

**STATEMENT OF CHARLES GRIMSDALE ABOUT DEVELOPMENT AT
WOOLLEY VALLEY, SWAINSWICK TO COUNCIL MEETING
16TH NOVEMBER 2010**

Chairman and Councillors,

I am a local resident of Woolley valley and a member of a local group that represents residents from Woolley, Upper Swainswick, and Charlcombe (see www.savewoolleyvalley.co.uk) .

I wish to make you aware of the anger and frustration amongst local residents resulting from the continued unauthorised development in Woolley valley. The Save Woolley Valley Action Group website has received over 1,000 written submissions in support of the cause. In addition over 65 local residents have pledged funds to support direct action to stop further development.

Background

The land (Parcel 2866, Woolley Lane, Charlcombe, Bath, BA1 8DN) was sold by television broadcaster, Jonathan Dimbleby, to Golden Valley Paddocks Ltd (GVP) in 2005, with a restriction that it be used for agricultural purposes only. This land is in a designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), with an Article 4 restriction. In 2008 GVP applied for planning permission to erect an agricultural building supposedly to house alpacas. Alpaca farming is being used around the country by developers as a shoo-in for residential planning, and this practise is making a mockery of the planning process. The alpacas never arrived and the company has now moved the goal posts to try and start an intensive chicken farming operation involving the use of ten large barns. They have 3 other sites around the South West where they are using similar agricultural schemes to justify the siting of mobile and permanent residences. It is our view that Golden Valley Paddocks are a property developer and not a long-term agricultural concern. In fact their land Agent (Marc Willis) is on record (in an interview in The Times, 15th May 2010ⁱ) stating “We make no bones about wanting to build a farmhouse...”

Planning for the agricultural building was refused by the Planning Department. GVP then made 4 subsequent retrospective applications to develop the site, all of which were refused. However GVP continued with development of the site regardless. A large, unauthorised mobile home was delivered to the site on 11 Dec 09, and significant extensions and changes have been made to a stock barn. One of the more destructive pieces of work undertaken was the excavation of over 1,500 cubic metres of soil from around the stock barn and movement of this soil to the other end of the site where it was deposited, and where GVP have constructed a pond.

A photo of some of the excavations is shown below; please note the size of the excavators for scale.



To the relief of local residents the Planning Authority did finally issued Stop and Enforcement Notice on (12th and 21st May 2010) requesting that changes to the land levels should be restored, and that all further excavation and or engineering works on site should cease.

Our Concern

Since the issue of the Enforcement Notice, none of these engineering works have been restored, and even worse there was further excavation and movement of hard core on site that has not in any way restored the land to its former levels. Local residents supplied written and photographic evidence of clear breaches of the Enforcement Notice, and furthermore there is no evidence that the Developer has complied with the requirements of the Enforcement Notice. Residents are beyond frustration and are angry that the Planning Department appears to have ignored the submitted evidence of breaches to the Enforcement Notice, and that the land has not been restored to its former state. In addition, no enforcement has been taken on the mobile home, or on the alterations to the barn.

GVP is now seeking to try and regularise this engineering work through a retrospective planning application 10/04188/FUL.

If Golden Valley Paddocks are allowed to ignore an Enforcement Notice and to continue development on the site it makes a mockery of the Planning Process, and creates an open invitation to other developers looking to develop on agricultural land all over North East Somerset.

Summary

We appeal to you to ensure that the enforcement notice is upheld and that all future un-permitted development to the site in this Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty is prohibited.

**STATEMENT OF ALASTAIR MACKICHAN ON BEHALF OF
CHARLCOMBE PARISH COUNCIL ABOUT DEVELOPMENT AT
WOOLLEY VALLEY, SWAINSWICK TO COUNCIL MEETING
16TH NOVEMBER 2010**

Madam Chairman, Councillors,

I am Alastair MacKichan, Chairman of Charlcombe Parish Council.

I wish to make you aware of a serious breakdown of trust between the Planning Department and the Parish Councils of Charlcombe and Swainswick. This has arisen as a result of unauthorised development in Woolley Valley.

The land in this valley is not only within the Green Belt and Cotswold AONB, but has the added protection of an Article 4 Direction removing permitted development rights. It is the only agricultural land within B&NES to be so protected. And therefore you might expect the Planning Authority to take particular care to protect this environment from unauthorised development.

In reality, the opposite has happened. A developer has been allowed literally to lay waste to parts of the valley and to develop at will, despite the refusal of 5 planning applications.

The one beacon of light has been the support we have received from our Ward Councillor, Ian Dewey, who has worked tirelessly on our behalf.

We first reported instances of unauthorised development to the Planning Authority in January 2008. Since then the response of the Planning Authority has consistently been slow and inadequate.

The Planning Authority has failed to take note of the very strong public opposition to this development, particularly from the local communities who are seriously affected by the harm caused by this development.

The assessment by the Planning Authority of what developments on the site require planning permission is, in some cases, inexplicable. For example, an existing open stock barn has been converted to a fully enclosed light industrial unit. The Article 4 removes development rights for the alteration or extension of a building, and yet the Planning Authority says no planning permission is required.

The Planning Authority has failed to take enforcement action at the appropriate time, using "expediency" as the excuse. When they have finally taken enforcement action, as a result of persistent pressure from the Parish Councils, it has been limited and ineffective. We still await enforcement action, promised last May, on an unauthorised mobile home, now unoccupied, and access to the site. The Planning Authority has also failed to act upon many of the breaches of a Stop Notice which we reported to them.

The Planning Authority has consistently failed to engage with Charlcombe and Swainswick Parish Councils, despite repeated offers of help from us. As a result, confidence and trust between the Parish Councils and the Planning Department is now totally lacking.

I put it to you that this is a most unacceptable state of affairs, and flies in the face of the Parish Charter, which commits B&NES to consult with, and involve, their Parish Councils.

**STATEMENT OF DAVID REDGEWELL ON BEHALF OF SOUTH WEST
TRANSPORT NETWORK TO COUNCIL MEETING 16TH NOVEMBER 2010**

Buses And Rail In The Greater Bristol Area

Buses – Dismantling Of Essential Public Transport Services

We are extremely concerned that a combination of bus cuts proposed by local authorities, a 20% reduction in the Bus Service Operator Grant, and potential cuts in the Rural Bus Subsidy Grant from central governments worth 4.8 million to the West Country last year, and in the Urban Bus Challenge, will threaten the very viability of a cohesive bus network for Greater Bristol and Wiltshire, Somerset and Gloucestershire.

