

CABINET MEETING 5 MAY 2022

STATEMENTS FROM PUBLIC AND COUNCILLORS

1. Zhenya Shkil (Bath Ukraine Solidarity Campaign) – Situation in Ukraine
2. Theresa Franklin – The High Common
3. Sylvia Sinclair – The future of the High Common/Approach Golf Course
4. Rachael Hushon – Procurement process for the High Common
5. Adam Reynolds – Park & Ride bus contract
6. Cllr Vic Pritchard – Journey to Net Zero
7. David Redgewell – Transport Issues

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS - COUNCILLORS

M	01	Question from:	Cllr Dr Yukteshwar Kumar
<p>On Beckford Road in Bathwick ward, people will step from a bus not onto a pavement, not even on to a pedestrian island but straight into a dedicated cycle, e-bike and e-scooter lane. "Floating" bus stops could be disastrous and may put blind people's lives at risk and the British Columbia Human Rights Tribunals have declared that this could be discrimination against differently abled (disabled) people. Will not the council be responsible for any tragedy or mishap because of these proposals? There is an alternative to this which is to stop the cycle lane either side of the bus stop. Is not safety of residents, life of a disabled person more important than giving a completely smooth ride to the cyclists? Do not pedestrians (alighting from buses) have priority over cyclists?</p>			
Answer from:			Cllr Sarah Warren
<p><i>I know that Bathwick ward Councillor Rigby shares some of your concerns. However, Officers reassure us that this particular bus stop has relatively light usage, and the principle of its design layout is included within the design standards for such schemes. Furthermore, we have further enhanced the design in order to improve awareness between cyclists and bus users.</i></p> <p><i>The only alternative to the design at this location is to stop the cycle lane either side of the bus stop, which would mean cyclists then have to pull out into traffic when there is a bus at a stop. Road space reallocation is a challenging issue and one that will come forward on a more regular basis going forward as our commitments to all forms of active travel are realised.</i></p> <p><i>We will be undertaking publicity when the scheme launches to make sure cyclists are fully aware they have to give way to people getting on and off buses. The scheme will be monitored and assessed on an ongoing basis to ensure that we are able to understand the use more fully and ensure that concerns are not realised.</i></p>			
Supplementary Questions:			Cllr Dr Yukteshwar Kumar
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When and where did Cllr Rigby raise any concerns about the proposed bus stop design? 			

- The original response mentions that further enhancements have been made to the design. What are these enhancements? Where can residents see details of the design?
- Have the changes been approved by groups who represent differently abled people? What consultation has taken place?
- How much is the bus stop used?

Answer from:

Cllr Sarah Warren

- *In September 2021, in a meeting with officers about the proposals which Cllr Dr Kumar also attended, Cllr Rigby raised concerns about the safety of pedestrians with regards to the design of the bus stop. Also, at the second stage of consultation in December 2021, Cllr Rigby stated she had severe reservations about the design of the bus stop in Beckford Road and encouraged the use of road markings and signage to ensure the possibility of conflict between pedestrians accessing or alighting buses and cyclists is minimised. Her comments also acknowledged her understanding that the proposal was compliant with national standards. These comments were made in her capacity as ward member in response to the report on the results from the Traffic Regulation Order consultation.*
- *We have enhanced the design of our 'bus stop boarders' compared to the layout provided in the national design standards, Local Transport Note 1/20, and from those we have seen used in other cities. Those enhancements are the use of red coloured surfacing where the cycle lane runs up to be level with the adjacent footway in order to help distinguish it from the footway. We will also provide 'give way' triangle markings to make it clearer to cyclists they have to give way to pedestrians. The design can be seen on the drawing included in the web pages we used during the consultation: <https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/TCL0016S02-100-1%20RevH.pdf>*
- *Officers contacted a number of groups and individuals representing those with disabilities at the first and second stages of consultation to make them aware of the Active Travel Fund scheme proposals and to invite comments. This included Deaf Plus, Bath Access Group, Bath Bus Users Group, Age UK and RNIB. Discussions subsequently took place with representatives from the RNIB and Bristol Disability Equality Forum, who had awareness of similar designs being used elsewhere. Some of these groups and individuals, in responding to the consultation, raised concerns about the bus stop boarder design. The enhancements we have made to our design has been in response to these concerns. We have committed to undertaking a review of the bus stop once it has been in place for several months.*
- *Recent figures show that on average nine people a day board a bus from this stop on a weekday and an average of six a day on weekends. We do not have any information on how often people alight from a bus at this stop.*

M	02	Question from:	Cllr Karen Warrington
Please confirm the number of electric vehicle charging points currently available in BANES and provide the usage statistics for each one. Please provide a split between charging points located in Bath and ones located in North East Somerset.			
Answer from:			Cllr Sarah Warren
<p><i>The council currently provides 20 electric vehicle charging bays in the following public car parks:</i></p> <p><i>Bath</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Charlotte St car park, Bath: 4 x fast 7kW (2x Revive, 2x Pod Point)</i> <i>Lansdown Park & Ride, Bath: 4 x fast 7kW (2x Revive, 2x Pod Point)</i> <i>Odd Down Park & Ride, Bath: 4 x fast 7kW (Pod Point)</i> <i>Newbridge Park & Ride, Bath: 4 x fast 7kW (Pod Point)</i> <p><i>North East Somerset</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Fox & Hounds car park, Keynsham: 2 x fast 7kW (Pod Point)</i> <i>Dragonfly Leisure Centre car park, Midsomer Norton 2 x fast 7kW (Pod Point)</i> <p><i>All 6 sites were installed with Pod Point chargers and we no longer receive any usage data for these chargers. Two of the sites, Charlotte St and Lansdown P&R have been upgraded with Revive Network chargers. Usage data for March 2022 indicates 905kWh was provided at Charlotte St car park and 48kWh was provided at Lansdown P&R (excluding Pod Point chargers).</i></p> <p><i>Thirty new electric vehicle charging bays are being installed at eight locations across the district including 12 rapid (50kW) and 14 fast (22kW) public charging bays, as well as 4 rapid (50kW) taxi charging bays.</i></p> <p><i>The following EV charging facilities will be operational in May 2022:</i></p> <p><i>Bath</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Kingsmead Square car park, Bath: 4 x fast (22kW) bays</i> <i>Charlotte St car park, Bath: 2 x fast (22kW), 4 x rapid (50kW), 2 x rapid (50kW) taxi bays</i> 			

