

CABINET MEETING – 12th September 2024

STATEMENTS FROM PUBLIC AND COUNCILLORS

1. Cllr Susan Charles (Corston Parish Council) – Accessible Planning
2. Gill Sinclair – Speed Limits in Peasedown St John (Petition)
3. Barney Frith – (Off the Record Youth Forum Representative) – Focus of the Youth Forum
4. Kate Morton (on behalf of Becky Brooks Director of 3SG) – Re-procurement of Community Contracts
5. Steve Osgood – Unique use restrictions applying to the Bath Recreation Ground
6. Joe Laishly (on behalf of Samantha Walker) – Raising the UN Flag
7. Lara Amro – Proposal for a Palestinian Resettlement Scheme
8. Jane Samson – Listening to different communities within B&NES
9. Lin Patterson – Rights for Nature

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS - COUNCILLORS

M	01	Question from:	Cllr Joanna Wright
<p>Can the Traffic Management Team's prioritisation for the Local Highways Improvement Programme (formerly TIP) be shared with councillors, so we have a clearer understanding of which schemes are being selected for LHIP funding?</p>			
Answer from:			Cllr Manda Rigby
<p><i>The Council delivers an annual programme of Local Active Travel Safety Improvements (previously named Transport Improvement Programme). The Traffic Management Team maintain a list of requests, these are assessed annually by Officers, and the draft programme developed in discussion the Highways Cabinet Members, prior to Full Approval as part of the Councils budget approval process.</i></p> <p><i>We are hoping to complete the assessment through September / October 2024 and will be able to share the draft programme as part of the budget setting process.</i></p>			
M	02	Question from:	Cllr Joanna Wright
<p>Please can you provide the Equalities Impact Assessment for the new electronic voting system for councillors at full council at the Guildhall?</p>			
Answer from:			Cllr Kevin Guy
<p><i>The purpose of replacing the outdated AV system in the Chamber was to improve the user experience and accessibility by replacing the microphones, speakers and visual solutions. This also applies for those attending in person or watching our webcasts. This was an operational decision that was procured in accordance with contract standing orders with no express requirement for an EQIA.</i></p>			

M	03	Question from:	Cllr Joanna Wright
<p>The Peace Motion was passed unanimously by B&NES Council in July (you can read it here: https://democracy.bathnes.gov.uk/documents/s82779/Green%20group%20Peace%20motion.pdf). One of the actions requested was:</p> <p>"Asks the Council Leaders to write to the Government urging a ceasefire, the release of hostages, and advocating for lasting peace with a two-state solution on the global stage."</p> <p>Where will this letter be made publicly available, and how will the public be informed about the actions taken by their council representatives after a motion is passed?</p>			
Answer from:			Cllr Kevin Guy
<p><i>It is not current practice to make letters arising from motions available to the public (they do not form part of the official record of the meeting) nor is there any requirement to inform the public of subsequent actions. Arrangements will be made to ensure a copy of these is sent to the Councillor who moved the successful motion.</i></p>			
M	04	Question from:	Cllr Shaun Hughes
<p>Within the Economic Strategy for B&NES 2024–2034, page 3, it states “As a major anchor institution, the University of Bath plays a key role in the economic, cultural and environmental well-being of B&NES contributing £380m pa to the economy and supporting 5,950 jobs locally”.</p> <p>Could I ask for these figures to be broken down into how these figures were arrived at and the source of your information.</p>			
Answer from:			Cllr Paul Roper
<p><i>The passage from this section of the Economic Strategy is a supportive statement from the University of Bath as one of our partner organisations in the strategy’s development. These figures were developed from their economic impact statement. This is an independent</i></p>			

analysis conducted by BiGGAR Economics in November 2021 of the economic contribution the University of Bath makes to the UK and the local community.

Within Section 9 (pages 59 and 60) of the report it provides a detailed breakdown of the economic impact and the economic impact in terms of jobs. This shows methodology as to how the figures were formulated.

M

05

Question from:

Cllr Colin Blackburn

I would like to request to see a list of Planning Appeals 'lost' in B&NES, that have been awarded costs against us, over the last 5 years? Please include how much these individual cases have been awarded.

Answer from:

Cllr Matt McCabe

18/02898/FUL- £5,000 paid 17/7/2019, 17/05819/FUL- £360.00 paid 16/1/2020, 19/03747/FUL - £3807.00 paid 05/06/2020, 20/03716/FUL - £3,500.00 paid 09/06/21, 20/01039/FUL - £280.00 paid 28/07/21, 20/01119/FUL - £2059.06 paid 29/10/21, 19/00542/UNDEV - £7530.00 paid 17/03/22, 22/01299/FUL - £45,270.00 paid 23/10/23.

M

06

Question from:

Cllr Colin Blackburn

Which budgets have these payments have been made from?