Evening and Sunday services are now under threat and some daytime services on outer suburban and rural routes may be lost completely – they are also often heavily subsidised.

For example:

Shirehamton to Emersons Green via UWE

Withywood to Brislington via Laurence Hill city centre

Bus number 20 in Bath circular around the city

Bus number 66 in Trowbridge

How do you get to work if the bus is cut?

The cuts to services will have many consequences far beyond those that many councillors will have anticipated. For instance the cuts will affect shift workers, shop workers, nurses and doctors getting to work, as well as many others who rely on the bus to go to the shops, post office, health care, etc. The situation is made worse by the combination of adjacent authorities making cuts. The whole network in and around Greater Bristol will contract unless councils step in and do something about it before it's too late.

More traffic jams

The government has said it will be the greenest government ever, another reason why public transport needs to be safeguarded.

Councils are also keen to reduce congestion on our roads. A good bus network is an essential element to providing an alternative to the car. Bristol's traffic is already appalling and our public transport system a disgrace compared to most European cities and other cities in the UK.

Bus wars

The situation is further compounded by potential 'bus wars' whereby bus companies compete for passengers by duplicating services, arriving just slightly earlier and outpricing competitors. This means that passengers find two buses in quick succession with a long gap to follow perhaps an hour long. Gradually companies using older buses that are non low floor win on price. There is a risk then that they begin to concentrate on the best commercial routes only, discarding parts of the suburban network with fewer passengers in order to achieve time savings and concentrate on parts which deliver the most profit. This approach to public transport might lead to survival of the fittest but it neglects true social need.

Jobs

The bus cuts will affect hundreds of bus industry jobs in the Greater Bristol area. At a time of recession this is a very important additional consideration.

RAIL

The Department for Transport is removing two four carriage locomotives from service, each with up to 300 seats. We are expecting 9 trains (each composed of two carriages) from CENTRO but at the same time returning 8 trains to Greater Manchester. The Welsh Assembly Government railways division is taking back four trains on loan so we stand still when it comes to rolling stock.

We desperately need to lobby ministers for extra trains.

Six trains are needed, as well as those for eventual additional services on the Portishead Line, services to Henbury for Cribbs Causeway, summer services to Minehead, and also the Trans Wilts Line (Swindon to Frome via Melksham and Trowbridge).

Local trains are subsidised and these subsidies will need to be maintained.

Station improvements urgent

Station improvement by local councils might dry up completely. A number are now urgent:

Yate

Severn Beach

Clifton Down, Montpelier and Redland: CCTV and ticket machines

Keynsham: disabled ramps and CCTV

Oldfield park: CCTV

Higbridge and Burnham on Sea: new glazing and new meshing on shelters.

Trowbridge: major overhaul with interchange for buses and catering

Westbury: access for interurban buses and delivery of proposed new platform as turnback for Bristol suburban services

Electrification

This is very welcome but it must include local suburban trains between Cardiff and Swindon and gapfilling needs to include Severn each branch and Henbury loop.

Electrification needs to help local trains as well as intercity.

Regeneration

We are most concerned that the regeneration needs of Bath Weston Riverside, and of Trowbridge and Radstock taken into account in terms of public transport infrastructure. The success of all these areas depends on high quality public transport and much improved interchanges. We ask councillor to work cross boundary and within the WoE area to support the necessary public transport improvements to bring about regeneration of brown field sites and concentrate new development in towns rather than let car based suburban sprawl be the order of the day.

**STATEMENT OF KELLY BULL IN SUPPORT OF PETITION FOR A PEDESTRIAN
CROSSING AT NEWTON ROAD/ST. MICHAEL'S ROAD, TWERTON, BATH
TO COUNCIL MEETING 16TH NOVEMBER 2010**

We the undersigned request that Bath & North East Somerset Council look into the possibility of providing a pedestrian crossing outside of St Michaels Junior School Newton Road Twerton Bath.

The road at Newton Road is a dangerous road with several children being knocked down in the past few years due to cars not respecting the road conditions.

STATEMENT OF STEFAN DIFINIZIO, MEMBER OF THE YOUTH PARLIAMENT FOR B&NES 2010 ON BEHALF OF DAFBY DELEGATION TO COUNCIL MEETING 16TH NOVEMBER 2010

ITEM 14 - YOUTH SERVICE PROJECTS

Hello I'm Stefan Difinizio and I'm the member of youth parliament and also attend a number of different youth centres and projects.

- On Monday 20th September about **one hundred young people** came to the overview and scrutiny meeting to protest about the huge and **disproportionate 40% cuts** to the Youth Service; **only two years** after our youth services were **cut by 30%**.
- We wanted to show how important the Youth Service is to young people. **Five young people spoke passionately** at the meeting to highlight what an important role youth projects have in their lives; a role often not met by other agencies.
- The overview and scrutiny panel recognised how strongly the young people felt and agreed that the Youth Service budget should be looked at again. The young people at the meeting felt that they were being taken seriously. However, what has actually changed?
- About **£50,000** has been put back into the budget, but this **still amounts to roughly a huge 35% cut**.
- Also, in the latest proposal it is claimed that more centres are being kept open, **but actual face to face youth work hours have been cut further (about 43 hours)**, in comparison to the previous favoured proposal.
- **Youth work sessions are now only two hours long as opposed to 2.5 hours.**
- **Timeout Youth centre building** is being funded, **but no youth work** and the town council cannot promise to find the funding.
- **Radstock Youth Project** is now only funded **as a limited, and a very part time project**.
- **Also the Youth Democracy Project** (which includes DAFBY, YAGA, UKYP, Youth Bank, Young Inspectors, formerly SAFE and lots of other training for young people) **and** which fairly recently was given an **Outstanding OFSTED report**, is being **taken completely out of the youth service**, the **budget being cut** and the **remaining service being put out to commission**.

The young people of B&NES deserve a properly funded Youth Service. People talk about the need to move towards a **targeted Youth Service**, but the Youth Service works on a daily basis with many young people who see **the youth service as their main support**;
Can you remember what young people said at overview and scrutiny meeting?