- Larkhall car park, Bath: 2 x fast (22kW) bays
- Claverton Rd car park, Widcombe, Bath: 2 x fast (22kw) bays
- Railway Place, Bath (adjacent to Bath railway station): 2 x rapid (50kW) taxi bays

North East Somerset

- South Road car park, MSN: 4 x fast (22kW) bays
- Church Street car park, Radstock: 2 x rapid (50kW) bays

By September 2022 the following site will be operational:

- Keynsham Civic Centre: 4 x rapid (50kW) and 2 x fast (22kW) bays to be installed later this year

A press release will be issued to announce the opening dates.

The new charge points will bring the total number of charging bays provided by the council across Bath & North East Somerset to 50. EV charging is also provided at supermarkets, hospitals, university campuses and hotels. Full details of all publicly available EV charging points is provided by Zap-Map: <https://www.zap-map.com/live/>

M	03	Question from:	Cllr Karen Warrington
The public inquiry into the York Street Traffic Regulation Order took place this week. If the Inspector declares against the council and upholds the complaint, how does the administration intend to proceed with the implementation of its City Centre Security policy?			
Answer from:			Cllr Kevin Guy/Cllr Manda Rigby
<p><i>The Council awaits the outcome of the Inspector's report and is confident that the evidence produced will allow the Inspector to find in our favour. However, regardless of the outcome the Council will continue to work with Counter-Terrorism Policing South West and Avon & Somerset Police, to build on the hard work carried out to date, including continuing to work with businesses and key city stakeholders in training of front-line staff, raising awareness of counter-terrorism, public safety and security measures and planning for the implementation of the Government's new Protect Duty legislation, which is expected later in the year, early 2023.</i></p>			

M	04	Question from:	Cllr Vic Pritchard
The administration is committed to seeing golf return to the High Common. In recent years, however, the former Approach Golf Course has operated at a loss to the council. If golf is to return to the High Common, can the administration be confident that it will be commercially viable and will not need to be subsidised by the council?			
Answer from:			Cllr Kevin Guy/David Wood
<i>The operating model would need to be self-financing and require no subsidy from the council. However, it should be expected that the Council would need to fund any capital investment on the buildings and look to gain repayment of this capital from the contract.</i>			
M	05	Question from:	Cllr Vic Pritchard
In a February 2021 press interview, Cllr Paul Crossley stated that local people do not wish to see the High Common commercialised and stressed that the current administration is listening. Why, then, are you now seeking a commercial operator for the site?			
Answer from:			Cllr Kevin Guy/David Wood
<i>Since the closure of the Approach Golf Course due to covid-19 the site has been maintained as open park land. However, it was always the intention to revisit the use of the site and now seems the right time to look at the options to reinstate golf and make the site financially sustainable.</i>			
M	06	Question from:	Cllr Vic Pritchard
If golf provision is to return to the High Common, how many people will it need to attract on an annual basis to be commercially viable?			
Answer from:			Cllr Kevin Guy/Cllr David Wood
<i>Any potential operators will need to provide a viable business plan and show how they would contribute to the council's priorities including enabling more people to be more active more often, to improve health and wellbeing as well as maintaining the site in line with the climate and nature emergency</i>			

<i>declarations.</i>			
M	07	Question from:	Cllr Vic Pritchard
Please specify how many public consultations, and the nature of these consultations, have taken place over the future of the High Common since July 2020.			
Answer from:			Cllr Kevin Guy/Cllr David Wood
<p><i>Golf operated on the site for several years alongside informal community uses, and we have been asked on numerous occasions to look at bringing golf back to the site.</i></p> <p><i>Community consultation was not required as we are not looking to change use on the site.</i></p>			
M	08	Question from:	Cllr Vic Pritchard
Please provide a report of the diversity and/or equalities assessment that has presumably taken place over the future of the High Common since July 2020.			
Answer from:			Cllr Kevin Guy/Cllr David Wood
<p><i>An Equality Impact Assessment is in the process of being completed which will summarise the equality considerations so far and the way that equality issues will be considered as the project develops. Equality considerations are also embedded within the procurement process for a new operator for the site.</i></p>			
M	09	Question from:	Cllr Vic Pritchard
A petition has been started by a resident urging the council to keep Bath's parks free of chemicals and pesticides. Please specify which chemicals and			

pesticides are currently used on Bath's parks and if any plans are in place to introduce any new ones in the near future?

Answer from:

Cllr Kevin Guy/Cllr David Wood

Last year the Parks Department stopped using herbicide in its general parks maintenance in anticipation of the Council ending the use of Glyphosate for street and pavement weeds as of the 1st April 2022.

This also includes the Play Inspectors who have stopped using herbicide to tackle weeds and moss in play areas.

However, we do still have a statutory responsibility to stop the spread of non-native invasive weeds and so we continue to use Glyphosate in treating patches of Himalayan Balsam, Japanese Knotweed and occasionally Giant Hogweed. So, the only herbicide in current use is for statutory responsibilities.

