

COUNCIL MEETING 18TH JULY 2024

STATEMENTS FROM PUBLIC

Public (item 7)

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| 1. Helen Dudden | Accessible housing |
| 2. Neil McCabe | Sydney road Liveable Neighbourhood scheme (<i>attached</i>) |
| 3. Ian Orpen | Sydney road Liveable Neighbourhood scheme |
| 4. Alan Morley | Sydney road Liveable Neighbourhood scheme |
| 5. Eleanore for Danielle Selwood | Air pollution |
| 6. Simon Allen | Liberal Democrat B&NES Age Friendly Community |
| 7. Neil Dickinson | Low traffic neighbourhoods (<i>attached</i>) |
| 8. Malcolm Baldwin | Liveable Neighbourhoods – an essential future proofing (<i>attached</i>) |
| 9. Adam Reynolds | The City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement – a £50 million loss of investment due to poor execution (<i>attached</i>) |
| 10. Jane Samson | Peace motion |

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS - PUBLIC

P	01	Question from:	Stephen Kenward
<p>“In my opinion the Council has not engaged and communicated properly what the intentions, evidence base and success criteria of individual schemes are”, “The Sydney Road closure stands out amongst them”. These are the words of Bath MP Wera Hobhouse in a recent letter to a constituent. I am one of the many residents in the adjacent roads being adversely affected by this scheme. Without transparent criteria for examining the detriment to the neighbourhood, how can I have confidence in the Council's ability to judge the scheme fairly?</p>			
Answer from:			Cllr Manda Rigby
<p>A summary of the consultations and engagement for the Liveable Neighbourhood programme from 2020-2024 is appended to these responses.</p> <p>The decision on whether to make the Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO) in Sydney Road permanent will be made sometime after the trial has been in for 6 months and before 18 months, following analysis of all the data and consultation feedback. As part of this, the following information will be considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Feedback from an online (and paper) public consultation questionnaire during the 6 months of the trial – this is open to residents living in and around the trial and the wider public• Feedback from a targeted questionnaire sent to those living in and around the trial at the end of the trial• Feedback from engagement with key stakeholders – including schools, local businesses, and community groups• Traffic monitoring information, both baseline and data collected during the trial itself• Air quality monitoring information, both baseline and data collected during the trial itself <p>Our specialist transport and air quality technical officers will advise whether there are significant impacts resulting from the trial by analysing the monitoring data and looking at other traffic and air quality patterns around the area.</p>			

All the data collected from the trial will first be published as part of a Single Member Decision report. This report will enable the relevant Cabinet Member to consider their support for the trial, and whether the formal traffic regulation order process to make the scheme permanent should be initiated.

The formal decision to make the scheme permanent is made by the Director of Place Management through the confirmation of a Traffic Regulation Order.

These decisions will take into account the information from the trial, together with wider council policy aims, including our Corporate Strategy, and wider sustainable transport and climate emergency policies, such as its Journey to Net Zero ambitions (listed below).

- Corporate Strategy (Improving people's lives, alongside twin goals of climate and nature emergencies, & listening to our residents, for transport: 'more travel choices')
- Journey to Net Zero (Adopted May 22)
- Local Plan (and forthcoming update)
- Health and Wellbeing Strategy (creating healthy places)
- Joint Local Transport Plan 4

P	02	Question from:	Stephen Kenward
<p>"The more I listen to individual households the more I doubt that closing off Sydney Road has any real benefits". These are the words of Bath MP Wera Hobhouse in a recent letter to a constituent. Is the Council listening and doubting yet?</p>			
Answer from:			Cllr Manda Rigby
<p>The proposal for the scheme was the result of previous consultations with residents on the LN programme in the Sydney Road area, where there was support for a through-traffic restriction.</p> <p>A timeline of consultations and the outcomes of these can be found at www.bathnes.gov.uk/sydneyroadetro but specifically:</p> <p>During a public consultation in Autumn 2020 on Liveable Neighbourhoods in B&NES, the following results were received from 1,575</p>			

respondents (including residents and visitors to the area):

- 85% said they agreed with the principle of reducing the dominance of vehicles in residential areas
- 84% said they agreed that to establish LNs, it may be necessary to restrict through traffic on certain streets
- 78% agreed that certain trade-offs are required to achieve those aims

During [public engagement on the Sydney Road LN area in November/December 2021](#), the most common issues experienced by residents in the area were 'through traffic' and 'speeding traffic'.

There is much data to back up these claims, not least the long-standing Community Speedwatch Programme. In order to be even considered for inclusion in such a scheme, Avon and Somerset Police have to agree that the volume of traffic and observed speeds fulfil their scheme criteria, unlike some other areas which applied and were turned down as a significant problem was not identified.