Can we afford to have a properly funded youth service?

I think you should ask the question **can we afford not to fund it properly?**

STATEMENT OF NADINE GEARY TO COUNCIL MEETING
16TH NOVEMBER 2010

ITEM 13 - BATH TRANSPORTATION PACKAGE

I am speaking on behalf of Response2Route.

Residents of Newbridge and Lower Weston have applied for Village Green status on the two sections of the Green Corridor, that are most valued as recreational spaces by our local community.

If granted, this status will ensure that these spaces are protected for the foreseeable future.

Bath and North East Somerset Council have objected on the grounds that the land is predominantly used as a 'through path' instead of 'for pastimes'. This assumption is irrelevant if the land has also been used for recreational activities - which it has.

Many residents have written to support the application and have sent evidence to demonstrate recreational use over the last 20+ years. We believe that we have a good chance of succeeding in our application. The evidence submitted would have been enough to grant Village Green status alone, but an inquiry is now forced because of the objection by Bath and North East Somerset Council .

The only objection to the application is from the council. Because of this, a costly and time-consuming inquiry will now have to take place. We are advised that these inquiries could cost local taxpayers up to £100,000, plus costs escalating in barrister's fees every day the objection is sustained.

We believe that the reasons for your objection are not significant enough to warrant the high costs of the resulting inquiries. It is an unjustified use of public funds; just so the council can name the land "a footpath" rather than "a Village Green".

If your objection is withdrawn, permitting Village Green status will not cost the taxpayer a penny.

In addition to this, we believe it is the council's responsibility to support communities who want to continue to preserve and use surrounding green spaces in a positive way.

We urge you to withdraw your objection. At these difficult financial times you have a responsibility to ensure that Bath and North East Somerset's taxpayers' money is well spent.

**QUESTIONS ASKED BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AT COUNCIL
MEETING
16 NOVEMBER 2010**

NUMBER	QUESTION FROM	QUESTION TO COUNCILLOR(S)	SUBJECT
1	Mr Ian Barclay	Malcolm Hanney	Background Information Relating to Firs Field, Combe Down

Public Questions for Council 16th November 2010

(NOTE: The following question and answer will be published on the Council's website as soon as possible after the meeting and linked to the published draft minutes of this meeting.)

1. Question from Mr Ian Barclay

In preparation for the Bath Recreation Ground Trust's forthcoming consultation on Recreation Ground Land Use (apparently to include Firs Field Combe Down), how will the Council make public Firs Field background information so as to complete the information already issued? This additional information appears to include:

- Council questions to legal counsel and counsel's opinions (ref Note to Combe Down residents, July 2009);
- A history of Firs Field from 1919 to the present day covering the "blue", "pink" and "white" land conveyances, legal issues including pink land trust document (ref July 2009 Note), Land Registry entry, to accompany the plan already issued, and Council's acquisition of Firs Field Land by way of gift;
- Present protection afforded Firs Field under the Local Plan, byelaws etc;
- Feedback reports on the Sulis Club meeting on 26 June 2009 and the Firs Field Proposal Note to Combe Down residents in July 2009;
- A record of Council active discussions with Combe Down Ward Councillors and Friends of Firs Field, from their commencement in 2009 up to the present time (ref Council Press Release 15 April 2009);
- Details of the "appropriate covenants that would give similar protection to the land as those that would be applicable for a village green" (ref Press Release 15 April 2009).

Answer from Cabinet Member for Resources

The Council made appropriate information available to the Friends of Firs Field and local residents of Combe Down during the consultation that took place last year. At that time the Council made clear that it would not be releasing Counsel's Opinion in relation to Firs Field, the Rec or otherwise as this would be inappropriate precedent.

The Council, in its corporate role, continues to have discussions with the Recreation Ground Trust and other parties in relation to this matter and will have regard to issues raised by the Friends of Firs Field and local residents, and indeed undertakings and indications given by the Council in its corporate role, at the time of the consultation.

**STATEMENT BY SQUADRON LEADER (RETD) BRIAN HIGGINS MBE
TO COUNCIL MEETING 16TH NOVEMBER 2010**

ITEM 12 - SECONDARY SCHOOLS REVIEW

I am addressing the Council in my capacity as the Chair of Southdown PACT and as a resident of Southdown for 40 years. I would like to bring to the attention of the Council the impact upon a particularly vulnerable community, if the proposed closure of Culverhay School goes ahead. The last five years have seen a significant loss in the number of facilities and amenities available to the residents of Southdown, Whiteway and Twerton. These include;

- The Whiteway Youth Club and Southdown Social Centre
- A range of public houses and social clubs including, the Beehive, The Jubilee, The Rose and Laurel, the Burnt House and Southdown Labour Club (which is now very close to permanent closure)
- Three Post Offices in Englishcombe Lane, in Mount Road and in Coronation Avenue
- An undertakers, a newsagents, a wool shop, a petrol station and a green grocers in Englishcombe Lane
- The Hub Crèche facility in Twerton
- Odd Down Youth Centre, which is now only able to run for one night per week

One of the few resources left to a community, which already has significantly fewer advantages than other parts of the city, is Culverhay School. Culverhay is a proudly community school, which demonstrates a strong commitment to building community cohesion and to exporting social capital back into its community. This is evident in the way it makes the site available to users within the community and in the extensive range of educational and social opportunities it provides for the community.

Examples of these opportunities include;

- ICT courses up to Level 3, which run from beginners' level to the small business user;
- Courses in digital imaging, website design, making presentations and photography
- Courses in arts and crafts such as woodwork, pottery, painting, card making, drawing and DIY
- Language conversation classes
- Basic skills development courses for adults in English and Maths
- Courses in book keeping, starting a small business and budgeting
- A wide range of sporting and fitness opportunities such as rhythmic gymnastics; line dancing; fitness training and keep fit classes

The school also hosts numerous holiday schemes for the community such as, SPLASH programmes for vulnerable young people; the SOFA project, which promotes opportunities for young people with disabilities to interact

with their peers; football coaching; cricket coaching; and holiday play schemes

Local community groups also make extensive use of Culverhay's facilities, including the Wine Circle, Youth Theatre Groups, Choirs and local singing groups, the Bath Dance Group; Bath East Asian Chinese and Friends Group and the Community Learning Service.

