

BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET COUNCIL

MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING

Thursday, 21st September, 2023

Present:- **Councillors** Michael Auton, Alex Beaumont, Colin Blackburn, Alison Born, Anna Box, Deborah Collins, Paul Crossley, Chris Dando, Mark Elliott, Sarah Evans, Fiona Gourley, Kevin Guy, Alan Hale, Ian Halsall, Dave Harding, Liz Hardman, Gavin Heathcote, Saskia Heijltjes, Oli Henman, Joel Hirst, Lucy Hodge, Duncan Hounsell, Shaun Hughes, Dr Eleanor Jackson, Grant Johnson, Samantha Kelly, Hal MacFie, Ruth Malloy, Lesley Mansell, Matt McCabe, Sarah Moore, Ann Morgan, Michelle O'Doherty, Bharat Pankhania, June Player, Manda Rigby, Dine Romero, Paul Roper, Sam Ross, Onkar Saini, Toby Simon, Shaun Stephenson-McGall, George Tomlin, Malcolm Treby, Karen Walker, Sarah Warren, Tim Warren CBE, Andy Wait, David Wood and Joanna Wright

Apologies for absence: **Councillors** Tim Ball, David Biddleston, Jess David, Steve Hedges, George Leach, John Leach, Paul May, Robin Moss and Alison Streatfeild-James

35 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

The Chair drew attention to the emergency evacuation procedure, as set out on the agenda.

36 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

37 MINUTES - 20TH JULY 2023

On a motion from Councillor Eleanor Jackson, and seconded by Councillor Liz Hardman, it was

RESOLVED that the minutes of 20th July 2023 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

38 ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE CHAIR OF THE COUNCIL OR FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

At the request of the Chair, Council stood for a minute's silence in recognition of the recent death of Jane Tapper, former B&NES Councillor for Weston from 1999 – 2003 and Bill Carruthers, former Labour Council for Westfield, for the same period.

39 TO ANNOUNCE ANY URGENT BUSINESS AGREED BY THE CHAIR

There were no items of urgent business.

40 QUESTIONS, STATEMENTS AND PETITIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

Statements were made by the following people;

Chad Allen made a statement about English ivy. He explained how it takes over buildings, trees, walls, telegraph/lighting poles and can cause significant damage. He called on the Council to acknowledge that action was needed to remove this hazard. The statement was referred to the relevant Cabinet Member.

Jeff Manning made a statement, supporting a petition from the residents of Foxhill, which called on the Council to take a radical fresh look at its working relationship with Curo. He cited various examples of recent problems and called for closer engagement to resolve issues. A copy of the statement is linked to the online minutes and placed on the Minute book. In response to an offer from Councillor Kevin Guy to meet him and the ward member, Mr Manning replied that he would welcome that. Councillor Joanna Wright asked Mr Manning for his view of the mental health implications on residents if there were poor quality services, to which he replied that the effect was significant on the individuals and the community. The statement was referred to the relevant Cabinet Member.

Gavin Hambrey spoke on behalf of the Bath Riverside Residents' Association gull action group, and in his own capacity, about urban gulls. He outlined the problems they caused, the steps they had taken to improve the situation and called for further measures to reduce the negative impact gulls have on local residents. Councillor Kevin Guy asked if Mr Hambrey considered that Local Authorities need more power to deal with this issue; to which he responded that what was key was getting Natural England to understand the impact gulls are having on people. Councillor Grant Johnson asked what else might be done, taking into consideration that their protected status prevents the use of greater control measures. Mr Hambrey replied that the regulatory approach from Natural England needed looking at, and called for a collective voice about potential law changes. Councillor June Player asked if Mr Hambrey agreed that the Council should be engaging more robustly at a senior level to address the residents' concerns, to which he replied that he did agree. Councillor Tim Warren asked if egg removal was taking place, to which Mr Hambrey replied that targeted removal was taking place but the numbers were very limited, required a separate regulatory process each time and were funded privately by the management company. Councillor Joanna Wright asked if it would be helpful for the Council to host a portal where residents could register gull activity; Mr Hambrey replied that he believed there was already an arrangement such as this but anything that could be done to make that more widely known and used would be helpful. A full copy of the statement is linked to the online minutes and placed on the Minute book. The statement was referred to the relevant Cabinet Member.