The Parks team have no plans in place to start reusing herbicide for general maintenance.

Although currently managed by the Leisure Team, we can also confirm that both Entry Hill and the Approach Golf Course have not had any chemical inputs since their closure.

The feasibility of establishing and maintaining a golf course without the use of herbicide or other chemical inputs (e.g. fertiliser) would need to be considered by any future operator.

M

10

Question from:

Cllr Vic Pritchard

The High Common has historically been shared by many users. Will you and the new operator commit to maintaining the park for free and unrestricted use by all?

Answer from:

Cllr Kevin Guy/Cllr David Wood

Golf operated on the site for several years alongside informal community uses, and any future operator will be required to keep free access to the site maintained for residents.

M	11	Question from:	Cllr Paul May				
The aim of Aequus Developments Ltd (ADL) is to “repurpose the council’s commercial estate”. Will this also include a repurpose of ADL at the same time?							
Answer from:			Cllr Richard Samuel				
<i>Response sent within 5 working days of the meeting:</i>							
<i>The terms of reference for ADL are set by the council and may be varied at any time to reflect changing needs. The 25th March 2022 Council report set out the Aequus Governance, Structure and Business plan, of which, an area of development is to repurpose Commercial Assets into residential to help diversify income and reduce the Council’s reliance on retail tenants.</i>							
M	12	Question from:	Cllr Paul May				
Since 2017, what percentage of household waste collected kerbside has been sent to Avonmouth for processing?							
Answer from:			Cllr David Wood				
<i>Due to the way that the data is recorded we are not able to separate the amount of household collected black bag waste that has been sent to Avonmouth.</i>							
<i>The figures below show the percentage that was sent to Avonmouth of the black bag waste from household collections along with black bag waste from the recycling centres and our business waste collections.</i>							
			2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
% residual waste delivered to Mechanical Biological Treatment at Avonmouth for treatment and then export to Combined Heat & Power plants in Europe			28%	33%	38%	0%	0%
% residual waste treated at Avonmouth Energy from Waste Plants as the final destination			32%	27%	29%	74%	80%

M	13	Question from:	Cllr Paul May
<p>Earlier this month, it was announced that WECA has been awarded £105m from the Government to improve bus services across the region. Please outline the steps the council is planning to take to work with WECA to boost bus usage and ensure this funding is used to good effect in BANES.</p>			
Answer from:			Cllr Sarah Warren
<p><i>The consortium bid between WECA and North Somerset received an indicative allocation of £105.5m, the second highest award in England. £48m of this indicative allocation is ring-fenced for infrastructure spend in North Somerset Council and £57.5m for is revenue funding for the whole area.</i></p> <p><i>B&NES Council will be working closely with WECA through the established framework of meetings, to ensure that this money is spent effectively in supporting and improving local bus services across the region in accordance with the priorities identified in the Bus Service Improvement Plan. The prospective programme of spend includes additional services to better connect our communities, alongside targeted fare reductions and improved customer experience while travelling by bus.</i></p>			
M	14	Question from:	Cllr Paul May
<p>The WECA Mayor has stated that any review of the greenbelt will be the responsibility of the council. Will you give an assurance that such a review will be undertaken and that it will enable the villages of Whitchurch and Pensford to be protected from unwanted development?</p>			
Answer from:			Cllr Tim Ball
<p><i>If any changes are needed to the Green Belt to accommodate longer term development needs, then the principle will need to be established in the WECA Spatial Development Strategy (SDS) with the relevant locations identified. The SDS will have to demonstrate that there are exceptional circumstances for changing the Green Belt, as required on National Planning Policy Framework para 139. If this is a requirement of the SDS, then it is the role of local plans to consider the options for detailed site boundary changes in conjunction with the allocation of development sites. In such circumstances, B&NES will work closely with local communities to seek to minimise harm to the Green Belt and secure benefits for local communities.</i></p>			

M	15	Question from:	Cllr Paul May
<p>You have previously given an assurance that BANES will not be required to take any of Bristol's housing allocation. Bearing in mind that the Spatial Development Strategy (SDS) sits with WECA and that no draft has yet been seen, is this still the case and what happens if the SDS is not approved by the three local authorities?</p>			
Answer from:			Cllr Kevin Guy
<p><i>It is the role of the WECA Spatial Development Strategy (SDS) to establish a spatial strategy to accommodate the housing targets for the sub-region, as set by the national standard methodology. National policy expects housing needs to be met in full and all authorities are statutorily obliged to work together to ensure full housing needs are met, under the Duty to Co-operate, where it is practical to do so and is consistent with achieving sustainable development (NPPF para 35). The decision on whether B&NES and South Gloucestershire will need to accommodate any unmet need from Bristol will therefore be determined via the SDS. The timetable for the publication of the draft SDS is currently unclear but it is understood that WECA is seeking to bring it to the WECA Committee in early summer. Under devolution order, WECA is required to establish the strategic planning framework by preparing a SDS and there is no mechanism in the Regulations and Order for an alternative approach. The Unitary Authorities will therefore only be able to make limited progress on the new Local Plan in advance of the submission of the SDS for examination. A delay to plan making in the longer term means that the Unitary Authorities would be at increased vulnerability to speculative planning applications, although the B&NES Local Plan Partial Update means that B&NES is in a more robust position in the meantime.</i></p>			
M	16	Question from:	Cllr Paul May
<p>Please provide an update on the Low-Traffic Neighbourhood applications for Whitchurch and Pensford.</p>			
Answer from:			Cllr Sarah Warren
<p><i>The Whitchurch Liveable Neighbourhood application remains a potential pilot scheme, and we are currently awaiting preliminary designs from AECOM for review and approval before proceeding to the next step, which will be to consult on those designs.</i></p> <p><i>The Pensford Liveable Neighbourhood application was submitted for consideration as part of the 48 applications received in February 2021 and May 2021. Whilst it was not selected as one of the 15 priority areas for Phase 1, it could be considered for Phase 2 once capacity is released.</i></p>			