The school also hosts regular car boot sales and craft markets throughout the year.

I am sure Councillors will have taken note of Culverhay's alternative proposals, outlined in its own Consultation Booklet. The school has made a strong commitment to work with partners such as Bath Spa University, to build community cohesion, by developing the site to become even more of a hub for the community. These partnerships will open up opportunities for adult learners to return to education, including opportunities to achieve Level 3 and Degree level qualifications, in an area where the Local Authority's own needs analysis shows few adults currently hold such qualifications.

Closing Culverhay closes the door to all these opportunities, at a time when the community served by the school needs them more than ever. I therefore urge Councillors to oppose the closure of Culverhay.

STATEMENT OF SEAN WYARTT TO COUNCIL MEETING
16TH NOVEMBER 2010

ITEM 12 - SECONDARY SCHOOLS REVIEW

CULVERHAY SCHOOL AND THE SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES STRATEGY

I would like to draw the councillor's attention to the Sustainable Community Strategy Plan 2009 – 2026 and some of the quotes it contains.

“To create communities where everyone contributes and everyone takes responsibility. Our challenge is to foster community ties particularly at a time when economic difficulties, development of new housing, people moving to the area from the rest of the UK and climate change provides a set of unique challenges.

People are able to have their say through promotion of ‘real’ consultation and engagement

Listening to these groups and individuals in our communities has, and will continue to form an important part of ensuring that the work the Partnership carries out is addressing the things that are important to local people both in the short and longer term.

Vibrant sustainable communities:

That are lively and inclusive Places where people feel safe, take responsibility and make a contribution.

Some of the key issues that came out of the conference were ‘locality’ and in particular access to local services, local democracy and the importance of a sense of community.

We are committed to the concept of locality and ‘thinking local’. This includes making sure that we are providing accessible services to all our communities, I think we have seen through the issue of transport how this proposal fails to do this.

All children have access to excellent schools in line with the vision for the 21st Century School and access to personalised education

There is an increase in the number of children walking and cycling to school to raise levels of physical activity

HOW DELIVERED

Children's Centre Services are providing integrated services for children aged 0-11, available in all areas, most notably in those areas where there is most

deprivation. Does not joined up thinking suggest a clear school of transition particularly as the people have indicated this is their wish.

Significant cuts are made in the carbon emissions of all organisations at least in line with national targets (34% by 2020, 80% by 2050)

The Strategy for children and young people in B&NES is that “all children and young people will do better in life than they thought they could.” In doing so we are committed to ensuring that all children and young people are safe (HOW CAN SAFETY BE GUARANTEED IF CHILDREN HAVE TO WALK FURTHER TO SCHOOL ALONG MAIN ROADS?) and that we tackle inequalities in our communities and close the attainment gap.

Local people are able to tackle things for themselves, allowing communities to take responsibility for their own development and future”.

I point to the local community and how they have engaged in this process. I say to you that there is an opportunity here to engage the most disadvantaged community in our city and make a real difference. There is a momentum which if harnessed and utilised through the parents who are speaking to you tonight could change a community. If you fail to do that you will lose that opportunity and it may never be there again. This decision is not about what is happening and education today it is about what could happen.

STATEMENT OF CHRIS SHIRE TO COUNCIL MEETING
16TH NOVEMBER 2010

ITEM 12 - SECONDARY SCHOOLS REVIEW

Ladies and gentlemen, I intend to be brief since you will be hearing numerous reasons why Culverhay should be kept open. May I bring to your attention one item by which a consequence of closing Culverhay will result in an ongoing **additional** cost to BANES as a result of its closure. Statutory Walking Distance. At present almost all pupils going to Culverhay do so by walking.

Where the journey from home to school exceeds 3 miles the council has to pay for the pupil to be taken either by school bus, taxi or public transport.

As you are aware Culverhay has a higher than normal percentage of pupils who are entitled to free school meals, 33% in the current Yr 7. This does vary of course but of the other two years who will be particularly affected Yr 8 17% and Yr 9 39%. An average of 33%. The national average is I understand around 13%. One effect this has is to reduce the statutory walking distance from 3 miles to 2 miles before the council has to provide free transport. You were all invited recently to walk from the home of one of the parents in the Culverhay catchment area to the nearest alternative school, Oldfield School. Using the postcode of that home I have drawn up a spreadsheet showing the public transport options to each of the alternative schools in Bath. For this I have used a common school start time of 08:40

As you can see some of the routes involve the taking of more than one bus, sometimes from more than one company. I have therefore also added in a column to show the cost of weekly passes or ten trip tickets for these journeys and where multiple bus companies are involved I have used the BANES BusRider ticket which is cheaper than having more than one company's weekly ticket. You will be well aware that buying daily returns or multiple single tickets is vastly more expensive.

From the spreadsheet you all have in front of you, you will see that the distance is never less than 3 miles when done by car.

May I remind you of the government's policy on sustainable travel to school: Since 2003, the 'Travelling to School Initiative':

As well as helping to boost children's fitness and concentration, walking and cycling helps to reduce the congestion caused by the 'school run' - together with the associated accidents and pollution, carbon emissions included.

In summary if all the pupils choose to go to Ralph Allen as the **only** non-denominational co-ed school south of the river (which incidentally has the best, and cheapest, transport links) and as you are well aware one of the drivers behind the reorganisation is to create more non-denominational co-ed places in Bath, then BANES could find itself paying the school transport costs of every pupil who would otherwise have gone to Culverhay. Not just those on free school meals.

References:

BANES website

<http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/educationandlearning/Schoolsandcolleges/schooltransport/Pages/AssistancewithCosts.aspx>

Additional Transport for Low Income Families

For children from low income families in receipt of free school meals or maximum working tax credit, free transport will be provided if they live between 2 and 6 miles from the nearest three schools to their home address.

Source for the bus timetable data is www.transportdirect.info which I have always found to be remarkably accurate. Even down to variations in journey time for the same journey according to time of day.

Bus company season ticket costs taken from the bus company websites.