Answer from:

Cllr Matt McCabe

Planning Budget Code Appeals NCB52

M	07	Question from:	Cllr Colin Blackburn
Which financial year were these costs paid in?			
Answer from:		Cllr Matt McCabe	
<i>See answer to question M05.</i>			
M	08	Question from:	Cllr Sam Ross
The aim of the Journey to Net Zero transport strategy for Bath was a 24% reduction of car journeys and miles within Bath by 2030. What has been the progress towards this target since the launch of the strategy in May 2022?			
Answer from:		Cllr Sarah Warren	
<p><i>The targets for decarbonising our transport network are set out in Bath & North East Somerset Council's Climate Emergency Strategy. Transport currently accounts for 29% of carbon emissions in the B&NES area which is approximately in line with the national figure of 28% in 2022 (2022 UK Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Final Figures). Nationally, transport is proving the hardest area of human activity to decarbonise. Before 2020 there had been relatively little overall change in the level of greenhouse gas emissions from domestic transport over the previous three decades, with emissions only 3% lower in 2019 than they were in 1990. Across all sectors however during the same period emissions of carbon dioxide have reduced by 46.3% (around 279.5 MtCO₂) to 324.2 MtCO₂ (2022 UK Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Final Figures).</i></p> <p><i>The Journey to Net Zero for Bath, identified the scale of change required in B&NES to meet the carbon neutrality target in transport terms. There are many potential pathways to achieving this target, for example, one scenario would require:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• 7% decrease in the number of car journeys across the local authority area</i> 			

- 25% reduction in kilometres travelled per person by car each year
- Electric cars: 76% pure battery, 14% petrol hybrid
- Buses: 76% electric, 24% hybrid
- Rail: 37% of freight rail is electric, 100% passenger rail is electric

These percentage reductions are from a baseline of 2016.

In line with national figures traffic levels in Bath are likely to have risen between 2022 and 2023 as traffic is still recovering in response to the global pandemic. Nationally, Department for Transport data indicates an increase of 2.2% in motor vehicle traffic between 2022 and 2023 (ref <https://roadtraffic.dft.gov.uk/summary>).

B&NES has a number of automatic traffic count sites located across the district that monitor traffic flows on key routes, including those in Bath. Whilst these don't capture every vehicle travelling within Bath, they are a good proxy in terms of what the general level of traffic flows are in the city. Comparing data from a number of key sites across Bath comparing traffic levels between 2019 and 2022 indicates a reduction in traffic levels of 1.14%.

M 09	Question from:	Cllr Sam Ross
According to an answer in June 2024, no records indicate when North Road was last fully resurfaced. The poor surface has led to several people getting seriously injured while cycling on North Road. Why does the Council not hold this data?		
Answer from:		Cllr Manda Rigby
<i>The asset history data is held on an asset management system called Confirm holding historic data back to 2000 when the system was introduced, records prior to this would have been archived and periodically disposed of so resurfacing records prior to 2000 will not be retrievable. A long section of North Road, Bathwick in poor condition was resurfaced in August, the works were completed on the 23rd August 2024.</i>		

M	10	Question from: Cllr Lesley Mansell
<p>In March 2024 B&NES Council passed a motion unanimously that the Labour Group seconded. This is to include in our equality impact assessment process a category for those who have experienced being in care. This will recognise them as having a protected characteristic. The aim of this is to ensure that all our policies, practices and services provide appropriate support and that they do not discriminate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Has this category been added to the template? - How many issues have been recorded since March 2024 and how many recommendations have been made in relation to this? - When will the action plan relating to this be reported to the Adult and Children’s Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Panel? 		
Answer from:		Cllr Paul May
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Yes, the question about care experience is now fully embedded in the template when applying for any job across the council and we are seeing people use this.</i> • <i>4 young people in the Care Experienced Team have made applications and were flagged successfully. 3 have been successful in securing employment within council departments.</i> • <i>A cross-council working group has been set up to set out and oversee how this motion is embedded across the council – the group had its first meeting on 1st August and meets every 6 weeks. This is being led by Cherry Bennett (Director of People & Change) and an action plan will come from this work. It will be shared with scrutiny in 2025.</i> 		

M	11	Question from: Cllr Lesley Mansell
<p>Following the recent proposals on car parking in Radstock, Woodborough Road - proposed parking restrictions TRO 24-022 - Representations have been received stating the current proposal will inadvertently create several new issues for residents and road users.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Has the fact that these changes will reduce current parking spaces and reduce visibility for road users? - Will the council consider an alternative for example traffic calming measures instead? - And will there be an opportunity to engage further with residents on this proposal in a meaningful way? 		
Answer from:		Cllr Manda Rigby
<p><i>The parking restriction proposals in Woodborough Road are aimed at helping to slow traffic by staggering the layout of where people can park. Currently vehicles park all along one side. There would be minimal reduction in the amount of parking space. Officers have advised that they layout will not compromise safety and will lead to lower traffic speeds.</i></p> <p><i>Although traffic calming can be a very effective way of reducing vehicle speeds, it is expensive, and we don't have the resources to implement it wherever there are issues with excessive speed. It is worth being aware that some traffic calming layouts can also affecting parking. We have added the request for traffic calming to a list of requests we maintain for when we consider future highway improvements. There is always more demand for highway schemes than the budget can cover.</i></p> <p><i>The current parking proposal provides a more immediate way to reduce speeds and make the road safer. The consultation closes on 12th September. Letters have been sent to properties adjacent to where the restrictions are proposed. Details can be found under the 'Have your say' section of the council website. https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/take-part-street-parking-tro-consultation</i></p> <p><i>Responses will be considered before a decision is made on whether to go ahead with the parking changes.</i></p>		

