

## **BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET COUNCIL**

### **MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING**

Thursday 20th July 2023

Present:- **Councillors** Michael Auton, Tim Ball, Alex Beaumont, Colin Blackburn, Anna Box, Paul Crossley, Chris Dando, Jess David, Mark Elliott, Sarah Evans, Kevin Guy, Ian Halsall, Dave Harding, Liz Hardman, Gavin Heathcote, Steve Hedges, Saskia Heijltjes, Oli Henman, Joel Hirst, Duncan Hounsell, Shaun Hughes, Dr Eleanor Jackson, Samantha Kelly, George Leach, John Leach, Hal MacFie, Ruth Malloy, Lesley Mansell, Paul May, Sarah Moore, Ann Morgan, Robin Moss, Michelle O'Doherty, Bharat Pankhania, June Player, Manda Rigby, Dine Romero, Paul Roper, Sam Ross, Onkar Saini, Toby Simon, Alison Streatfeild-James, Malcolm Treby, Karen Walker, Sarah Warren, Tim Warren CBE, Andy Wait and David Wood

Apologies for absence: **Councillors** Alison Born, Deborah Collins, Fiona Gourley, Alan Hale, Lucy Hodge, Grant Johnson, Matt McCabe, Shaun Stephenson-McGall, George Tomlin and Joanna Wright

#### **18 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE**

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

#### **19 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Disclosable pecuniary interests were declared by Councillors Oli Henman and Joel Hirst in item 10 – Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel.

#### **20 MINUTES - 25TH MAY 2023 & 15TH JUNE 2023**

On a motion from Councillor Eleanor Jackson, and seconded by Councillor Kevin Guy, it was

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of 25<sup>th</sup> May 2023 and 15<sup>th</sup> June 2023 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

#### **21 ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE CHAIR OF THE COUNCIL OR FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

The Chair was pleased to announce that the seven parks and green spaces managed by Bath & North East Somerset Council have been awarded the prestigious [Green Flag Award](#) for being welcoming places that are safe and secure, clean and well maintained and fulfil sustainable and conservation requirements.

#### **22 TO ANNOUNCE ANY URGENT BUSINESS AGREED BY THE CHAIR**

There were no urgent items.

## **23 NOTIFICATION OF MEMBERS ELECTED ON 22ND JUNE 2023**

Members noted that Councillors Liz Hardman and Grant Johnson had been elected to the Paulton ward on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2023.

## **24 QUESTIONS, STATEMENTS AND PETITIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

Statements were made by the following members of the public;

Debbie Andrews made a statement regarding the nuisance from seagulls. A copy of the statement has been placed on the Minute book and attached to the online record. Mrs Andrews provided a number of examples of how seagulls were negatively impacting residents' lives and called on the Council to provide funding for a solution. Councillor June Player asked Mrs Andrews if she would like the Council to petition Natural England to allow egg and nest removal, to which Mrs Andrews replied that she definitely would like that, as the chicks needed to be taken to a more appropriate place. Councillor Tim Warren commented that nest removal used to take place and asked if Mrs Andrews had noticed an increase in the problem since this had stopped. Mrs Andrews replied that she definitely had.

Adam Reynolds made a statement raising two concerns; the Somer Valley Links consultation and urged councillors to attend the consultation events and delivery issues of the Liveable Neighbourhood trials, calling for the focus to change so that officer time was not spent on the wrong aspects. A copy of the statement has been placed on the Minute book and attached to the online record.

Chad Allen made a statement outlining his concerns about the destructive effect of English Ivy on buildings and other trees and challenged the position of the Royal Horticultural Society on ivy.

Natalie Barnett from Climate Hub B&NES made a statement calling for a permanent Climate hub to be provided in Bath city centre and setting out the reasons why this was necessary. A copy of the statement has been placed on the Minute book and attached to the online record. Councillor Kevin Guy asked if Ms Barnett would like to meet with the relevant Cabinet Member to discuss this, to which she replied that that would be great. Councillor Liz Hardman asked why a physical space was needed to which Ms Barnett responded that they had considerable experience doing pop ups, but there were benefits that arose from a permanent physical focus. Councillor Shaun Hughes asked about plans to expand into North East Somerset, to which Ms Barnett responded that Bath was the current focus, but they would like to expand to other areas such as Keynsham and Midsomer Norton.