M	17	Question from:	Cllr Shaun Hughes
<p>I am most surprised to see your response to falling P&R use is to increase charges.</p> <p>As an example, if 3 people visit Bath by car they can drive to the city centre and would pay £9.60 to park for 6 hours in Avon Street or Charlotte Street car parks, your alternative is £10.80 for the inconvenience of waiting for a bus to and from the P&R?</p> <p>If we are serious about reducing the pollution levels and meeting our climate agenda surely you should invest in a cost incentivised transport scheme, typically these price increases disproportionately effect residents in North East Somerset who need to access the City for work, retail etc.</p> <p>Do you agree this is a step in the wrong direction?</p>			
Answer from:			Cllr Manda Rigby
<p><i>As set out within the report considered this evening, the tender responses from the market are significantly more expensive than under the previous contract. We have considered all options and whilst we have been able to commit to the service being maintained at the current operating levels, we recognise that weekend fare costs need to rise to match weekday travel and ensuring that all passengers pay the same fare for the same service rather than disproportionately impacting some groups. We have attempted to mitigate the impact on users despite the significant impact to the Council's budget of the new contract and the reduction in standard patronage levels of over 22% and a reduction of 42% in concessionary fare users due to the pandemic. Whilst the costs for individuals under this model may have risen slightly, the group ticket options will be maintained, allowing 2 adults and up to 5 children to travel into the city for £6.50, a significant saving on the cost of parking as set out above.</i></p> <p><i>As part of the change, the Council is recommending moving toward a gross cost contract option where all costs will sit with the Council and the Council will also receive all income. As the income recovers any surplus will be reinvested back into the service to increase operating hours, improve the service offer and ultimately reduce fares as appropriate. This approach is supportive of the wider policy direction and more practical steps such as using increased residents parking schemes, liveable neighbourhoods and increased parking charges to reduce car usage in the city centre.</i></p>			
M	18	Question from:	Cllr Joanna Wright
<p>Please can you give a full list of the chemicals and quantities used on the ground to facilitate golf on the High Common, including which herbicides not endorsed by the Soil Association are used? What is the acreage of this site?</p>			

Please can you give details of the water that is used on the High Common golf Course to maintain the green carpet - does the High Common use an irrigation system recycled spring water already or is it provided from a mains supply?

Answer from:

Cllr Sarah Warren/Cllr David Wood

The site is currently maintained by Parks as public open space.

We can also confirm that the Approach Golf Course has not had any chemical inputs since its closure.

Any future operators would need to show how maintenance of the site would meet the council's climate and nature emergency declarations.

The site is approximately 37.3 acres

There is an irrigation system that would be used to water the greens. This system is fed from the mains supply.

M 19

Question from:

Cllr Joanna Wright

Every year the Canal and River Trust hires gangs with large petrol driven mowers and strimmers to cut back vegetation along the canal towpath. The Council has declared an Ecological Emergency. Will you be approaching the Canal and River Trust on the issue of how better to support nature along the canal towpath?

Answer from:

Cllr Sarah Warren

Yes we can approach the canal and river trust, however, we continue to use diesel and petroleum equipment ourselves in our own grounds maintenance operations until viable alternatives come to market.

The Canal & Rivers Trust are part of our Waterspace Partnership and sit on our Bath River Line Steering Group, the future management and maintenance of this important corridor is being reviewed to improve it as a key movement and ecological corridor.

M 20

Question from:

Cllr Joanna Wright

In December 2021 I asked the Leader of Council a question on how the Council will be working to address the issue of slavery and how the council will identify the social, cultural and economic inequalities inherited from this tragedy and take the lead on making this slave heritage visible.

On the 22nd April 2022 the Council released a press statement on the opening of the Bath World Heritage Centre. This mentioned the city's history with regard to architecture, the romans - "a central place for visitors and residents to find out about Bath's special status as a World Heritage Site" yet no mention has been made of the role of slavery in the creation of this city. It would appear that the Council, the custodians of this UNESCO World Heritage Site, in the absence of any acknowledgement of it, seeks to avoid the pressing issue of the role of slavery in the history of the site. How will this Council take forward active plans to properly tell the history of the city including its role in the slave trade?

Ref: Cllr Wright's Question from December 2021

"The UNESCO website makes it very clear its commitment to "building peace in the December 2021 minds of men and women" and "since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed". It goes on to say that "a peace based exclusively upon the political and economic arrangements of governments would not be a peace which could secure the unanimous, lasting and sincere support of the peoples of the world, and that the peace must therefore be founded, if it is not to fail, upon the intellectual and moral solidarity of mankind". In essence, UNESCO was created because it viewed that politics and economics are not enough to build a lasting peace, and that it must be based on "humanity's moral and intellectual solidarity." The whole city of Bath is a UNESCO world heritage site, and this status according to UNESCO should be used for education, healing and peace building. The custodian of this site, BANES, has made, it would appear little attempt to unpack the social history element with regard to slave trade, slave ownership or the wealth thereby generated or the extractive practices of colonisation. The Bath World Heritage website is silent.

It states in the UNESCO Healing the Wounds of Slave Trade and Slavery: report from Slave Routes Project Jan 2021

"The violence of slavery did not end with abolition. Its contemporary consequences are still active in the form of the terrible poison of racism that continues to contaminate societies."