Supplementary Question:		
<p>What is the supporting evidence to substantiate the statement that this will have a minimum effect on parking, bearing in mind that currently, parking is kept to one side of the road, although people could park on the other side of the road, but they don't? If it moves, then sight lines are more likely to be restricted so where is the evidence to show that this proposal will be an improvement?</p>		
Answer from:		Cllr Manda Rigby
<p><i>The evidence is set out in the officer report, they carried out a survey and concluded that it would have a minimal impact. The consultation on this proposal has closed today (12th September 2024), and the next stage is to look at all the representations before making a decision on whether or not to go ahead.</i></p>		
M	12	Question from:
		Cllr Lesley Mansell
<p>Following the recent proposals on car parking in Radstock, The Street and Fortescue Road TRO 24-022 - The proposal is to mark up what is already in place with a waiting limit of 30 minutes between 8 – 6.00 p.m. How will this help local businesses and customers who need more than 30 mins and find the extra costs proposed for the car park behind the library a further burden?</p>		
Answer from:		Cllr Manda Rigby
<p><i>There are no changes being proposed to the current parking restrictions as marked and signed in The Street and Fortescue Road. Officers discovered that the historic Traffic Regulation Order (TRO), the legal document which we produce to put in parking restrictions, does not match with what is on the road. The proposal is purely to amend the TRO so that it does match what is on the road. The rules about amending TROs requires us to publicise the changes which is why this has been done. If councillors would like to put forward future changes to parking restrictions, such as changing a 30-minute time limit to 1 hour, they should ask officers by emailing TrafficManagementTeam@bathnes.gov.uk</i></p>		

M	13	Question from: Cllr Robin Moss
<p>It was agreed at the budget meeting in February 2024 that £802k would be cut from the funding through a “Review and recommission community support contracts”- £400k in 2024-25, £402k in 2025-26.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) What progress has been made towards the 2024-25 budget target? 2) What discussions & consultation have taken place with the not-for-profit sector? 		
Answer from:		Cllrs Paul May and Alison Born
<p><i>The council engaged with not-for-profit organisations that are currently delivering community support contracts to identify opportunities for savings in May 2024. Following an engagement event the council set up a dedicated e mail for community providers to raise any further enquiries. There are two further engagement sessions planned with the sector in September and October.</i></p> <p><i>All ideas and opportunities for savings delivery and contract efficiencies identified by community support providers will be considered and will inform commissioning plans for 2025/26.</i></p> <p><i>A training event was held with the sector in August which was led by 3SG and the council lead for procurement to update on procurement law and explain to the third sector regarding the process of bidding.</i></p> <p><i>In November there is a planned joint training with commissioners and the sector to look at models of commissioning.</i></p> <p><i>The Executive Director for Operations meets regularly with the Director of 3SG Becky Brooks to ensure that the sector is engaged in the process.</i></p> <p><i>During this consultation it has been agreed to maintain current level of funding to the sector to ensure service continuity and to look for one off savings from other social care service areas.</i></p> <p><i>Appropriate engagement will continue as we move into the formal procurement arrangements.</i></p>		

M	14	Question from:	Cllr Robin Moss
Following the recent single member decision “E3559 Bath West Children's Centre Service insourcing” to bring this service back ‘in house’, are there any plans to involve users & staff in the ongoing management & future planning for this service?			
Answer from:		Cllr Paul May	
<p><i>The decision to insource the Bath West Children’s Centre service will mean that future delivery will be provided by Bright Start Children’s Centre Services who have been providing Children’s Centre Services in Bath East, Somer Valley and Keynsham and Chew Valley for many years. Bright Start and Action for Children already work closely together and both services were actively involved in the options appraisal which informed the decision to insource. Bright Start will build on existing good partnerships that have been established within the Bath West area. Bright Start Children’s Centre services will continue to adhere to the Early Help Quality Assurance Framework which provides routine opportunities to involve both service users and staff in the ongoing management and planning of services. In the meantime, Bright Start and Action for Children will work together to support the Bath West team to make sure that the transition is as smooth as possible.</i></p>			
Supplementary Question:			
Are there any plans to involve users and staff in the ongoing management and future planning for this service?			
Answer from:		Cllr Paul May	
<p><i>The commitment to involve users and staff is set out in the response provided and I will ensure that this does happen.</i></p>			
M	15	Question from:	Cllr Liz Hardman
Good practice is that any objections to planning applications from B&NES councillors and/or Parish & Town Councillors should be on the			

agenda of the Planning Committee. However there have been instances recently when this has not happened. Can you provide a list of planning objections that fit this description?

Answer from:

Cllr Matt McCabe

The Council has a scheme of delegation which sets out the circumstances in which planning and other applications should be determined by committee and when decisions can be delegated to officers. The scheme sets out that where a B&NES Councillor requests for an application to be referred to the planning committee or the Parish & Town Council support or object to an application contrary to the officer's recommendation (and provides so with planning reasons for doing so) then the application is referred to the chair/vice chair of committee who make a final determination as to whether a decision is delegated or not. It should be noted that objections and/or support comments from individual Parish & Town Councillors do not trigger a referral to the chair.

Objections from B&NES Councillors and/or Parish & Town Council will usually be listed in the representations section of each item on the committee agenda, although these will sometimes be summarised, collated with other similar comments or reference will be made to the full comments being available on the website. If there are specific instances where there are concerns that B&NES councillors and/or Parish & Town Council comments have not been included in reports, then these details should be provided to the Planning department so that they can advise further.

Supplementary Question:

For those applications that would generally come before the B&NES Planning Committee because the applications were not supported by either the Town or Parish Council or by the B&NES Ward Councillor, what percentage are now being decided by the B&NES Planning Committee or by the Chair and Vice Chair of the committee in the past six months?

Answer from:

Cllr Matt McCabe

From 1st January 2024 to 31st August 2024 there have been 18 decisions issued that were subject to a Chair Referral which did not go to committee, 27 Committee Decisions issued, and 1226 Delegated Decisions issued (this does not include the 18 decisions that were subject

to a Chair referral which did not go to committee).

