

BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET

CABINET

These minutes are draft until confirmed as a correct record at the next meeting.

Thursday 25th September 2025

Present:

Councillor Kevin Guy	Leader of the Council, LD Group Leader, Member Advocate for Armed Forces and Veterans
Councillor Mark Elliott	Deputy Council Leader (non-statutory) and Cabinet Member for Resources
Councillor Joel Hirst	Cabinet Member for Sustainable Transport Strategy
Councillor Lucy Hodge	Cabinet Member for Sustainable Transport Delivery
Councillor Paul May	Cabinet Member for Children's Services
Councillor Matt McCabe	Cabinet Member for Built Environment, Housing and Sustainable Development
Councillor Manda Rigby	Cabinet Member for Communications and Community
Councillor Sarah Warren	Deputy Council Leader (statutory) and Cabinet Member for Sustainable Bath and North East Somerset

30 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

31 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

The Senior Democratic Services Officer read out the emergency evacuation procedure.

32 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Alison Born and Cllr Paul Roper.

33 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

34 TO ANNOUNCE ANY URGENT BUSINESS AGREED BY THE CHAIR

There was no urgent business.

35 QUESTIONS FROM PUBLIC AND COUNCILLORS

There were no questions from Councillors or members of the public.

36 STATEMENTS OR PETITIONS FROM PUBLIC OR COUNCILLORS

37 MATTERS REFERRED BY POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY BODIES

No matters were referred by Policy Development and Scrutiny Panels.

38 RESET LOCAL PLAN OPTIONS DOCUMENT

Cllr Matt McCabe, Cabinet Member for Built Environment, Housing and Sustainable Development, introduced the report, moved the updated officer recommendation and made the following points:

- Thanked officers for producing the consultation document within a compacted timescale.
- An options consultation had been launched last year but the change in government had resulted in a new housing calculator being brought forward.
- There had been an increase in housing targets for Bath and North East Somerset from 700 houses per year to 1500 (27,000 over 18 years).
- Anyone who had responded to the consultation last year would have their comments assessed as part of the new consultation.
- The new targets resulted in the Council's 5-year land supply for housing being reduced to 2.7 years.
- The Council needed a robust Local Plan with a 5-year land supply for housing to avoid speculative development.
- The refreshed Local Plan would replace the existing plans and establish the framework in which planning decisions would be made until 2043.
- The options document set out the spatial options for the local plan. Four large strategic sites were being put forward by the Council: Hicks Gate, Keynsham North, West of Bath and Somer Valley.
- Identifying larger sites would allow a focus on infrastructure and sustainable development.
- All sites need to be tested against local knowledge and residents were encouraged to respond to the consultation to ensure the right houses were built in the right places.
- New policies were also proposed in relation to Retrofit First policy and HMO restrictions in Bath to protect affordable family homes.

Cllr Manda Rigby seconded the motion and emphasised that the consultation would be inclusive and focus on hard-to-reach groups. This would include a 'van with a plan' which would be touring the area to host drop-in sessions, publicise the consultation, facilitate and encourage participation. She clarified that the consultation did not imply preference for any specific site.

Cllr Paul May acknowledged that the housing target was a huge challenge for Bath and North East Somerset. He recognised the restrictions for developments within the city of Bath and spoke in support of larger developments to help unlock investment and benefit communities. He agreed with the need to consult on all options but expressed concerns about developer proposals around Whitchurch Village which would change the character of the village.

Cllr Sarah Warren emphasised the environmental benefits of the Local Plan reset including policies on Retrofit First, climate adaption, district heating, renewable energy, regenerative farming and the increase of biodiversity net gain from 10% to 20%.

Cllr Joel Hirst welcomed the approval of the options document for consultation and highlighted the need for appropriate transport infrastructure, building communities which had a balance of employment opportunities and appropriate social infrastructure and ensuring that affordable family housing was available across the district.

RESOLVED (unanimously):

- (1) To approve the Reset Local Plan Options document (Appendix 1 of the report) for public consultation for a period of six weeks from 3rd October to 14th November 2025, subject to the amendments set out in the schedule to the revised officer recommendation.
- (2) To agree and authorise the Executive Director for Sustainable Communities, in consultation with the Cabinet Members for Built Environment, Housing and Sustainable Development and Communications and Community, to issue communications relating to the reset Local Plan Options and to undertake consultation as summarised in section 10 of the report and outlined in the communications and engagement plan (Appendix 2 of the report).
- (3) To delegate authority to the Executive Director for Sustainable Communities, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Built Environment, Housing and Sustainable Development, to agree textual changes to the Options document (Appendix 1 of the report) prior to its publication for consultation.

39 THE MOVEMENT STRATEGY

Cllr Joel Hirst, Cabinet Member for Economic and Cultural Sustainable Development, introduced the report, moved the officer recommendation and made the following points:

- The Movement Strategy would provide the framework to support 'Journey to Net Zero' goals by addressing traffic congestion, air pollution, and carbon emissions.
- The strategy proposed rebalancing the traffic network and improving active travel and bus flow.
- The vision was a 'virtuous circle' of quality places, improved travel choices and reduced traffic.
- The strategy included short, medium, and long-term interventions and would help secure regional investment from WECA for schemes such as mass transit options, improved strategic travel corridors, improved rail networks with new stations and improved travel interchanges.
- The benefits of the strategy included better travel to work options, improved pedestrian safety, improved mobility in the city centre for all, better parking, more reliable bus networks, prioritised bus corridors, better real time travel information and expanded EV infrastructure.
- The consultation would run from 14 October to 28 November.

Cllr Sarah Warren seconded the motion and highlighted that the benefits were beyond carbon reduction and would have a positive impact on health, heritage and the economy.

Cllr Lucy Hodge welcomed the strategy, stating that it would provide a timely and comprehensive framework to prioritise activity, ensure schemes linked up and improve the quality of life for everyone.

Cllr Matt McCabe referred to the timeliness of the strategy to coincide with the re-set of the Local Plan and encouraged everyone to engage with the public consultation.

Cllr Paul May referred to the trials around school streets and confirmed that he would be promoting the concept of school streets as part of this strategy.

RESOLVED (unanimously):

- (1) To approve the development of a Movement Strategy.
- (2) To agree the strategic objectives for the Movement Strategy. The objectives are creating a great quality place, improve travel choices and reduce private vehicular traffic.
- (3) To approve proceeding to public consultation from Tuesday 14th October to Friday 28th November 2025.

The meeting ended at 5.15 pm

Chair

Date Confirmed and Signed

Prepared by Democratic Services