Leigh Samways from the Moorland Road Traders' Association made a statement expressing the community's concern about the Residents' Parking zone (RPZ) in the Westmoreland/Oldfield Park area and the impact it will have on local businesses and shops. She acknowledged the efforts that had been made recently by the Council to listen to and address their concerns and called on the Council to keep engaging with them so that their vibrant community was not negatively affected. Councillor Colin Blackburn noted that the signs for the RPZ had already gone up, 6 weeks before the scheme starts, and wondered if they felt this would have a detrimental effect on the community while they were trying to prepare for its introduction, to which Ms

Samways replied that she did think so as customers were already confused and unclear about whether they could park. Councillor Tim Warren asked Ms Samways if she considered this might signal the end of their business to which she responded that she hoped that was not the case but did think it will do so for some businesses and shops and it was not good to see gaps on the High street.

Andrew Dawes, Operations Manager at St Bartholomew's Church in Oldfield Park made a statement on behalf of 'The Oldfield Park Community Alliance' and presented a petition of over 1800 signatures with the following wording;

*"We, the undersigned residents of Oldfield Park & BANES ask that the Council cancel plans to introduce their proposed RPZ scheme and instead introduce a scheme that still prioritises residents but which also accommodates the needs of our valued community shops & institutions."*

Mr Dawes urged the Council to re-think their proposals and continue to engage with the community to come up with a better solution. Councillor Shaun Hughes asked Mr Dawes if he was aware if the plan was still for the Permit app to be rolled out, which would allow organisations such as St Bartholomew's to book large volume visitor events such as weddings and funerals. Mr Dawes replied that he thought it was still on the table, but at the moment, parking was not possible for a large event over 200 people.

Malcolm Baldwin made a statement calling on the Cabinet to press ahead with implementation of its programme. A copy of the statement has been placed on the Minute book and attached to the online record.

The Chair thanked the members of the public for their statements, and the petition, which would be considered by the relevant Cabinet Members.

## **25 ANNUAL BUSINESS ITEMS DEFERRED FROM THE AGM**

The Council considered a report which covered those aspects of annual business which had not been able to be considered at the May AGM, due to the delayed Paulton election.

On a motion from Councillor Kevin Guy, seconded by Councillor Robin Moss, it was unanimously

**RESOLVED** to

1. Approve the revised political proportionality table for the composition of committees and panels and the appointment of Members to those bodies in accordance with the requirements of political proportionality;
2. Expressly disapply the proportionality rule to the Restructuring Implementation Committee (with no Councillor voting against), as set out in section 3.9 of the report;
3. Agree the allocation of Political Assistants and Group Support Officers as set out in Appendix 2 of the report; and

4. Authorise the Monitoring Officer to make and publicise any amendment to the Council's Constitution required, or take any other necessary action, as a result of decisions taken at this meeting on this and other reports within the agenda, or otherwise as required by law.

## **26 REPORT OF INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL**

Councillors Oli Henman and Joel Hirst had previously declared a disclosable pecuniary interest for this item and left the Chamber for the duration of the item, taking no part in the debate or vote.

The Independent Remuneration Panel on Members' Allowances were asked by Council on 25<sup>th</sup> May 2023 to specifically consider the new role of Cabinet Project Lead and whether an allowance was appropriate. They met on 19<sup>th</sup> June to consider this.

On a motion from Councillor Kevin Guy, seconded by Councillor Sarah Warren, it was

### **RESOLVED to**

1. Note the comments and recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) on Members' Allowances, as set out in Section 3 of the report;
2. Agree that the job description for the role be slightly revised to reflect the volume of work and nature of the role, as attached at Appendix 1 to the report, and that should this be incorporated into the Councillor Roles document linked from the Code of Conduct in the Constitution;
3. Agree that the Cabinet Project Lead role be paid an allowance equivalent to 1 x the basic allowance (currently £10,225);
4. Agree the necessary changes to the Constitution sections regarding Cabinet arrangements, as set out at Section 3.7 of the report to include the new allowance in Schedule 1 Part 1 of the Constitution;
5. Agree to increase the allowance rate for IRP members from £50 to £70 per meeting as set out in section 4.5 of the report; and
6. Formally thank the Panel for their work.