M	16	Question from:	Cllr David Biddleston
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- 1) Is there a record of s106 'planning gains' secured from developers in 2022-23 & 2023-24?
- 2) Are there any instances over the last 5 years where s106 monies have been returned to developers, or where promised developments have not been delivered?

Answer from:	Cllr Matt McCabe
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The annually published Infrastructure Funding Statements set out both the spending and funding secured from s106 obligations for each financial year. The statement for the financial year 2022-23 is published and available on the council website. The statement for the financial year 2023-24 has not yet been completed or published but will be available in due course. We do not hold data relating to numbers of unfulfilled obligations, however, there have been four instances where s106 monies have been returned to developers in the specified period.

M	17	Question from:	Cllr Eleanor Jackson
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What were the results & conclusions from the recent consultation on parking charges?
I have been approached by residents who felt that some of the questions in the consultation were 'leading'. Has this been reflected in consultation comments?

Answer from:	Cllr Manda Rigby
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The consultation on parking charges during the summer closed on 8 August and a high volume of responses were received. Due to the complexity of the proposals the online feedback form was separated into specific questions which were designed to help respondents

provide exact feedback for each proposal, as well as any additional information they felt was appropriate. This feedback form was designed in consultation with other council services to ensure that the questions remain neutral so that responses reflect respondent own views.

M	18	Question from:	Cllr Saskia Heiltjes
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The Cabinet Member for Highways confirmed that the funding bid for traffic light improvements was unsuccessful. Could smaller-scale improvements be implemented immediately to reduce waiting times for pedestrians at priority junctions, rather than waiting for funding for the larger programme?

Answer from:	Cllr Manda Rigby
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The council has an aging stock of traffic signal junctions and crossing equipment which is why we applied to the Department for Transport for funding to help us maintain and renew them. It is very disappointing that we were not successful, and we are seeking other ways to secure funding. Our priority has to be about using our limited resources to keep this infrastructure in safe and working order. Due to that limited resource, we are not able to undertake a specific review of pedestrian wait times.

When we renew a signalised crossing or junction, once it has reached the end of its serviceable life, part of that work involves reviewing the timings. Although there are a lot of demands on funding to renew traffic signals and other highway infrastructure, a number of the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement active travel schemes being planned across B&NES will lead to several existing signalised crossings being replaced, and this may enable reduced pedestrian wait times in these locations.

M	19	Question from:	Cllr Saskia Heiltjes
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Would the Cabinet Members be able to provide us with figures on the underspend of the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS)?

Answer from:	Cllr Sarah Warren
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<i>This needs to be referred to WECA.</i>		
M	20	Question from: Cllr Saskia Heiltjes
The Active Travel Masterplan mentions the availability of data from automatic cycle counters and sensors. Could this data be shared with the public, or at the very least with the Climate Emergency and Sustainability Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel?		
Answer from:		Cllr Sarah Warren
<p><i>The Active Travel Masterplan indeed references the availability of data from automatic cycle counters and sensors. We currently have over 70 permanent traffic count sites located across the district that automatically monitor traffic, including traffic volumes, speed, and class of vehicle. The data from these count sites is stored and maintained in a bespoke software package managed by our Transport Monitoring Officer.</i></p> <p><i>While we cannot provide members of the public with direct access to the data via our network, we always respond to any requests for traffic data from the general public and are happy to share the data that we hold on our system.</i></p> <p><i>We will investigate what access we can practically provide to PDS panel members going forwards and bring a written update to the next Scrutiny meeting in November.</i></p>		
M	21	Question from: Cllr Eleanor Jackson
Would the cabinet member do something to expedite adaptations for disabled people's independent living in social housing? The homeless are being hit by this issue.		
Answer from:		Cllr Matt McCabe
<i>The Council provides a range of grants and assistance to support elderly, disabled and otherwise vulnerable residents to remain in their own</i>		

homes, including disabled facilities grants. We place a high value on these adaptations which have a significant and positive effect on residents' lives, and which typically also reduce the need for further interventions. As such we aim to ensure these adaptations are completed promptly and work with a range of partners, including social landlords, to ensure the process is as efficient as possible. However, the largest time component for delivery is often due to factors outside of the Council's direct control, including securing valid quotations, landlord consent and contractors time slots. If the Member has a particular case in mind, then please let the Head of Housing know directly and he will investigate on your behalf.

M

22

Question from:

Cllr Eleanor Jackson

Following a recent planning application heard at committee, what does the administration propose to do to persuade or prevent developers submitting applications which de facto exclude disabled people? In this case, there was an allocation of a significant number of bike stands, but only one disabled person's parking space, there being a failure to appreciate that 'young professionals' can be disabled with mobility problems. In the past, applications for blocks of flats have not had lifts. Would an appropriate SPD be considered?

Answer from:

Cllr Matt McCabe

The provision and enhancement of facilities for disabled people, that is fit for purpose is a core part of the Local Plan Partial Update as expressed through policy ST1 and the Transport and Development SPD. The SPD provides policy and guidance which seeks to improve the accessibility of public transport, walking and cycling route design for disabled people, allowing them to make a choice of active travel if they are able to. However, the SPD also acknowledges that for some disabled people, using public transport or other active travel methods including walking or cycling is not possible. To that end, the SPD provides policy and guidance to ensure that developments have accessible parking options for Blue Badge Holders who rely on their cars. The SPD includes parking standards for a range of different development types and uses, with blue badge parking generally expressed as a percentage of the over capacity of spaces provided. This sets a standard and clear expectation for developers to follow to ensure that developments cater for disabled persons. However, whilst this document provides policy and guidance, each planning application must be determined on its own merits, balancing up many considerations including the constraints of the site and other competing matters (green infrastructure, housing need, design, etc.) alongside consideration of the Public Sector Equality Duty. In some cases, this can justify deviation from the identified parking standards if there is sufficient justification to do so.