How will the Council begin to work with the UNESCO Slave Route Project to question the social, cultural and economic inequalities inherited from this tragedy? Will B&NES Officers read the Jan 2021 Healing the Wounds of Slave Trade and Slavery report and report back with immediate and practical steps towards connecting with the Slave Route project to Bath with the Council taking a lead in this work?

https://healingthewoundsofslavery.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/UNESCO-GHFP_2020_Healing-the-Wounds-of-Slavey_Desk-Review_Report.pdf

Answer from:

Cllr Kevin Guy/Cllr Dine Romero

The World Heritage Centre's primary purpose is to help visitors to Bath understand what a World Heritage Site is and why Bath was inscribed as one. It is not a space where a detailed history of Bath is explored and the press release reflected this.

However, in the permanent displays in the centre there is prominent reference made to the fact that some of the wealth that created Georgian Bath (and hence one aspect of the UNESCO listing – the classical, Palladian architecture) was derived from Britain's involvement in the Transatlantic Trade.

Further to this, Heritage Services would like to undertake a more in-depth exploration of this subject in the temporary display area of the centre. The

exhibition programme for this space will be established post opening.

It is worth noting that other institutions in Bath have, and continue to interrogate, the history of Bath's involvement in Transatlantic Enslavement. Displays at Bath Abbey and the Holburne Museum will hopefully be complemented shortly by renovated interpretation at Beckford's Tower. These sites all have direct connections to enslavement and it is wholly appropriate and highly relevant to their locations and specific histories that they have undertaken to exploring these connections. Whilst the World Heritage Centre can introduce the story to visitors to Bath, they will then be able to explore it in detail at these other venues during their visit to the city.

M	21	Question from:	Cllr Joanna Wright
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On a recent search on the NHS Service: Find a Dentist <https://www.nhs.uk/service-search/find-a-dentist> it is apparent that there are no NHS dentists accessible in Bath for residents other than by a referral. Even previous NHS dentists have ceased operating forcing residents to look for a private dentist or not have a dentist.. It is clear that many families relied on NHS dentists for healthy teeth and mouth care for all members of their families. It is apparent that many families will be unable to afford important dental care as the cost of private dentists is often out of reach for many families. As families will not be able to access an NHS dentist locally what will the Cabinet Member for Adults be doing to address this issue with regard to HCRG and the services the Council commissions through the NHS?

Answer from:	Cllr Alison Born
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The problems that local residents are experiencing regarding access to NHS dental services was brought to our attention a few weeks ago. Dental access is not a council responsibility but we have raised it with colleagues in the CCG who confirm that dental services are commissioned by NHS England. NHS England is responsible for <https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/dentists/how-to-find-an-nhs-dentist/>. There are inequalities in oral health and it is worrying that there is insufficient NHS dental provision locally and that NHS England do not have up to date data on many practices. It is possible that the new integrated care system arrangements will include the provision of local dental services in the future but there is no timescale for that. In the meantime, people who are not registered with a dentist and who have urgent dental needs should contact 111 online or by phone.

M	22	Question from:	Cllr Joanna Wright
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What policies are B&NES Council developing to support sustainable agriculture and help drive best practice in terms of the district's land use?

Answer from:		Cllr Sarah Warren
<p><i>There are already clear policies in the Local Plan to support local food production (e.g. RE2, LCR9) and the new B&NES Local Plan will be reviewed or prepared to help achieve the objectives to respond to the Climate and Ecological Emergencies. The Council sits on the WoE Agriculture Group hosted by the West of England Nature Partnership and this group will look to develop best practice guidance.</i></p>		
M	23	Question from: Cllr Joanna Wright
<p>Could the council give full details of the costs the council pays per child to private providers of children's homes that are used by children from this authority? Does the Council know what the profit margin is, as the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) has said that: <i>Private providers of children's homes and foster care are making "significant and persistent" profits by charging cash-strapped local authorities elevated prices for increasingly scarce placements.</i> What is the Council being charged on average per week per child? Are the homes the Council uses owned by private equity firms?</p>		
Answer from:		Cllr Dine Romero
<p><i>The majority of B&NES children are placed in children's homes that are not owned by private equity companies. Of the 27 children placed in children's homes, 2 are placed in a provision owned by a private equity company. These were the most appropriate placements for the needs of the 2 children.</i> <i>The average cost of residential care £4,500 per week and this could increase to £7,700 for those young people whose needs are very complex. The providers of children homes operate on a 10-12% profit margin.</i></p>		
M	24	Question from: Cllr Joanna Wright
<p>What are the council's regulations with reference to pavements? It is understood by some residents that householders are not allowed to create a car parking space if it impacts on a public right of way i.e.: pavements used by pedestrians (including of course vulnerable children and the elderly.) If the Council does allow residents to turn front gardens into car parks how does this fit with the climate and ecological emergency? Specifically, I have been alerted to residents in Bathwick Ward who are creating or hoping to create car ports in anticipation of a lack of street parking space because of the Cleveland Pools restoration work. Please can you give full details of B&NES policy on this?</p>		