Government website

http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/Parents/Schoolslearninganddevelopment/SchoolLife/DG_10013990

STATEMENT OF SARAH WALL TO COUNCIL MEETING
16TH NOVEMBER 2010

ITEM 12 - SECONDARY SCHOOLS REVIEW

Why, nearly five months on are we are still waiting for a suitable answer to our question, 'Why the change of mind, why now Culverhay?'

It was clear in the cabinet meeting minutes from May 2008 that the proposal was that only one school was required north of the city so St Marks or Oldfield would close. Many councillors & indeed cabinet members spoke in favour of this. In March this year Cllr Watt's 'single member cabinet decision' still clearly places a new co-educational school on the Culverhay site. What has changed since then? Aren't we entitled to an open answer about this?

The wording on page 15 of the original consultation document was very clear. It states that the cabinet had 3 options and the third one is to consider any new option(s) that may have emerged as a result of the consultation.

We were told that the proposal for the two faith schools to federate had emerged as part of that consultation but it is now apparent that this was in the pipe line as early as September 2009 and was supported by a letter from Tony Parker which was included in the community consultation report for sixth form development at St Gregory's in February of this year., So this was being developed before the original secondary school consultation in May 2010 & did not emerge as a result of it.

We have been given no reason for the turn around on Oldfield except that it is graded outstanding by OFSTED, but Oldfield already had that grading in 2008 when the cabinet were clear that it could be closed. Cllr Watt has said there is nothing new at Culverhay but there is nothing new at Oldfield either except the desire to become an academy & remove itself from LEA control, so really absolutely nothing new there. There is no new curriculum or federation planned and there is no proof whatsoever that becoming a co-ed academy it will raise standards. Which is what we have been told this is all supposed to be about. Furthermore, there is no evidence to suggest that Oldfield could continue to provide outstanding education as a co-educational setting, this is just an assumption.

However, what Culverhay is proposing is far more radical & offers partnerships with outstanding settings who have a proven track record of radically raising standards in other schools.

Our conservative Prime Minister, David Cameron is clear in what type of school he wants;

"It's a smaller school where the head teacher knows your child's name. It's a school where there are good standards of discipline, a school where they teach the basics so we open children's minds to all the best things that have been written & said."

“It’s a school where there’s really high aspiration, we don’t accept second best we say that everyone can go all the way. It’s a school where we have common sense and we recognise that you’ve got to stretch the brightest pupils, you’ve got to help those falling behind. We all know what a good school looks like and it’s that good school that you want.”

Culverhay already fits these criteria laid down by David Cameron & with reduced
Planned Admission Numbers so could other Bath schools. Why is a local conservative council ignoring national conservative government policy?

STATEMENT OF SARAH MOORE TO COUNCIL MEETING
16TH NOVEMBER 2010

ITEM 12 - SECONDARY SCHOOLS REVIEW

I would like to urge the council to carefully consider all the options when discussing the future of Culverhay School. In the council meetings in 2008, the site on which Culverhay is situated was described as “the best site in the city for a secondary school”. If the cabinet agree to close this school during their meeting next week, this site will not only be lost to the existing children and the school’s community, but the entire city. There are no other sites in that area of the city that could be used in the future for a secondary school.

With 2000 new homes agreed to be built on the western riverside in the next few years, together with the MOD sites on Lansdown, Foxhill and Warminster Road possibly becoming available for new homes, that will mean less access to Ralph Allen, Hayesfield, Beechen Cliff and Oldfield for the children in the south west of the city leaving the children in that area with no choice of school.

However, if the council agree to the alternative proposal put forward by Culverhay school of an all through co-educational academy for children aged 2 to 19, not only will the site be retained for future generations, but Southdown Infants and Juniors would move onto the site, freeing up the land on which they are situated to be sold. This land is not subject to the same restrictions as the Culverhay site. In Section C1 of the council’s local plan, Policy GB3 clearly lists Culverhay school site as a Major Existing Developed site, which is limited to infilling and redevelopment for educational uses.

It would also reduce the maintenance of 3 schools to one and by allowing Culverhay to become a co-educational school, it would remove the requirement for the small schools grant, thereby reducing costs to the authority even further.

STATEMENT OF MARY ANNE ALLEN TO COUNCIL MEETING
16TH NOVEMBER 2010

ITEM 12 - SECONDARY SCHOOLS REVIEW

The Education and Skills Act 2008 increased the minimum age at which young people in England can leave learning, thus requiring them to continue in education or training to the age of 17 from 2013 and to 18 from 2015. Current y9s will be the first to be affected.

The learning can be in :-

- full-time education, such as school, college or home education
- work-based learning, such as an Apprenticeship
- part-time education or training if they are employed, self-employed or volunteering for more than 20 hours a week.

This will increase the need for spaces required in education. Currently there 710 spaces in secondary schools across BANES. Using projection figures from BANES, a low estimate can be given of how many more places will be required for y12-y14 study. An extra 900 could be needed by 2013. More in following years as year 13 becomes larger as a result.

This will increase the need for a greater diversity of educational opportunities available to all in Bath. A better range of vocational education is required not just more GCSE based qualifications

This need to engage in wider range of learning opportunities is required at present for lower years. Across the schools in Bath the numbers of young people not in education, employment or training is high and BANES does not meet its target. These figures have stayed pretty constant and above the target for BANES for many years. Surely this shows that the one fits all education system narrows choices for some young people and WE are limiting there development.

"In the Government Response to the Children, Schools and Families Committee's Eighth Report of Session 2009-10. ¹

This Government has a clear aim to raise attainment for all children and to close the gap between the richest and the poorest. We want more young people from disadvantaged backgrounds to progress on to the best universities and jobs.

But we cannot achieve this aim solely through national direction and control. Local authorities and education and training providers will play a key role in our plans to improve education. This is particularly important as the numbers and characteristics of young people who are currently NEET vary significantly between local areas and so services need to be tailored to their specific needs.

Recommendation 3 Young people make progress at different rates. Policies and funding mechanisms should not disadvantage those who work at a different pace from the majority of their peers.

we recognise that the needs of individual young people can vary significantly, and often the support required by a 16 year old and a 23 year old can be very different. That is why it is important that local areas are able to coordinate and tailor support and services for young people.”

There is a Need for greater understanding of individual low achievers profiles, not just stating their poor grades and shouting they must get 5 A to C's including Maths and English by 15 years of age.

Please allow Culverhay to be part of the solution for Baths Educational future offering a different type of education that is currently not available.