(The response was provided within 5 working days of the meeting).

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS - PUBLIC

P	01	Question from:	Edmund Cannon
Information and timetables on the bus stop on the London Road near to Lambridge Street have not been in place for sometime. How does B&NES work with WECA to ensure that information on services is available to bus users?			
Answer from:			Cllr Sarah Warren
<i>The West of England Combined Authority (WECA) is the Transport Authority responsible for the Bath and North East Somerset area, and as such, all operational decisions and day-to-day management of bus service information fall under WECA's jurisdiction. This includes ensuring that bus service information is readily available to the public. Where B&NES is made aware of significant operational issues, these are escalated to the WECA Infrastructure Directors for resolution.</i>			
P	02	Question from:	Edmund Cannon
Many residents are finding the public toilets run by B&NES to often not be in use, broken or unclean. Who does B&NES use to maintain public toilets, and will there be a review of this agreement?			
Answer from:			Cllr Tim Ball

The Council recognises the value of public toilet facilities to the public and aims to have all facilities available and clean at all times, B&NES currently has 16 sites managed by Healthmatic on its behalf. There are also privately managed toilets available to the public.

Regrettably, there has been a steady increase in anti-social behaviour and misuse of the toilets, particularly within our parks and sites within central Bath. This has contributed to closures and disruption to service levels. We continue to work with our colleagues within the Police to minimise these issues and address local problems. Additionally, Healthmatic has also found recruitment and retention of cleaning staff difficult more recently which is also a recognised factor.

The toilets are monitored by B&NES officers and the agreement is reviewed annually to ensure that any problems are addressed appropriately.

P	03	Question from:	Grace Wiltshire
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The recent application by Lidl to build a superstore on the London Road in Lambridge was on a site that was once owned by the Council. Please can you explain how this land was transferred to Bath Rugby?

Answer from:	Cllr Paul Roper
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Bath City Council acquired land at Mill Lane Bathampton ('Bathampton Meadows') in November 1995 with a view to entering into a land exchange with Bath Rugby. As a consequence of changing priorities, the land exchange did not proceed. Hence B&NES or its predecessors has never held any ownership interest in the Lambridge training ground as plans to acquire this by way of exchange for the land at Mill Lane never came to fruition.

P	04	Question from:	Grace Wiltshire
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Many cars are idling outside shops in Larkhall Square. What steps do residents need to take to have anti-idling signs installed?

Answer from:	Cllr Manda Rigby
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Thank you for bringing this to our attention, the council has an anti-idling officer and campaign focused on promoting awareness of issues associated with idling engines.

We have visited Larkhall this week to assess suitable locations for our current anti-idling signage banner which affixes to railings – there is a noted absence of suitable mounting points in Larkhall. We are reviewing design and procurement of alternative signing materials. In the interim we will be liaising with local business owners to seek support to display our anti-idling posters and literature.

P	05	Question from:	Grace Wiltshire
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Please can you give full details of the recent air pollution levels on London Road?

Answer from:	Cllr Sarah Warren
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Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂) concentrations for this location and all other monitoring points across B&NES can be viewed on our interactive map at <https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/nitrogen-dioxide-monitoring-data> and in Appendix A of our annual Air Quality Status (ASR) reports published at <https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/document-and-policy-library/annual-air-quality-reports>.

London Road also hosts an electronic monitoring station observing multiple pollutants. This forms part of Defra's National Automatic Urban and Rural Monitoring Network (AURN). Observed data can be reviewed at <https://uk-air.defra.gov.uk/interactive-map>. You can zoom in on the maps to the location of interest, clicking a location will provide recorded data for that site. The map functions work best when viewed in full screen.

P	06	Question from:	Barbara Gordon
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20mph speed limits have been introduced to some roads in Bath, which I very much welcome as a measure for all road users to make our roads and communities safer. Why are these done in batches and not through a city-wide Traffic Regulation Order (TRO)? It seems expensive to create a TRO for a few roads and then repeat the exercise for further roads.

Answer from:		Cllr Manda Rigby
<p><i>20mph limits have been introduced across Bath in phases over many years. Officers have advised that it was not possible to do a blanket 20mph limit traffic order covering all roads in the city.</i></p> <p><i>The majority of roads in Bath are now covered by 20mph speed limits and there are only a small number where 30mph limits remain, mostly on main roads. Not all of these 30mph limits may necessarily be suitable for changing to 20mph and our traffic engineers would need to undertake an assessment, which is why a city-wide traffic order in Bath has not been made. Across Wales, when the default 'restricted road' speed limit was changed from 30mph to 20mph, some roads remained as 30mph following local assessments. We are following the analysis of vehicle speeds and collision data from the initiative in Wales closely to help inform our future position.</i></p> <p><i>This year we have been putting 20mph speed limits in those villages in B&NES that don't have them. I am hopeful we can look at more Bath roads in the near future. Councillors can put forward their requests to our Traffic Management Team.</i></p>		
P	07	Question from: Barbara Gordon
<p>The BANES Active Travel Masterplan was partly developed because the WECA-authored Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) is outdated. Will BANES be requesting that WECA update the LCWIP?</p>		
Answer from:		Cllr Sarah Warren
<p><i>The Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) is produced by the West of England Combined Authority (WECA), our transport authority. It is a live document subject to regular updates. At present, my officers have been informed by WECA that neither Active Travel England nor the Department for Transport have required the Combined Authority to review it. We are, however, working with Officers of WECA to request an update to ensure the document reflects our aspirations as expressed in our Active Travel Masterplan, once consultation is complete and our masterplan is finalised. The BANES Active Travel Masterplan serves as a crucial tool to ensure that our local active travel goals are explicitly stated and can be integrated into broader regional strategies.</i></p>		
P	08	Question from: Barbara Gordon

Issues with the bin compound for boaters at Bathampton are ongoing. What is the Council doing to resolve these issues?