Answer from:		Cllr Manda Rigby
<p><i>Creation of new accesses and/or hardstanding are regulated by the Town & Country Planning Act rather than any Council policy. Each case is different depending on what classification of road or other designation such as a conservation area the proposal sits within. As such we cannot give a 'one size fits all' response to this question. We would advise people to use the pre application enquiry service to establish if planning consent is required. Information on this service can be found here.</i></p> <p><i>Creation of a new or amended vehicle crossing will also require approval by the Local Highway Authority under the Highways Act 1980, Section 184. This will only be considered where consent has been given for its creation by the planning authority where applicable. Further guidance on what our highway inspectors will be considering and forms to apply can be found here.</i></p> <p><i>The Council's policy regarding the appropriateness of turning front gardens into car parking is guided by our adopted local development policies which can be found here. The level of parking allowed is guided by the level of sustainable transport options available in that area. This policy is under review, the draft guidance which seeks to help deliver sustainable development and economic growth by setting how parking and its effects will be managed can be found here</i></p> <p><i>The area around Cleveland Pools is currently covered by a Residents Parking Zone which prioritises parking for residents and their visitors. The level of parking amenity for residents should not be affected by the Pools and repurposing of front gardens shouldn't be necessary.</i></p>		
M	25	Question from: Cllr Joanna Wright
Please can you give full details of how the recent £100K funding for Social Prescribing and Active Travel in B&NES is being taken forward?		
Answer from:		Cllr Dine Romero
<p><i>B&NES Council was successful in being awarded £100k from the Department for Transport (DfT) to carry out a feasibility study to develop plans for a three-year Social Prescribing and Active Travel programme in the Somer Valley area as part of a national pilot.</i></p> <p><i>The feasibility study has been completed and a funding bid was submitted to the DfT at the end of April by colleagues in the public health and sustainable communities directorates in collaboration with many partners. The feasibility study needed to demonstrate how the following objectives could be met through an active travel and social prescribing offer over the three years:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Address local community identified need relating to underrepresented groups, deprivation and health inequalities</i> <i>Actively promote increased levels of physical activity through cycling and walking</i> 		

- *Demonstrate clear links between infrastructure development and the proposed social prescribing schemes*
- *Support a modal shift to active travel providing people with travel choices and supporting changes in behaviour*

The funding bid is for £1.6m over three years (2022/23 – 2024/25). If successful, the project will initially focus on an offer in Midsomer Norton, Radstock, Westfield, Paulton, though with the option of expanding the offer across the Three Valleys PCN area. A key reason for Midsomer Norton, Radstock, Westfield, and Paulton being key geographical areas of focus, is that there are planned infrastructure improvements in these areas and the DfT are keen to explore how behaviour change support and social prescribing can be linked with change to active travel infrastructure.

The proposal is to set up and operate a 'Walking and Cycling Hub' in the Healthy Living Centre Radstock. It will be a 'one stop shop' for walking and cycling support, activities, cycle hire, cycle repair, and information on active travel routes. As well as the main hub in Radstock there will be regular 'pop-up' hubs in high-street locations in Midsomer Norton, Radstock and Paulton offering the same interventions. The pilot will expand on our existing Social Prescribing model. It will take referrals from community services, health professionals, self-referral, and a range of other routes. Pathways will be set up with the 3 Valleys Primary Care Network with the B&NES Community Wellbeing Hub for people to be referred to a range of walking and cycling activities which will be led by several different providers including B&NES Council, Sustrans, Sporting Family Change, and other local charities.

We have been working with a range of partners to progress the study, and including the Town & Parish Councils, 3SG, B&NES Communities Team, HCRG, DHI, WERN, University of Bath, and Wheels for All.

M	26	Question from:	Cllr Joanna Wright
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In the press statement on the 14th April 2022, you stated that:

“Uncertainty about the future course of the pandemic and the impact of high inflation may well influence future trends”

However, in full Council in February when you set the Council's annual budget you stated that inflation would be set at 2% and were derogatory of the remarks made by Councillors who questioned the inflation rate set by the council. As the UK inflation rate is presently at 7% how will the Council be resetting the budgets for the coming year?

Answer from:	Cllr Richard Samuel
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To give Councillors assurance that the Council has recognised inflationary risk in its budget, provision has been made in addition to the 2% (£2.4m) across all major contracts; inflationary contingencies have been included in recognition of inflationary budget pressures across areas including: Energy contracts, Home to School Transport and Social Care, these total £4.5m in recurrent revenue funding (included in Annex 2(ii) of the budget papers). In total this allocates 5.5% revenue budget uplift across Council contracts, at the time of setting the budget the December national inflation rate was 5.4%,

the Cabinet is satisfied that appropriate provisions have been made giving a robust budget for 2022/23.

M

27

Question from:

Cllr Joanna Wright

Under E3357 Park and Ride Contract renewal it states:

5.5 Several start and finish times were quoted within the tender. All options create a significant on-going budget pressure and, for this reason, any option to lengthen the timetable has unfortunately been dismissed at this time. However, as set out in 5.3 this could be revisited based on the income levels generated within the gross cost contract if supported.

5.6 The analysis of financial model options is therefore based on the default or current, option (Monday-Saturday 06:15-20:30, Sunday and Public Holidays 09:30-18:00).

Under E3358 Journey to Net Zero: Reducing the Environmental Impact of Transport in Bath it states:

1.2 The current ways in which we travel will not get us to carbon neutrality by 2030. This plan sets out the changes needed to decarbonise Bath's transport system in line with our climate emergency and to create places we want to live and work; with better connected, healthier and genuinely sustainable communities.

For information, the cheapest return ticket to Bath from London Paddington means taking a train after 10am in the morning and after 7pm in the evening. Should a person wishing to use a park and ride to get to and from the train station, they will have found that no P&R bus exists.

Do the Cabinet Members recognise that the decisions they are taking on the new Park and Ride Contract and the Journey to Net Zero do not enable the necessary connectivity that allows for sustainable journeys which in turn will reduce private car miles and lead to carbon reduction in the transport sector?

Answer from:

Cllr Manda Rigby

As set out within the report, the costs for the Park & Ride service after open market tender are significantly higher than the previous income generating contract let in 2012. Therefore, consideration was given to the overall affordability of the service due to the reduction in standard patronage levels of over 22% and a reduction of 42% in concessionary fare users due to the pandemic.