STATEMENT OF JO MCCARRON TO COUNCIL MEETING
16TH NOVEMBER 2010

ITEM 13 - BATH TRANSPORTATION PACKAGE

Following the Transport Minister's recent announcement, Response2route urge the council to re-think the divisive and costly BRT element of the Package.

On cost:

It is very important to note that the council have not carried out a like-for-like cost comparison with the alternatives. This means it is impossible to assess whether the scheme offers value for money.

In addition to the high costs of building the BRT, the project carries significant financial risks and extra costs which still remain un-budgeted for. This includes huge engineering costs for re-working the sewer, costs of inquiries and compensation.

Regarding the costs of inquiries, the council cannot even be sure that their case will be successful in which case the money spent moving forwards with these will be wasted.

We believe it is unacceptable to take such financial risks in the current climate.

On benefits:

It remains unclear what the particular benefits of the BRT scheme are and why it is so crucial to the BTP.

None of the roads bypassed by the BRT are identified as traffic hotspots in the Joint Local Bath Transport Plan. Yet after bypassing these roads, the scheme will hit congestion in the city centre, like Dorchester Street.

Local bus timetables and residents' surveys show that the BRT will not improve estimated bus journey times.

Further more, the scheme will not efficiently serve local people.

So what is the scheme actually for?

We have heard the argument that the Western Riverside Development is dependent on proposed BRT route but that's simply untrue. Clearly the BWR requires an efficient public transport route into town and this should be part of the plan for this development. However, this is not dependent specifically on the currently proposed route and could be served by buses running on existing roads from a car park on Twerton Fork just as efficiently (if not more efficiently).

With or without the Western Riverside it is clear the BRT will cause more congestion on the Windsor Bridge Road.

This is the only congestion point in the west of Bath and it will be made much worse with extra traffic lights and buses cutting across the traffic every few minutes.

So what do we suggest?

We urge the council to **properly** consider the alternative routes for a BRT. We believe the Lower Bristol Road would be the best option for a number of reasons:

- The road is wide enough to accommodate a segregated route and a significant part of this road already has a reserved bus lane.
- The scheme could serve the BWR with out crossing the Windsor Bridge
- The Lower Bristol Road would benefit from re-development and regeneration as a result of this investment. This would benefit Bath as a whole as it is one of the first parts of the city visitors see when arriving from the west.
- It would be welcomed by local people who would like a better bus service for Twerton and Westmorland. It has already been suggested by a local residents group as a way forward.
- Costs could be saved by swapping the Newbridge P&R extension to develop the far cheaper Twerton fork and **IF** there were any extra costs, they would be cancelled out by this saving. This is also a more logical location and would avoid cars having to negotiate the narrow river bridge where there is currently rush hour congestion.
- We believe this would be a cheaper and better option, which would be welcomed by local people.

For these reasons; the cost and the benefits, we urge the council to **properly and fully** examine the options and assess the possibility of running the scheme on existing roads.

We want to work with the council to make improvements to the city which will be welcomed by communities in Bath. We hope the council will see this as an opportunity to move forwards positively with the support of local people.

We hope the council will see this as an opportunity to move forwards positively with the support of local people.

Thank you.

STATEMENT OF ISHBEL TOVEY TO COUNCIL MEETING
16TH NOVEMBER 2010

ITEM 13 - BATH TRANSPORTATION PACKAGE

The BRT route has been sold to the people of Bath, in an expensive PR campaign, as a scheme which will 'help stop gridlock'. However, the business plan supporting this scheme admits that it will actually provide 'minimal benefits'. That conclusion should have been enough to stop it in its tracks before yet more public money is spent on inquiries, compensation and compulsory purchase orders but, unfortunately, it is still being held out as some sort of miracle cure for the ills of Bath.

I lived in a city, Athens, which was at gridlock but , over a period of 10 years of work that city is now moving again. Why? Not through a reduction in traffic volume but through improved traffic flow.

Why is this relevant? Because the plans for the BRT include plans for four new sets of traffic lights. That is four points where currently free flowing traffic will be interrupted, leading to a build up of vehicles and potentially four new traffic hotspots.

The most important of these is at the Windsor Bridge Road, this short but very important stretch of road is the only existing traffic hotspot in the West of Bath and anyone who has ever travelled on it at peak times could testify that putting a set of traffic lights in the middle of it could have nothing but a detrimental affect. This scheme could create more congestion rather than less and may result in the Windsor Bridge becoming impassable at certain times of day – a terrifying thought when you consider that it is the route of choice for emergency vehicles travelling from the South of Bath to the RUH.

Another major flaw in this scheme is that it is a car-based scheme. If bus prices on local routes remain at their current prohibitive levels, £7.60 for a mother with her two children to travel from Newbridge into the town centre, ever increasing numbers of residents of Newbridge, Weston and Twerton will continue getting into their cars to drive out to the park and ride and travel into Bath for just £2.50. This is what is causing the current shortage of spaces at peak times at the Newbridge Park and Ride. Surely, it is madness that Bath residents are being forced into their cars to drive to park and rides on the outskirts of town in order to get a bus back into town. Do we really want a scheme which leads to the beautiful country side on the outside of Bath being turned into a carpark?

I know that the council has no jurisdiction over bus prices but if you can run the Park and Ride buses at a profit on such low prices, would you be able to take over some of the main local routes and run them in a similar manner, thus getting people off the roads and negating both the need for a new road and bigger park and ride carparks?

Finally, the BRT element of the Bath Transportation Package attempts to address congestion in the West of the city, but if you ask any Bath resident

where Bath faces its main congestion problems they will tell you it is in the East. Surely, in these times of austerity we should first be looking at a solution for the east of Bath before throwing all the available money at the west.

STATEMENT OF DAVID DUNLOP TO COUNCIL MEETING
16TH NOVEMBER 2010

ITEM 13 - BATH TRANSPORTATION PACKAGE

Bath Transport Issues – A New Vision

Chapter 1

As well as cost reduction, the revised Transport Package should have three goals –

- a) The reduction of congestion
- b) Improvement of air quality
- c) Protection of the World Heritage Site including its setting within the Green Belt.

We support B&NES Low Cost Options. In addition there are two matters hitherto excluded from the BTP.

