

COUNCIL MEETING 14TH MARCH 2024

STATEMENTS FROM PUBLIC & COUNCILLORS

Public (item 7)

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| 1. Jake Hotchkins | Care Leavers motion |
| 2. Terry Galloway | Care Leavers motion |
| 3. John Morgan | Liveable Neighbourhoods |
| 4. Chad Allen | English Ivy and the Liveable Neighbourhood programme |
| 5. Luke John Emmett | Support for the cultural sector |
| 6. Bob Goodman | The Council's listed buildings |
| 7. Emma Owens | The impact of the Israel/Gaza war on the people of the city of Bath |
| 8. Marie Duffy | The impact of the Israel/Gaza war on the people of the city of Bath |
| 9. Alice Georgiou | The impact of the Israel/Gaza conflict on the people of BANES |
| 10. Jane Samson | The mental health impact of the situation in Gaza on the residents of B&NES |
| 11. Sophie Higgins | The situation in Palestine and it's impact on the residents of Bath |
| 12. Mohammed Alrozzi | Palestinian resident in the city and the impact of the ongoing situation in Palestine on his experience and overall wellbeing |

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS - PUBLIC

P	01	Question from:	Amanda Digney
<p>What was the outcome of the Pavement Licence and Table and Chairs Permit conditions consultation and what was the measure of how this policy would improve pedestrian access and safety at events?</p>			
Answer from:			Cllr Tim Ball
<p>The recent consultation was in relation to the Council giving 28 days' notice to specific businesses, requiring them to remove their street furniture during the major events. This was to avoid overcrowding and reduce restrictions on ease of movement in busy areas, and to ensure the city remains accessible. This is expected to affect a limited number of businesses a few times a year. In summary 55 people responded to the consultation; 7 respondents agreed with using the condition; 11 Strongly agreed; 4 neither agreed nor disagreed; 6 disagreed & 27 strongly disagreed. The report will be considered by Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Services, and if implemented, the impact of this decision will be monitored by Licensing Officers during large events.</p>			
P	02	Question from:	Amanda Digney
<p>What is the reasoning behind the decision of Bath and North East Somerset Council to add the stipulation; "that all furniture and other permitted items must be either placed on wheels and/or light enough to be removed by members of your staff from the permitted areas, outside of the permitted days and hours" to applications for tables and chairs permits and licenses, when this is in neither the government guidance issued to councils on the subject nor section 7a of the Highways Act 1980?</p>			
Answer from:			Cllr Tim Ball
<p>The council wants to support a café culture, including outdoor tables and chairs. To support this, we are helping businesses wherever we can through issuing pavement licences on the highway for residents and visitors to enjoy, there have been 309 pavement licences granted across the district since 2020. We need to be mindful, however, of impacts on local businesses as well as the need to access the highway</p>			

and maintain accessibility for all users. We are therefore drawing up new guidance to support pavement licence applications, to ensure they are appropriate to local needs and conditions. This will be used to inform the extent, timings and layout of pavement licence areas, including where under special circumstances items can be left on-street overnight, as well as how these will be configured and stored. All items of outdoor furniture will need to be readily moveable without specialist equipment at all times.

It is anticipated this guidance will come into place in draft in April on a trial basis. This will be considered by the Licensing Committee and if agreed will be enforced, following engagement with businesses, later in the year.

P	03	Question from:	Amanda Digney
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How has Bath and North East Somerset council measured the implications (of the stipulation referred to in question 2 above), on hospitality venues that have historically been actively encouraged by BANES to invest in higher quality street furniture that, by its nature, is neither light weight nor suitable to be put on wheels?

Answer from:	Cllr Tim Ball
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The Council supports investment in high quality street furniture as part of pavement licence areas, and this must be stipulated at the time a pavement licence application is made. However, the furniture should also be moveable without the need for specialist equipment so that it can be packed up readily e.g. overnight and/or moved if access is required as the areas form part of the highway and need to be regularly cleaned and inspected.

P	04	Question from:	Charlie Digney
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Does Bath and North east Somerset council have a coherent long term strategy on outside dining and drinking in cafes, bars, pubs and restaurants, and if so what is it?

Answer from:	Cllr Tim Ball
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The council wants to support a café culture, including outdoor tables and chairs. To support this, we are helping businesses wherever we can through issuing pavement licences on the highway for residents and visitors to enjoy, there have been 309 pavement licences granted across the district since 2020. The strategy for public spaces for the city is included in the Public Realm and Movement Strategy, this sets

out the strategy for a vibrant city centre on public spaces the 'Creating a Canvas for Public Life' section.

P05

Question from:

Charlie Digney

How does Bath and North East Somerset Council quantify the importance of the hospitality sector to the city and how does it measure the importance of outside seating to the hospitality sector?

Answer from:

Cllr Tim Ball

The B&NES Economic Strategy recognises the importance of the hospitality section in our district, there is no specific or quantifiable measure of the importance of outside seating in the strategy.

P06

Question from:

Charlie Digney

Given the hospitality sector was supported by the Government with 350 billion during the pandemic, why is the council putting hospitality in Bath under threat by threatening the outside spaces they rely on, despite national policy being to encourage this as shown in the policy paper below?

'While structural issues and the unprecedented circumstances posed by the pandemic have left the sector facing many challenges, they have also highlighted its adaptability and capacity for innovation. Hospitality businesses have proven to be incredibly resilient and have adapted their operations in a range of different ways – from providing takeaway meals and Home Food Kits to embracing new technology and maximising the use of outdoor space. This adaptability offers a blueprint for the future and gives hope that the businesses that have survived during the pandemic, and those that follow, will emerge stronger than before.'

Policy paper, Minister for Business and Trade, 'Hospitality strategy, reopening, recovery and resilience' 2021

Answer from:

Cllr Tim Ball

This is not our intention. The council wants to support a café culture, and we do also need to be mindful, of impacts on other local

businesses as well as the need to access the highway and maintain accessibility for all users. We are therefore drawing up new guidance to support pavement licence applications, to ensure they are appropriate to local needs and conditions. This will be used to inform the extent, timings and layout of pavement licence areas, including where under special circumstances items can be left on-street overnight, as well as how these will be configured and stored. All items of outdoor furniture will need to be readily moveable without specialist equipment at all times. It is anticipated this guidance will come into place in draft in April on a trial basis. This will be considered by the Licensing Committee and if agreed will be enforced, following engagement with businesses, later in the year.