In light of this significant change in usage, the Council is recommending moving toward a gross cost contract option. This significant change in management approach will allow the Council to both maintain the service at this time, provide an affordable business model in the short term and over the long term reinvest in further service enhancements as patronage increases back to and above the levels seen historically. This approach is supportive of the wider policy direction and more practical steps such as using increased residents parking schemes, liveable neighbourhoods and increased parking charges to reduce car usage in the city centre.

However, under this model, the risks of patronage not recovering also sits with the Council as the Council will be required to make payment for the entire

service regardless of income generated and this could lead to further losses. Therefore, each space within the car parks and on the bus services themselves becomes critical to the financial model for the contract and the Council will need to ensure that we generate as much income as possible to allow us to invest in future service upgrades and improvements such as late night running, changes to routes, improvements to the sites themselves and upgrades to the buses used.

In the meantime, the service will continue to operate with buses running to and from the city centre from 06.15 until 20.30 Monday to Saturday, 09.30 to 18.30 Sunday in line with the model in place for the last 10 years.

M	28	Question from:	Cllr Joanna Wright
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E5537 Park and Ride Contract Renewal appears to fail to address support for cycling provision on the buses connecting many up and down high hills in Bath that presently have no LTN 1/20 compliant cycle infrastructure. As the E3358 Journey to Net Zero is only policy, which is clearly years away from implementation, why has the E5537 P&R contract failed to include the provision of cycle storage as a key transport deliverable as one of the Council's corporate aims to deliver on the climate emergency?

Answer from:	Cllr Manda Rigby
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As noted above, the Park and Ride contract will be let on a gross cost contract basis allowing the Council to consider fully the policy, financial, service and reputational opportunities on a regular basis. As patronage recovers, full consideration will be given on a 6 monthly basis to how the services can be improved based on the information gathered during that period. This could allow consideration of further enhancements for cycles in the future. Whilst the solutions for carrying bikes will be investigated further, it cannot be at detriment to the use of the service by those who have additional needs or need to transport children.

In addition, the park and ride sites will be considered within the wider WECA led Future Mobility Zone project that is looking to develop the park and ride sites into multi modal interchanges and we will ensure that any improvements further enhance this approach.

M	29	Question from:	Cllr Joanna Wright
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The Government will soon be making a decision whether to legalise e-scooters on the public highways. Throughout the trial all parking of e-scooters was on pavements in B&NES. Will the Council be making E-scooter parking on the road where vehicles presently are allocated parking places?

Answer from:		Cllr Sarah Warren
<p><i>As part of the plans to expand the operational area of the Voi Escooter trial, the council is undertaking a review of existing hub locations alongside new hub locations for expansion areas. This review is expected to be concluded by 10th May and includes consideration for trialling several methods of increased physical formalisation of parking for Escooters, including some parking on road. Parking formalisation is being trialled to increase legibility of the parking for pedestrians with sight impairment, and to increase the level of adherence to safe parking by Escooter users.</i></p>		
M	30	Question from: Cllr Joanna Wright
<p>Presently parents of adopted children in B&NES are unable to access the Adoption West support in the form of WANDS (Wiltshire Adopters Networking, Development and Support). What Networking, Development and Support is being offered to B&NES adopted parents? What funding is in place to do this?</p>		
Answer from:		Cllr Dine Romero
<p><i>A proposal is with Adoption West (AW) Board of Directors to commission WANDS to grow the service in other areas of the AW region, to include B&NES. B&NES Adopters can join groups commissioned by Adoption West in Bristol, via CSS Adoption https://www.ccsadoption.org/</i></p> <p><i>B&NES adopters and residents are encouraged to contact AW duty team directly to discuss specific adoption support needs and to determine if the child / family need an assessment which they are entitled to request.</i> https://adoptionwest.co.uk/</p>		
M	31	Question from: Cllr Joanna Wright
<p>In a planning application, a request was made by the Council to the landowner to plant 80 trees due to the removal of trees felled in the planning request. To date this planting has not taken place. What actions will the Council take to uphold this planning decision?</p>		
Answer from:		Cllr Tim Ball

This will be registered as an enforcement case and a written response will be provided once investigations have taken place.

M

32

Question from:

Cllr Joanna Wright

When will Cleveland Bridge be re-open for use in both directions?

Answer from:

Cllr Manda Rigby

In January our contractors unearthed a complex engineering and safety critical issue which reports show does not have a straight-forward solution. Engineers need to be 100 per cent certain any solution will not cause a structural failure on other sections of the bridge.

This will take time to model, we had aimed to open the bridge to two-way car traffic during this period, but we have been informed by technical experts that this cannot be done safely.

The assessment is expected to be completed by the end of May and will inform how repair works progress. As a consequence, the traffic regulation order for the bridge will be extended for six months or until repairs to the bridge have been completed, if sooner.

M

33

Question from:

Cllr Joanna Wright

Please can you give full details of the latest pollution figures on the London Road with regards to the Clean Air Zone?

Answer from:

Cllr Sarah Warren

The table below contains the data relating to nitrogen dioxide concentration levels at monitoring locations on London Road, showing those which are within the CAZ boundary and those which are outside. 'DT' refers to monitoring using a diffusion tube and 'CM' refers to monitoring using a continuous analyser.

The results from 2019 are confirmed and relate to 'at monitor' locations. The results from 2021 are also 'at monitor' locations and are provisional, awaiting

peer review by DEFRA.

Levels at all monitoring locations have reduced in 2021 when compared with the last representative year of 2019.

All monitoring sites meet the Government's air quality objective level of 40 µg/m³ in 2021 except DT224 (Walcot Parade 2) which although above the objective, has reduced significantly from the 2019 concentration of 55 µg/m³. This location, together with Walcot Parade and Anglo Terrace façade, have been particularly affected by the temporary changes in traffic flows resulting from the closure of Cleveland Bridge throughout 2021.