Firstly, congestion is significantly reduced during school holidays.

Accordingly urgent discussions should be held with bus contractors, First and others, for a much improved school bus service. Through ticketing and prior purchasing reduce delay at bus stops and associated traffic hold ups.

Secondly, mindful of the carbon footprint, B&NES should make a major effort to consult with Wiltshire Council and jointly press for the reopening of Corsham railway station and increased rail capacity for commuters between Chippenham and Bristol. This would contribute towards reduction of congestion and pollution and, after all, rail is an existing form of Rapid Transit.

With regard to elements of the BTP :-

- A) The expansion of the Odd Down Park and Ride site is relatively cheap and non-contentious. There is no alternative rail route from the south west.
- B) The scrapping of the Regional Spatial Strategy housing targets questions any need to expand Newbridge Park and Ride. Enhanced rail investment could render this unnecessary but if increased P&R capacity on the west is justified, the original proposal on Duchy land south of the river would be cheaper and less contentious.
- C) The Bus Rapid Transit scheme was limited in scope and always difficult to justify. It is too expensive and should be dropped. CPOs should be rescinded. Uncertainties remain regarding the Western Riverside and on the eastern side anyone who has walked the route will know that Rapid Transit along London Road and through Walcot Street is impossible – let alone the chaos of Dorchester Street ! Any hoped for (but never demonstrated) improvements in travel times cannot be realised nor affordable! All along we have stated that Bus Rapid Transit could easily be replaced by a circular route for Park and Ride buses using Newbridge Road and the Lower Bristol Road – especially if the western Park and Ride expansion is located south of the river. Future Western Riverside residents could be served by shuttle buses which would avoid Windsor Bridge traffic disruption.

In conclusion, we ask the Council to revise the Bath Transport Package.

- Viz**
- i) Keep the low cost elements and Odd Down Park & Ride**
 - ii) Design and institute school bus services for ALL schools**
 - iii) Abandon BRT**
 - iv) Lobby for improved rail services between Chippenham and Bristol and stations in between**
 - v) Question the need for enhanced western Park and Ride and its location**
 - vi) Collaborate with Wiltshire to re-assess other possible eastern Park and Ride locations**

STATEMENT OF STEVE MACKERNES TO COUNCIL MEETING
16TH NOVEMBER 2010

ITEM 13 - BATH TRANSPORTATION PACKAGE

Bath Transport Issues – A New Vision

Following from the previous speaker's consideration of Bath's Transport issues, I would like to address two matters in particular, viz. the poor air quality in the city, and the need to reduce congestion on the main A4 London Road into the city from the east.

With regard to air quality, the much-discussed reduction of HGV's from the Cleveland Bridge should be a major objective of any revised BTP. It appears that the B&NES Cabinet have voiced support for such an initiative in the past. Councillors, let us grasp the nettle and get on with it! It can't be impossible. The A36 approach road through Limpley Stoke is very clearly inappropriate for large freight movements, and the London Road is no less inappropriate with its listed properties and use as a major access to the city from the east. Remember that the lion's share of pollutants is from these huge trucks. Any other solution could never come close to this in terms of cost effectiveness. A simple ban of HGVs from the A36 would achieve a huge improvement in air quality.

It is noted that the plan to build a new container terminal in Avonmouth is likely to have a major beneficial effect on this predominantly north-south traffic - since freight heading north or west of Bath would gradually be diverted to the new facility and thereby be removed from the roads around Bath altogether.

With regard to the congestion along the A4 London Road, much store has been placed on a new P&R site at Bathampton Meadows. This site, however, has been shown to NOT address any of the three objectives as described by the previous speaker. It will not (according to B&NES' own planners) reduce congestion, nor will it improve air quality, and has catastrophic consequences for the Green Belt setting of the World Heritage Site. It doesn't reduce congestion since it is too small (and cannot be expanded into flood plain) for the required capacity. It does not improve air quality along the London Road or anywhere else, since this is produced mainly by the HGVs, and is also in direct correlation with the congestion. And it has a calamitous effect on the ancient water meadows and setting of our city. We have been advised by UNESCO to pay better attention to protecting the setting, and many previous decisions have avoided development in this area for the very reason of protecting the environment, the Green Belt, the AONB, the WHS buffer zone, and the visual amenity of many hundreds of residents and leisure-seekers. It is an old discredited idea which should be scrapped.

...but replaced by a P&R scheme sited in a declivity on Charmy Down, and on the site of a disused WWII airfield. You have heard of this suggestion before, of course, - but maybe you have not considered the relative merits of this site over the current BTP proposition at Bathampton Meadows.

- a) Firstly it has no constraints on size – and can be built to cope with the required and future capacity. It will, as a consequence, reduce congestion on the A4 London Road (together with its element of air pollution). Very importantly, it could cope with all traffic arriving from the North for which, an expansion of Lansdown P&R is also included in the BTP. Expansion of Lansdown should, therefore, be eliminated.
- b) With B&NES latest estimates on arrival rates, it is also clear that traffic from the North, when combined with traffic which would use the A420 from Chippenham instead of the A4 – the majority of potential users will actually drive straight past its entrance.
- c) Traffic which continues to approach Bath along the A4 from Chippenham or the A363 from Bradford-on-Avon could use the site at the cost of a 2.1 mile diversion – which incidentally is less than the diversion that many of these drivers use today employing a rat run through Swainswick, Larkhall and Camden Terrace.
- d) Christmas traffic, tourist coaches, and special events can easily be accommodated.

In summary, I suggest that the following comprehensive plan could provide a revised Bath Transport Package which will have a much enhanced chance of being selected by the DfT from the DEVELOPMENT POOL of local schemes.

- a) All of the low cost alternatives;
 - b) Much increased provision of school bus services;
 - c) Expansion of Odd Down P&R as originally intended;
 - d) Replacement of the BRT with conventional P&R buses;
 - e) Expansion of Newbridge P&R on its original site south of the river;
 - f) Ban on HGVs along the A36 road into Bath;
 - g) Cancellation of the expansion of Lansdown P&R and the proposed new P&R site on Bathampton Meadows;
 - h) But the provision of a new P&R site at Charmy Down to serve additional traffic from the north and much from the east and south-east.
- This, allowing expansion of Lansdown P&R to be scrapped.