[Notes;

1. *The above successful resolution was carried with 38 Councillors voting in favour, 5 Councillors voting against and 5 Councillors abstaining.]*

## **27 APPOINTMENT OF MEMBER ADVOCATES**

The Council considered a report appointing Member Advocates who provide a voice for certain interests within the Council or community.

On a motion from Councillor Kevin Guy, seconded by Councillor Robin Moss, it was

**RESOLVED** to

1. Appoint the following Councillors as Member Advocates;

Cllr Jess David	- Green Infrastructure & Nature Recovery
Cllr Fiona Gourley	- Rural communities
Cllr Kevin Guy	- Armed Forces and Veterans
Cllr Alan Hale	- Safer Roads
Cllr Ian Halsall	- Engagement with Students
Cllr Liz Hardman	- Looked After Children
Cllr Saskia Heijltjes	- Active Travel – Bath
Cllr John Leach	- Climate Adaptation
Cllr Ruth Malloy	- Great Spa Towns of Europe
Cllr Ruth Malloy	- Twinning
Cllr Sarah Moore	- Accessibility
Cllr Michelle O’Doherty	- Homeless people
Cllr Shaun Stephenson McGall	- Active Travel – NE Somerset
Cllr Shaun Stephenson McGall	- LGBTQ+ issues
Cllr Sam Ross	- Rural Housing and community buildings
Cllr George Tomlin	- Social Housing Tenants
Cllr Andy Wait	- Rivers and waterways

2. Agree the updated Member Advocate role description; and

3. Invite the above Councillors to report briefly to the Council AGM each year on their activity.

## **28 CORPORATE STRATEGY 2023-2027**

The Council considered the Corporate Strategy and its associated framework which will guide council activity and budget planning over the next four years.

Councillor Robin Moss, Chair of the Corporate Policy Development & Scrutiny Panel, presented the comments from the Panel, which looked at the wider national context as well as the local picture.

On a motion from Councillor Dave Wood, and seconded by Councillor Sarah Warren, it was unanimously

**RESOLVED** to adopt the Corporate Strategy 2023-2027 as set out in the appendix to the report.

## **29 FRIENDSHIP AGREEMENT WITH OLEKSANDRIYA**

At its meeting of 16 March 2023, the Council resolved to pursue and formalise a friendship agreement between B&NES Council and the city of Oleksandriya. Delegated authority was given to the Chief Executive and Leader of the Council to negotiate, agree and sign the friendship agreement on behalf of B&NES Council. The Leader has exercised this authority and Council is now invited to give its

approval to invite the Mayor of Oleksandriya City Council to counter-sign the document.

On a motion from Councillor Kevin Guy, seconded by Councillor Chris Dando, it was unanimously

**RESOLVED** to

1. Note the attached friendship agreement developed in collaboration between Bath and North East Somerset Council, Oleksandriya City Council and local group - Friends of Oleksandriya;
2. Note that the Leader, under delegated authority provided by Council – 16 March 2023, has signed the friendship agreement on behalf of B&NES Council; and
3. Give its approval to invite the Mayor of Oleksandriya City Council to counter-sign and finalise the friendship agreement on behalf of Oleksandriya City Council.

### **30 TREASURY MANAGEMENT OUTTURN REPORT 2022/23**

The Council considered a report giving details of performance against the Council's Treasury Management Strategy for 2022/23.

On a motion from Councillor Mark Elliott, and seconded by Councillor Robin Moss, it was unanimously

**RESOLVED** to agree that;

1. The Treasury Management Report to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023, prepared in accordance with the CIPFA Treasury Code of Practice, is noted; and
2. The Treasury Management Indicators to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 are noted.

### **31 AVON PENSION FUND TERMS OF REFERENCE JULY 2023**

The Avon Pension Fund Committee recommended a change in the quorum of the committee set out in its Terms of Reference (ToR) at its last meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2023 and this report seeks Council approval for the change.

On a motion from Councillor Paul Crossley, seconded by Councillor Chris Dando, it was unanimously

**RESOLVED**

1. To approve the Terms of Reference of the APF Committee and Investment Panel including the change to the quorum in Appendix 1 of the report.