Matt Cooper made a statement about the merits of switching to a plant-based diet and urged the Council to prioritise plant-based food options wherever they could. A copy of the statement is linked to the online minutes and placed on the Minute book. In response to a question from Councillor Kevin Guy, Mr Cooper confirmed that he would be pleased to meet with Councillor Sarah Warren to discuss this. Councillor Grant Johnson asked Mr Cooper if this proposal was not counterintuitive to a sustainable diet as it would lead to greater deforestation to provide enough protein and higher levels of waste. Mr Cooper referred the councillor to the National Food strategy and the Committee on Climate Change, both of which state that a significant reduction in meat and dairy options are necessary in order to meet our Paris climate

obligations. Councillor Joanna Wright asked which other Councils had committed to this and what type of measures were involved. Mr Cooper replied that 12 Councils had passed a motion to move towards plant based eating. Oxfordshire County Council had adopted this fully, and various other Councils including Leeds, Norwich and Exeter were taking steps such as no meat on certain days or no meat for internal events. The statement was referred to the relevant Cabinet Member.

The Chair thanked the members of the public for their statements.

41 YOUTH JUSTICE PLAN 2023-24

Council considered the Youth Justice Plan for 2023-24 which had been previously considered by the Children, Adults, Health & Wellbeing Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel and supported by Cabinet.

On a motion from Councillor Paul May, seconded by Councillor Liz Hardman, it was unanimously

RESOLVED to

1. Agree that the Youth Justice Plan fulfils the requirements of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and can be submitted to the Youth Justice Board for England and Wales.
2. Adopt the Youth Justice Plan as part of the Council's Policy and Budget Framework that can be accommodated within the Council budget; and
3. Note that the Youth Offending Service Partnership Board is responsible for ensuring delivery of the Plan.

42 CORPORATE AUDIT COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT AND TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Council considered the annual report of the Corporate Audit Committee for its activity in 2022 - 2023, and a small amendment to the Committee Terms of Reference.

On a motion from Councillor Mark Elliott, seconded by Councillor Lucy Hodge, it was unanimously

RESOLVED that

1. The Annual Report of the Corporate Audit Committee is noted; and
2. The revised Corporate Audit Committee Terms of Reference are approved.

43 POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT 2022-23

The Council considered the annual report of the work of the Policy Development & Scrutiny Panels for 2022-2023.

On a motion from Councillor Michelle O'Doherty, seconded by Councillor Lucy Hodge, it was

RESOLVED to note the contents of the Policy Development and Scrutiny Annual Report 2022-2023.

[Notes:

- 1. The above resolution was carried with two Councillors abstaining.]*

44 MOTION FROM THE CONSERVATIVE GROUP - ANIMAL WELFARE

This item had been withdrawn.

45 MOTION FROM CLLR HAL MACFIE - REMOVING KERB & RAISED SURFACES IN KEYNSHAM HIGH STREET CONTRAFLOW CYCLE LANE

This item had been withdrawn.

46 MOTION FROM THE LIBERAL DEMOCRAT GROUP - STAFF SAFETY

The Council considered a motion concerning staff safety.

On a motion from Councillor Sam Kelly, and seconded by Councillor Sarah Evans, it was

RESOLVED that

Council backs the new Violence, Aggression, Threatening and Challenging Behaviour (Staff Safety) Policy, which is being rolled out by Bath and North East Somerset Council, and the associated campaign to tackle unacceptable, violent, and aggressive behaviour towards Council workers.

47 QUESTIONS, STATEMENTS AND PETITIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

Council noted the questions and responses that had been circulated.

Councillor Dave Harding made a statement about rural buses in the Chew Valley. He explained that the Demand Responsive Transport arrangement was not reliable or regular and people were becoming isolated, missing appointments, concerned about losing jobs etc. A recent WECA Mayor event had been disappointing for all the residents that had attended. Councillor Fiona Gourley, as Member Advocate for Rural Communities, has now drafted a petition calling for reliable public transport to be restored in North East Somerset and he urged all Councillors to support this. Councillor Joanna Wright asked if Councillor Harding would be signing the 'Take the West of England buses back into public control' petition which 2360 people have signed so far, to which he replied that he had not yet seen the petition. Councillor Fiona Gourley asked if Councillor Harding considered it appropriate that the WECA Mayor has spent £8 million pounds on free birthday buses for areas where services already exist and £4 million pounds on branding, when there are entire areas of B&NES who have lost their bus service. Councillor Harding responded by referring councillors to a National Centre for Public Research paper published in 2020

prepared for the Department of Transport entitled “Impact of interventions encouraging a switch from cars to more sustainable modes of transport” in which it says that interventions that used temporary financial or other rewards do little to encourage change once the reward has ended.

On closing the meeting, the Chair permitted Councillor Eleanor Jackson to check if Councillor Harding was aware of the statement she had made at the May 2023 meeting on this subject and the petition from Mrs Harrington, to which he confirmed that he had been present at that meeting, but would be happy to receive any relevant information from Councillor Jackson.

The meeting ended at 7.30 pm

Chair

Date Confirmed and Signed

Prepared by Democratic Services