.

David Redgewell South West Transport Network and Railfuture Severnside.

[Insert Danielle Sellwood statement here]

Cllr Duncan Hounsell

We all believe in fairness. I want to bring your attention to what I regard as unfairness regarding visitor accommodation policies and practice locally and nationally. Visitor Accommodation is covered in policy RE7 of the B&NES place-making plan. It states that a change of use from a dwelling to visitor accommodation will be permitted provided that for large residential properties a substantial private residential unit is retained. The reason for that policy is obvious. The owner living in the property will have a personal interest in maintaining good order and good relationships with neighbours. If a good citizen applies for planning permission in advance for such change of use of a property they own but do not live in they will be refused because of our policy RE7.

However, if an owner of a large property ignores the planning process and goes ahead to change the use from residential to visitor accommodation, the onus then falls on neighbours to demonstrate that a fundamental change of use has taken place.

Neighbours have to maintain logs of incidents such as increased noise and nuisance, traffic generation, impact on the character of an area etc. The minimum period for maintaining such logs is said to be 6 months. Neighbours can be advised to take photos, video recordings, use noise monitoring equipment all dated and timed and so on. A key consideration is whether the visitors are family groups treating the house as one would expect a normal house to be treated or groups enjoying "hen" and "stag" parties and the like. There will be neighbours who may feel intimidated and neighbours who lack the capacity or strength to undertake the required surveillance.

There are cases where neighbours have had to complete and submit monitoring forms to the Council for years before enforcement action is considered and taken. This enforcement action usually entails forcing the owner to make a formal planning application which can then take months to conclude, and, if the application is refused, the owner can appeal adding yet more months of anguish to neighbours while the owner is making sizeable sums of money.

Owners may buy a chain of residential properties and form a commercial enterprise from visitor accommodation. Because notice is given of any visit to a property by an enforcement officer, owners have enough time to pretend that it is their principal residence.

Our local policies need re-drafting in the next Local Plan. A simple test for a private residential unit could be where the owner is registered for Council Tax for example. Change of use to visitor accommodation for large properties should require a planning application at the outset in every case giving the local community and local councils a chance to have their say. Our planning enforcement team does very good work. They need the right tools - more officers, more resources, and stronger, unambiguous policies.

National law needs to be enacted that requires all AirBnB type accommodation to be registered with the local authority. A levy on every booking should be paid to the local authority to give the funds necessary for effective monitoring and control.

These changes will be welcomed by those who good owners who offer visitor accommodation, who want to do the right thing but are tainted by the publicity from the bad cases.

At its worst, these "party houses" blight people's lives for months and years, affecting health and well-being. Neighbours and communities feel powerless. This has to stop. It is simply not fair. END