

## Bath and North East Somerset Council - Full Council 19 March 2026

### Labour Motion: Evolving Discovery Cards - Modernisation and Efficiency for residents and tourists

To be proposed by Cllr Robin Moss

#### Council notes that:

1. B&NES residents have higher than average living costs yet lower than average pay. They rely on essential council services in a challenging financial climate.
2. Officers and councillors have previously identified the need for tools that improve access to reliable information on council services, transport, waste, democratic participation, and community updates.
3. Many local authorities use smart, digital-first systems to provide residents with more efficient, yet personalised services – such as the ‘South Glos Residents’ app which combines bins, democracy, advice and a host of other information.
4. Many UK councils have apps and digital passes for visitors, too – which improve visitor experiences while driving the local economy and generating income through sponsorships, partnerships and a wide range of commercial activities

#### Council acknowledges:

5. The Discovery Card is now, given the passing of time, limited in scope by comparison with the digital opportunities now available to local authorities.
6. As a result, we are falling behind modern residents’ and visitors’ expectations, being less efficient in **what** we offer both groups – and in the **way** we do that.
7. With six million annual visitors, B&NES has a great opportunity if it chooses to enhance the residents’ Discovery Card beyond a resident-only, hard-copy, heritage-led offer.
8. Investigating the Labour Group’s budget proposal for an evolution of the Discovery Card could be a cost-neutral way for the Council to improve resident services, enhance the cross-district visitor offer and raise income.
9. As noted by the Cabinet member for resources during February’s budget debate, the proposal contains “a few perfectly sensible suggestions” and is therefore worth pursuing in the spirit of genuine cross-party, and cross-community collaboration.

- *Unless where specifically set out in the statute, motions approved at Council do not bind the Executive (Cabinet) but may influence their future decisions.*
- *Councillors are reminded of their public sector equality duty which requires the Council to consider or think about how their policies or decisions may affect people who are protected under the Equality Act.*

**Therefore this Council resolves to request that the administration:**

10. Invest existing officer time to scope a full business case for “B&NES Priority”, a two-part evolution of the existing Discovery Card which comprises:

*(i) a tier for residents – B&NES Residents Priority - providing a modern, largely digital service that will:*

- Provide residents-only rates across a range of council services, helping to shield residents from rising costs in one of Britain’s most expensive places to live
- Build upon the models of South Gloucestershire and others’ apps
- Offer residents accurate, up to date information on:
  - waste, roads, and transport
  - council services and democratic updates
  - local infrastructure news

*(ii) a ‘city pass’ style, paid, tier for visitors - B&NES Visitors Priority; a modern visitor product that will:*

- Generate significant revenue through digital marketing and personalisation that enables:
  - commercial partnerships
  - ticket bundles
  - promotions
  - sponsorship and advertising
- Offer discounted rates compared with standard visitor prices
- Operate like city passes used successfully in major visitor destinations
- Improve visitor experience by providing real time travel and service information.

11. Ensure that the business case fully explores the concept’s commercial and civic potential, including:

- Increasing yield through pre- and post-visit communication
- Encouraging repeat visits and longer stays
- Supporting local businesses across all of B&NES
- Promoting green and sustainable travel into and around the district.

12. Conduct the work as a cross-cutting project, drawing on:

- relevant expertise across council departments
- *Unless where specifically set out in the statute, motions approved at Council do not bind the Executive (Cabinet) but may influence their future decisions.*
- *Councillors are reminded of their public sector equality duty which requires the Council to consider or think about how their policies or decisions may affect people who are protected under the Equality Act.*

- comparable national and international models
- external specialists where appropriate
- engagement with residents, visitors, and stakeholders.

10. Report initial findings to the Corporate Policy Development & Scrutiny Panel within six months, with clear options on delivery and outcomes for:

- revenue generation including costs and return on investment.
  - resident benefit
  - business impact
  - stakeholder engagement for co-design
  - implementation design
- as well as a plan for next steps with Panel / council updates built in.

- *Unless where specifically set out in the statute, motions approved at Council do not bind the Executive (Cabinet) but may influence their future decisions.*
- *Councillors are reminded of their public sector equality duty which requires the Council to consider or think about how their policies or decisions may affect people who are protected under the Equality Act.*