Monitoring location	Reference No.	Within CAZ boundary?	2019 confirmed result (µg/m ³) (at monitor)	2021 provisional result (µg/m ³) (at monitor)	change (µg/m ³)
Lambridge	DT055	No	36	28	-8
Walcot Terrace	DT052	No	36	25	-11
co-located with AURN analyser	DT226	No	32	27	-5
Anglo Terrace façade	DT222	Yes	49	38	-11
Canton Place	DT223	Yes	37	26	-11
Walcot Parade	DT198	Yes	50	38	-12
Walcot Parade 2	DT224	Yes	55	43	-12
Cleveland Terrace	DT225	Yes	38	32	-6
Between Thomas Street/Snow Hill	DT172	Yes	42	31	-11
Anglo Terrace	DT90	Yes	50	33	-17
Continuous Monitors					
AURN – Bath A4 Roadside	CM8	No	29*	27	-2
Chelsea House	CM4	No	22	18	-4

*low data capture in 2019 due to site move

An interactive map showing these locations can be found at <https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/services/environment/pollution-noise-nuisance/air-quality/air-quality-data-long-term>

M	34	Question from:	Cllr Joanna Wright
<p>It was reported that Digital Secretary Nadine Dorries has written to broadband service providers, including BT and Virgin Media O2, to raise concerns over the low uptake of social tariffs - discounted tariffs available to an estimated 4.2m households receiving Universal Credit. Only around 1.2% of eligible households are taking advantage of the tariffs, according to regulator Ofcom. Ms Dorries said in her letter that it is "vital we raise awareness of discount broadband offers for low-income households", with 84% of benefit recipients unaware of the tariffs.</p> <p>What active role has the council made to let residents know about low-cost broadband tariffs and how has the Council communicated this to residents?</p>			
Answer from:			Cllr Richard Samuel
<p><i>Social Tariffs as well as other schemes including free broadband for job seekers can provide much-needed support to residents in light of the current cost of living crisis. Both schemes are managed directly by JobCentre Plus (DWP), whose staff will be having regular contact with benefit claimants to determine eligibility. We promote both schemes through our central communications channel and the teams that have regular contact with our residents. We have a number of services including the Employment & Skills Pd, Future Bright, Cool Ventures, Citizens Advice Bureau, NCS, Cleanslate, Curo and Julian House that work closely with job seekers and Universal Credit claimants.</i></p>			
M	35	Question from:	Cllr Joanna Wright
<p>The UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres has stated: <i>"to avoid catastrophe, the main emitters must drastically cut emissions starting this year. This means accelerating the end of fossil fuel addiction and speeding the deployment of clean renewable energy."</i></p> <p>It is clear that leadership at every level requires bold action now to avoid climate catastrophe. This Council has declared a Climate Emergency. The Liberal Democrats won the 2019 local election with a clear mandate from the electorate to deliver on the climate emergency. However, as Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for the Climate Emergency and Sustainable Travel you have decided to hold a Citizens Panel on a bus gate on North Road - a route that would provide a safe and sustainable travel route for thousands of journeys every day in Bath. This route could already be in place. This route already has had a consultation, which was in favour of this necessary change to the public highway. Rather than deliver this you have decided to hold a Citizen's Panel at the further cost of £30,000. Cllr Warren you have repeatedly deferred the decision on this route. If you believe in a Climate Emergency, why are you not acting now as the UN Secretary General has called for with the aim of providing emergency degrowth alternatives that will help save the earth?</p>			

Answer from:

Cllr Sarah Warren

Tackling the declared climate and ecological emergency is central to our policy objectives and enshrined within the council's corporate strategy. Part of our commitment is to support the introduction of measures to encourage more active and sustainable travel across the whole of Bath & North East Somerset.

The results of the 2021 consultation on the active travel proposal for North Road were not as clear cut as Cllr Wright suggests, as detailed in the Cabinet report of 23rd June 2021, para's 3.32 and 3.33. The public debate about the North Road scheme became very polarised in 2021. The LGA report on the implementation of the Emergency Active Travel Fund (Cohen, Eslava and Frost, 2021) notes that Government guidance quickly changed, following the Emergency Active Travel Fund's launch, from an emphasis solely on speed of implementation, to increase the emphasis on consultation with local communities, given the vehemence of the opposition observed to some of the measures implemented around the UK.

The report comments that many cycle lanes introduced under the scheme were swiftly amended or removed, and concluded that "it pays to invest in doing engagement well", and that engagement may sometimes consume the largest proportion of the budget for the intervention. It notes that "a visibly open approach to seeking views from a wide range of stakeholders at an early stage is likely to result in a better design and will reduce the risk that distrust arises", that "where debate has become.... Polarised, councils can benefit from seeking the opinions of a socio-demographically representative sample of the community," and that "it can be useful to organise a deliberative process to understand how stakeholders feel when they have considered relevant evidence and arguments in a structured way."

B&NES wishes to ensure that any scheme brought in to support active travel to Claverton Down, and elsewhere around the district, will be acceptable to local residents. Cabinet therefore decided to commission a citizens' panel (a deliberative process of a representative group of citizens, as recommended by the LGA) to find out what 'ordinary' residents (including those we seldom hear from) think about efforts to make space for safe cycle lanes on roads in Bath and North East Somerset, including the route to Claverton Down. This research will be used to inform future schemes, alongside our usual consultation processes.

Reference:

Cohen, T., Eslava, L.N. And Frost, M. (2021) 'Stakeholder engagement in an emergency: Lessons from low-traffic neighbourhoods', Local Government Association. <https://www.local.gov.uk/publications/stakeholder-engagement-emergency-lessons-low-traffic-neighbourhoods>