Answer from:

Cllr Tim Ball

An agreement was reached in April 2024 in a meeting between the Council Leader, Senior Officers and Directors of the Canal and Rivers Trust (CRT) to upgrade the facility and improve existing controls at the site in the interim.

The CRT are currently engaged in a planning application process with planning officers to build a new facility and have changed waste contractors whilst increasing the frequency of collections. They have introduced a new sign on the enclosure informing users of an expected code of conduct as well as having installed a new lock on the gate.

Council Enforcement officers have since been visiting the site once or twice a week since April to check compliance. On every occasion the area has always been clean and tidy, with no waste residue or fly tipping evidenced either the outside or inside of the enclosure during inspections.

The enforcement team are not aware of a single complaint or comment from the public regarding this site since the new CRT procedures have taken effect.

P

09

Question from:

Ann Coghlan

Motions presented to B&NES Council include a footnote from Democratic Services stating:

“Unless specifically set out in the statute, motions approved at Council do not bind the Executive (Cabinet) but may influence their future decisions.”

If a motion is passed unanimously, such as Vision Zero in November 2023 or the Peace Motion in 2024, but is not acted upon due to the non-binding nature of the Cabinet, how is accountability ensured? What is the significance of passing a motion at Council if the Cabinet is not required to uphold it?

Answer from:		Cllr Kevin Guy
<p><i>The functions of an Authority are by law divided between functions that are solely the responsibility of Council (these are mainly limited to Policy and Budget setting as well as Licensing & Planning), those that are solely the responsibility of the Executive (Cabinet) (these are the vast majority of the strategic and operational decisions) and finally, there are some functions which are local choice (i.e., which can be one or the other and it is for Council to decide). These are set out at paragraph 2.3 of the Constitution https://democracy.bathnes.gov.uk/documents/s83653/Constitution.pdf.</i></p> <p><i>Council can pass motions that relate to its functions and that it can make decisions about. Such motions, if made, are binding motions and must be implemented. Where the Council resolves to do something which impacts the functions that are reserved to Cabinet, then these are only persuasive. For this reason, motions are drafted in such a way as to request that Cabinet takes action. They cannot demand that Cabinet takes action. Ultimately, Cabinet can choose to action them or choose not to. The rationale is that Cabinet must deliver within the context of a budget and must prioritise which of its functions it intends to address with the finite budget available to it.</i></p> <p><i>Accountability is ultimately via the ballot box.</i></p>		
P	10	Question from: Ann Coghlan
<p>When the Council passes motions that require the support or assistance of other members, such as Equalities Officers, what is the process for ensuring that these officers are made aware of the motions that have been passed?</p>		
Answer from:		Cllr Kevin Guy
<p><i>Motion text is logged and forwarded to the relevant officers and allocated to a member of the Executive Leadership team to oversee.</i></p>		
P	11	Question from: Gareth Eynon

At the June 2024 Cabinet, the following question was asked, and your response given is as follows:

Regarding the potential return of HGVs to London Road, I would like to inquire whether the Cabinet has explored options to increase deterrents for these vehicles, particularly those simply passing through the city. Given the reported external pressure to allow their return, could the Council legally consider tripling the clean air zone charge for such HGVs, which contribute to congestion, air and noise pollution, and strain on local infrastructure?

Answer from: Cllrs Manda Rigby and Sarah Warren: "All Euro I to V diesel and Euro 1 to 3 petrol (or earlier) HGVs are levied a £100 charge to enter the Clean Air Zone (CAZ) in Bath. In 2023, the Council also explored amending the Clean Air Zone Charging Order to include an additional charge of £50 for all Euro VI diesel HGVs over 12 tonnes entering the CAZ. Following a public consultation, it was decided not to proceed with the proposal at the time. Local authorities operating a chargeable Clean Air Zone determine the appropriate daily charges levied. The Charging Order acts as a legal instrument laying out the daily charges for each respective vehicle used within the zone; any future adjustments to daily charges would require a consultation and a later variation to the order."

Based on this response, it appears that B&NES Council can choose to proceed with another public consultation and increase charges for large vehicles entering B&NES Clean Air Zone. Please could you confirm this?

Answer from:

Cllrs Manda Rigby and Sarah Warren

Following the earlier public consultation there are no immediate plans to revisit HGV charges. By the end of 2023 96% of HGVs entering Bath's CAZ are considered emissions compliant (Euro VI) an increase from 93% since CAZ launch in March 2021. By way of comparison only 86% of vans entering CAZ are compliant although this is an increase from 63% since CAZ launch. Further info on CAZ and its contributions towards improvements to vehicle compliance and air quality can be found within the published annual and interim reports: <https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/policy-and-documents-library/baths-clean-air-zone-monitoring-reports>

P

12

Question from:

Gareth Eynon

At the June 2024 Cabinet, the following question was asked, and your response given is as follows:

Implementing astroturf sports pitches involves overturning surface soil, disrupting natural habitats, leading to soil erosion, loss of biodiversity, and ecosystem disruption. Additionally, the maintenance of astroturf involves chemicals that can harm soil and water quality, vegetation, and wildlife. The installation of astroturf may also contribute to heat island effects, impacting local temperature regulation. Were the Cabinet members aware of this impact when they approved the planning application for Larkhall Athletic FC to build new astroturf pitches over existing grass fields at their site off Valley View?