### **32 STANDARDS COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2022 - 2023**

The Council considered the annual report of the Standards Committee.

On a motion from Councillor Toby Simon, and seconded by Councillor Michelle O'Doherty, it was unanimously

**RESOLVED** to note the work of the Standards Committee as set out in the Annual report (Appendix 1).

### **33 MOTION FROM THE LIBERAL DEMOCRAT GROUP - KNIFE CRIME**

On a motion from Councillor Paul May, and seconded by Councillor Michelle O'Doherty, it was unanimously

**RESOLVED** that

Council:

1. Is horrified by incidents of knife crime in Bath and North East Somerset and expresses deepest sympathy to the families and friends of the victims and to all those people who are affected.
2. Notes the Police instruction against reporting, commentary or sharing of information or images online which could in any way prejudice proceedings. Notes that any juvenile defendants are legally entitled to anonymity, and that it is an offence to publicly name them while reporting restrictions are in place.
3. Thanks Police officers, the Ambulance service and other public services for their response.
4. Welcomes the support offered to young people locally by the emergency services, Children's and Adults social care, voluntary and community organisations and others.
5. Notes with concern that some young people are becoming increasingly afraid of knife crime.
6. Notes that Avon and Somerset Police say the vast majority of young people do not routinely carry knives.
7. Welcomes the preventative work carried out in partnership with the Council by the Police, NHS, Council services, youth and voluntary organisations, and other agencies to tackle the complex root causes of knife crime.
8. Recognises the vital role of the B&NES Community Safety and Safeguarding Partnership and Violence Reduction Unit; the Serious Violence Duty of councils and local services, including preparation of a Strategic Needs Assessment and a Strategy by April 2024.
9. Notes the importance of continuing regular engagement between the Council, Police, and the Police and Crime Commissioner.

10. Recognises the importance of education to divert young people away from crime and keep them safe and calls for information and support to continue to be provided through schools and other educational settings.
11. Recognises that Avon and Somerset Police participate in Operation Sceptre, a national initiative to tackle knife crime through education and enforcement.
12. Notes that the Police encourage parents and adults to talk with young people about the dangers and potentially devastating consequences of carrying a knife.
13. Notes that knife surrender bins are provided outside Police stations across the area, including in Bath, Radstock and Keynsham.
14. Supports Police and charity efforts to make emergency bleed control kits publicly accessible and to raise awareness of the role these can play in saving lives.
15. Notes that the BCSSP (B&NES Community Safety and Safeguarding Partnership) and Violence Reduction Unit will need to consider the multi-agency response and will determine next steps.
16. Welcomes the proposal by the Children, Adults, Health and Wellbeing PDS Panel to hold an investigation into the issue of young people and knives in B&NES, **to identify other successful projects to reduce knife crime and draw up an action plan for B&NES.**
17. Suggests that young people impacted by these issues, and their families, should be invited to give evidence of their experiences and inform responses.
18. Welcomes the proposal from the Cabinet member for Children's Services of holding a multi-agency meeting to brief and listen to parent concerns.

[Notes:

1. *The underlined wording in resolution point 16 above was offered by Councillor Liz Hardman and accepted into the substantive motion by the mover and seconder.]*

## **34 QUESTIONS, STATEMENTS AND PETITIONS FROM COUNCILLORS**

Councillor Onkar Saini made a statement about the proposed closure of train ticket offices, calling on his fellow Councillors to engage in the consultation to ensure the needs of vulnerable groups in the community are considered. A full copy of the statement has been placed on the Minute book and linked to the online minutes. Councillor Kevin Guy asked if Councillor Saini would welcome him writing to the Minister to express the Council's position, to which Councillor Saini responded that he would.

Councillor Ruth Malloy made a statement about single use vapes, calling on the Council to back the Local Government Association in calling for a ban on the sale and manufacture of single-use vapes, for both health and environmental reasons. A



full copy of the statement has been placed on the Minute book and linked to the online minutes. Councillor Paul May asked if Councillor Malloy would welcome an item on the Health & Wellbeing Board agenda on this issue, to which she replied that she very much would.

The Chair thanked the Councillors for their statements, which would be considered by the relevant Cabinet Members.

The meeting ended at 8.30 pm

Chair .....

Date Confirmed and Signed .....

**Prepared by Democratic Services**