It was also noted that there was significant support among respondents (75%) in favour of a measure to tackle through traffic.

Because the scheme was suitable for trialling (i.e. it can be delivered quickly and is reversible), it was felt that an ETRO consultation – which is a consultation with the trial in place - was appropriate as the next step. It means that any permanent decision can be led by the evidence collected during the trial.

The formal consultation on the trial started in April and the idea is that people feedback their thoughts over time, as they experience it, whilst the impact on traffic flows and air quality is monitored.

This way a final decision on whether to keep the restriction in place will be led by the evidence collected (with reference to the council's wider transport and climate emergency policies).

P	03	Question from:	Stephen Kenward
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Throughout the Sydney Road ETRO trial there are roadworks along the A36 between Brassknocker Hill and Bathampton. Traffic lights cut flow rates towards Beckford Road by over 50%. Also, vehicles now frequently queue the entire length of Brassknocker Hill as drivers divert to avoid increased congestion around Sydney Gardens and the A36 roadworks. This means that for the period of the trial, traffic volumes and flow rates are significantly curtailed by temporary circumstances. How will it be possible for the Council to objectively rely on their

monitoring data to justify the Sydney Road ETRO trial?

Answer from:

Cllr Manda Rigby

The aim is to collect traffic monitoring data (both before and during the trial) when there are no other works which could have a significant impact on the monitoring. For this reason, monitoring has been completed, where possible, outside of school holidays and before works on the A36 at Limpley Stoke begins in August 2024. It is impossible to find a period when the network has no works on it. We have also been mindful of the impact of events such as university open days can have upon traffic flows.

P

04

Question from:

Matt Cooper

I would like to know what action BANES is taking with regard to reducing the impact of animal agriculture on the climate and nature emergencies.

I have found a number of encouraging statements on the BANES website.

One advises that residents can reduce their meat and dairy intake to tackle the climate and nature emergencies. [1] BANES has made tackling the climate and nature emergencies one of two core policies [2], and committed to “provide the leadership to enable the Bath and North East Somerset area to become carbon neutral by 2030 as well as doing the same for our own operations.” [3] BANES has stated it will be “taking a regional and national lead in responding to the Ecological Emergency.” [4]

I would agree that reducing meat and dairy intake is an effective, indeed necessary, step to address the climate and nature emergencies. I also applaud the excellent aims of showing leadership on these urgent issues.

However, in the Climate Emergency Strategy [3] and Ecological Emergency Action Plan [4] little reference is made to addressing the impacts of animal agriculture on the climate and nature emergencies.

Please explain how BANES intends to meet its carbon neutrality and nature positivity targets with respect to the impacts of animal agriculture. Plant based diets can play a big part in reducing these impacts, so I would be particularly interested to know what leadership BANES is taking, or currently considering, in this area.

[1]

<https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/what-you-can-do-help-nature>

[2]

<https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/read-our-climate-strategy-and-action-plan>

[3]

<https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2023-03/BANES%20Climate%20Emergency%20Strategy%20Document%20AW1.pdf>

[4]

<https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2023-03/Ecological%20Emergency%20Action%20Plan%202023%20to%202030.pdf>

Answer from:

Cllr Sarah Warren

- The Climate Emergency Strategy and Ecological Emergency Action Plan set out our current priorities and direction of travel for tackling the climate and ecological emergencies.
- We know that working with farmers and landowners, and encouraging people to have healthy, sustainable diets in line with the [Eatwell Plate](#) will be good for people, climate and nature.
- We will be working on a new joint Climate and Nature Strategy for 2025 which will update our priorities and actions for the future. As part of this, we will be scoping work for a new Food Strategy.
- The [West of England Local Nature Recovery Strategy](#), when published in the Autumn, will set out a range of actions that farmers and landholders can take to help nature locally, including habitat creation and nature-friendly farming.
- A farmer cluster is being developed for the Chew and Cam & Wellow, which will cover a lot of the BANES area. This will enable us to better engage with farmers and landholders on a range of things, including nature-positive farming and improving water quality. We will be closely involved with the Cluster, including being represented on the Steering Group. More information on farmer clusters can be found here: <https://www.farmerclusters.com/>.
- We have also engaged with the Duchy of Cornwall on their [Future Farming](#) programme and ambitions to increase their 'Natural Capital' across their estate. The Duchy owns a significant amount of land in BANES.
- Additionally, we are working within an agriculture policy and funding framework set by the UK Government. The new Environmental Land Management Scheme should make it easier for farmers to take action for nature, by providing increased availability and variety of funding for habitat creation and management.