Answer from: Cllr Sarah Warren and Cllr Matt McCabe: “Firstly, it should be clarified that Cabinet Members form the Council’s Executive making key decisions including those relating to policy and finance, whereas decisions on individual planning applications have to be made by the non-Executive side of the Council because it is a regulatory function. The highest profile applications are decided by the Planning Committee and the majority of applications are decided by officers utilising powers delegated to them by the Committee. The application referred to was decided by officers under delegated powers. The planning application that you refer to was decided in December 2022 (it had been submitted in August) and had to be assessed in accordance with the planning policies that existed at the time. In December 2022 the policies in question were contained in the Core Strategy (adopted 2014) and the Placemaking Plan (adopted 2017). Since then, the Local Plan Partial Update has been adopted (in January 2023) which includes more stringent policies on artificial sports pitches (Policy LCR6) and Biodiversity Net Gain (Policy NE3A – which allowed the Council to take a 10% BNG approach a whole year before it became mandatory in England). Applications for artificial pitches 15 made since the adoption of the Local Plan Partial Update have had to be assessed against these updated policies and standards. New Policy LCR6 includes the following text: A management plan should be submitted with an application for a new artificial grass pitch. The management plan should outline the materials used and should consider potential sources of pollution from the installation phase through to end of life, including disposal. This includes both chemical and solid wastes including microplastics. Adequate remediation measures must be implemented and reported to ensure any identified potential harm can be suitably mitigated.”

Thank you for this response, however, it states in the following B&NES Planning document
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1LwNzLml3gaTXyh26WNP4gtYiC5gqEcxE/view>:

The Local Planning authorities may give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans and further the relevant consultation response from the Planning Policy that includes relevant requirements seems to have been disregarded. The management plan appears to be without details on material, pollution impacts, lifetime, recyclability, level of infill shredding.

How will Cabinet members address this serious concern going forward with other proposed artificial pitches being rolled out across B&NES, particularly concerning the Bath Rugby ground, University of Bath and Bath Football?

Answer from:

Cllrs Matt McCabe and Sarah Warren

Applications are assessed on a case-by-case basis. Developments must be determined in accordance with the adopted Development Plan which is read as a whole with weight given to other material considerations including emerging policies. The Local Plan partial update Policy has strengthened the position in relation to artificial pitches and the requirements that must now be met, and all new development will be considered in the light of that strengthened policy context.

P

13

Question from:

Gareth Eynon

In the recent Schools Attainment data, B&NES was the worst area in the country for Key Stage 2 children who receive free school meals. What actions are the council taking to improve upon supporting some of our most vulnerable children getting the best start in life through education?

Answer from:

Cllr Paul May

We want the best outcomes for all our children in B&NES. Whilst we know that when in secondary school, our free school meal pupils' education outcomes do improve to be broadly in line with their peers nationally, this is not good enough and we do want to see improvement in Key Stage 2.

Nearly all of the schools in B&NES are academy schools and run by a multi-academy trust, reporting to the Department of Education, not the local authority. However, this does not stop us from striving for better and committing resources to improve the education outcomes for all children. Specifically, the Local Authority has worked alongside the St John's Foundation and schools to develop the following programmes aimed at providing additional support to improve education outcomes.

We believe that the best start in education starts in the early years. Our Language for life; making a difference together, programme is

focused on closing the persistent word gap which impacts on children's later outcomes. With additional support from speech and language therapists and using evidence-based approaches, this programme has already worked with 23 early years settings and will target another 45 settings from September 2024

<https://www.nurseryworld.co.uk/opinion/article/david-hobdey-closing-the-gap-with-learning-for-life>

We have worked with St. Johns Foundation to develop the Primary Empowerment Programme, a programme to support seven schools in B&NES with the highest numbers of free school meals for pupils. This programme is in its third year and provides additional support to these schools to help families with literacy and numeracy.

We also deliver the Improving Educational Outcomes for Disadvantaged Pupils programme alongside St. Johns and the Big Education Trust. This programme has been developed alongside our schools to offer additional advice and support on strategies to improve attainment gaps through peer support and workshops. This year, the programme will be targeted at more schools and will include an offer of financial assistance for staffing cover to enable key teachers to attend.

Whilst work with education settings to reduce the attainment gap is fundamental, we also recognise that is important to address wider risk factors beyond the education setting that contribute to inequalities in educational attainment, including within the home, community and wider environment.

Public Health colleagues are therefore conducting a piece of work to explore what wider factors are contributing to the attainment gap within B&NES and how these can be addressed by teams across the Council and by partner organisations. Over 40 interviews with professionals working with children and young people, and with young people themselves, have taken place as part of this work.

Our work and our efforts will continue until we see sustained improvements in the attainment gaps for all children.

P	14	Question from:	Dominic Tristram
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It seems the Planning Enforcement team lacks the resources to enforce agreements set in planning applications, leading to actions that undermine B&NES planning policies. What resources are being allocated to ensure that all planning applications are properly monitored and enforced?

Answer from:		Cllr Matt McCabe	
<p><i>The Planning Enforcement Service at B&NES carries out a statutory function which is the investigation and responding to breaches of planning control where they are brought to their attention. To pro-actively monitor the implementation of all planning permissions would require additional resources, and as most developments are implemented without any breach occurring it would be a matter for the Council to decide in light of that factor whether additional staff resource should be provided to enable proactive compliance checking of decisions made. Where planning breaches are identified, and where it is found to be expedient to require those breaches to be remedied, the planning enforcement service work with the individuals responsible to resolve them collaboratively as this is the most effective and appropriate action both in terms of cost and outcome. When necessary, the team do take decisive and direct action and have recently achieved some excellent results in appeals and successful prosecution proceedings, which demonstrate that we have an effective enforcement service that the public should have confidence in.</i></p>			
P	15	Question from:	Dominic Tristram
Please can you provide emissions data created in B&NES for the last 5 years?			
Answer from:		Cllr Sarah Warren	
<p><i>We do not hold any emissions data. We do record monitored nitrogen dioxide (NO2) concentrations from 2014 onwards, accessible through interactive maps on our webpage: https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/nitrogen-dioxide-monitoring-data and in Appendix A of our annual air quality status (ASR) reports: https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/document-and-policy-library/annual-air-quality-reports</i></p>			
P	16	Question from:	Dominic Tristram
The protected cycle lane on Beckford Road going towards Batheaston is often used by confused cyclists coming off the canal tow path as			

two way, resulting in cyclists also going towards the city centre. How will you be addressing this ongoing issue that makes it unsafe for all users?

Answer from:

Cllr Sarah Warren

After the Beckford Road scheme was finished, the council added arrows to the cycle lane at both the access to the canal and the Beckford Gardens junction. There is also an arrow at the bus stop border. These arrows indicate that the cycle lane is one-way.

The council has recently consulted on the [draft Active Travel Masterplan](#) which includes improvements that will give cyclists more choices to travel from the canal tow path towards Bath city centre. These improvements are proposed to be delivered through developer contributions, council investment and central government funding.

We have been awarded funding from the [Sustainable Transport Settlement](#) to improve cycling routes in Bath and this area could benefit from improved infrastructure and wayfinding in the next three years if the proposals are approved.

P

17

Question from:

Off the Record Youth Forum

Regarding green energy – ‘Is the geothermal heating project being extended from the abbey to other places?’

Answer from:

Cllr Sarah Warren

The Council have begun to investigate options for further geothermal projects to decarbonise the heat and energy of Council owned buildings in the centre of Bath including the Guildhall, Roman Baths and Pump Room. This has included some preliminary investigation into the residual potential energy from surplus heat in the Great Drain (from where the Abbey extracts heat). An energy capture project was recently completed that extracts heat from the Kings Bath to heat the new World Heritage Centre and Clore Learning Centre and assist with heating the main baths and Pump Room buildings. The Council are exploring what is possible and affordable and applying for grants to help continue decarbonising the corporate estate and reach the Council’s 2030 net zero target.

P	18	Question from:	Off the Record Youth Forum
<p>What is the council going to do to step up mental health support to meet the increasing importance of mental health issues for young people?</p>			
Answer from:			Cllr Paul May
<p><i>Mental health support for young people in B&NES is important to the council. We are working with the local NHS and health providers to make sure local mental health support is of good quality and accessible to young people who need them. We know that due to increased demand people have to wait for some services. We are working together to support people to wait well. For example, we welcome the new NHS 111 helpline that is offering mental health support to adults and children from August this year. The helpline will be providing specialists from local children and adolescent mental health (CAMHS) to take calls from children and young people experiencing mental health issues.</i></p> <p><i>We are also committed to preventing future mental health issues from arising. As part of the Wellness service re-commissioning, we have invested in mental and emotional wellbeing support for young people from the age of 18 and adults. The new service would start in April 2025, and we look forward to continuing to support good mental wellbeing of young people in B&NES.</i></p>			
P	19	Question from:	Off the Record Youth Forum
<p>Does Bath and North East Somerset (B&NES) Council have any specific strategies or initiatives in place to involve young people in local government decision-making, consultation, or education about how local government functions, and if so, how are they implemented? If not, would they be open to introducing new measures or collaborating on initiatives to actively engage and inform young people?</p>			
Answer from:			Cllrs Paul May and Dave Wood
<p><i>The Participation Strategy has now been replaced with the Participation Toolkit for professionals working with Children and Young People this new toolkit was developed by the Connecting Families Team last year.</i></p>			

Children and Young People are regularly involved in consultations and all our commissioned services for young people who need extra support, have service user groups. These groups ensure that all children and young people getting support who can participate in decisions that affect them and their families and service users are actively encouraged to provide feedback.

Groups in Bath and North East Somerset that help deliver our wider consultations include the Youth Forum, run by where participants decide about campaigns and projects they undertake, based on the issues that really matter to young people in our area. Recently the Youth Forum undertook a consultation on Neurodiversity in schools, and how pupils could be supported to get extra help. This is now part of the resources page of the School's Hub. The Youth Forum can submit questions on a quarterly basis to the Children and Young People's subgroup of the Health and Wellbeing Board.

In addition, and supported by Keynsham Town Council, Keynsham Now recently celebrated its 10th birthday. It has raised over £2000 for local charities, and its members have spoken at the youth parliament, visited the Houses of Parliament, and set out their views at Keynsham Town Council meetings.

We are always open to considering new initiatives or collaborations to actively engage and inform young people.

A copy of the Participation overview document which shows how we engage and consult with our children and young people in B&NES is attached.

Appendices

Question P19 – Participation overview document