....and all complemented by serious and vigorous promotion of rail expansion to improve services from Chippenham through to Bath in line with the plans for electrification and signal improvements.

We contend that the above measures would be costed at less than half of the current BTP; would involve additional funding from First or other bus operators; and would stand a much improved chance of attracting funding in this difficult fiscal environment.

Please provide your serious consideration to this revised vision for a Transportation Package to address Bath's serious traffic-related issues.

Thank you.

STATEMENT OF JOHN WESTON TO COUNCIL MEETING
16TH NOVEMBER 2010

ITEM 13 - BATH TRANSPORTATION PACKAGE

Madam Chairman and Councillors.

Contrary to reports you may have received from various sources, I have been for some years and still am trying to help you resolve your traffic congestion problems.

With regard to the Bath Transport Package and in particular, if you wish to continue with your proposals for extending the existing Park and Ride Car Park at Newbridge and receive Grant Money, I understand that you will need to reduce the estimated cost of works in order for the Department for Transport to give further consideration to your Transport Package. I have prepared a document dated 15th September 2010 which I hope you have before you, showing comparisons of sites for a Car Park north and south of the River Avon.

From this document you will see that if you revert to your original site for the Car Park south of the river on Duchy of Cornwall land, not only will it provide for a much larger Car Park than that on the northern side of the river but, the cost per parking space should be much less.

This difference in costs is due to the very expensive decontamination works required to be carried out on the northern site, as part of the planning conditions when you received Planning Consent. This site was for many years used as a commercial and domestic refuse tip.

Very expensive construction and maintenance costs would be involved on the northern site involving the provision of special water filtration material by way of permeable and impermeable membranes in the base construction, in order to prevent ground water from being drained from the site and affecting the adjacent Nature Conservation area.

At the time of the submission by your consultants for Planning Permission, they advised you that the Car Park would need to be excavated from time to time in order to replace the various membranes, giving rise to loss of parts of the Car Park as work proceeded.

Also, your consultants advised you that the Car Park would flood at certain times and that to try and minimise this effect they proposed that large underground water storage tanks be constructed.

None of these restraints would apply to your original site south of the river, it being on virgin land with drainage direct to the river.

The Land Agent for the Duchy of Cornwall in Newton St Loe confirmed to me on 4th November 2010 that he would be quite prepared to re-open negotiations with the Council for the sale of the necessary land in order for the

Car Park to be constructed as originally intended on the southern side of the river.

Your original proposals for that Car Park included for part of it to be on two decks but, even if this was not carried out, the area is of sufficient size [8.33 acres] for it to be capable of providing parking for many more cars than the proposed extension of the existing Car Park, an area of only approximately 4 acres.

I respectfully request that you seriously consider reverting to your original site south of the river, which I feel confident would show a saving of costs at this critical financial time and provide for future transport needs.

To further show my resolve to help you, I have made available to your Chief Executive Officer a plan of the existing Newbridge Car Park showing that if the parking spaces were re-marked to the standard required size, then an additional 103 spaces could be provided giving a 20% increase on that now provided.

Thank you.

**STATEMENT OF ROWENA HAYWARD, GMB SOUTH WEST REGION
ORGANISER TO COUNCIL MEETING 16TH NOVEMBER 2010**

ITEM 8 - THE FUTURE COUNCIL

The GMB wish to make the following statement :

The Case for Change

Whilst the GMB acknowledge the financial dilemma facing all local authorities at this time we are nonetheless concerned that Bath and North East Somerset Council are making financial cuts **before** the impact of the Government's Comprehensive Spending Review has been fully identified. The GMB therefore see this process as a 'phased' approach in order to give a 'reduced' impression to the overall cuts. The £38m reduction in annual net expenditure (excluding schools) to be achieved over four years may rise significantly after December once the impact of the CSR has been properly analysed.

The GMB is equally concerned about the timing surrounding the whole issue of budget setting (or cutting) as there is very little time to consult or consider alternative proposals in the lead up to the budget setting for 2011.

We note with interest the reference to the 'Big Society' and the concept of greater personal and community ownership (self help). The principle is to be supported but the reality is another thing when it results in people being paid £1 per hour (recent initiative to get people back into work) to undertake work that has been carried out by local authority workforce – who in turn may find themselves deemed as 'long term unemployed' due to the public sector cuts!

Academies

The GMB are concerned about the impact upon Local Authorities in light of the Academies Act. It is unclear and is a 'framework' and is incomplete. There are more questions than answers and we welcome the opportunity to be part of that discussion through the project team.

Property Asset Delivery Vehicle

The GMB note with interest the proposal to create one or more asset backed vehicles to hold existing Council commercial and development assets but slightly what this actually means. If we are correct, it would appear the Council will enter into some sort of lease with an external body to manage the Council's Commercial Estate thereby 'releasing' around £100m over the next five years. Whilst this would meet the financial needs the GMB is concerned about the impact upon the specific workgroups affected and where the income would be used. It would appear this money would be invested into the Public Realm and Movement Strategy but what exactly would that provide?

The Role of the Council

The GMB note with interest the focus this Council is placing upon the strategic approach rather than the 'operational' function. We therefore see this as a direct move from the delivery of service provision to the 'commissioning' role in order to 'fix' a price for delivery of services in order to meet the financial constraints (balance the books) rather than focus upon the quality and standard of services. This is not what the public sector was set up to achieve it was about ensuring the most vulnerable in our society was able to access good quality services irrespective of he ability to pay. We have all seen the debacle of when services are outsourced into the private and voluntary sector – the private sector are focussed upon the profit element (of course that is there main priority) as they have responsibility to their shareholders to make a profit. Equally the voluntary sector may not always be equipped to absorb any initial losses they incur in the initial stages of taking over public sector services. The impact is therefore upon the service user and the workers who struggle to maintain the service quality and standard.

The workers in many cases find their terms and conditions are targeted in order to make the service profitable.

The GMB would urge the public to consider what this actually means when Bath and North East Somerset Council promote the change of emphasis from operational to strategic. How will that impact upon those most vulnerable within our community and the impact upon the workforce and local economy of Bath and North East Somerset with more local authority workers losing their jobs with a reduction in growth in new jobs in the area.

**STATEMENT OF CHRIS HOWE, UNISON REGIONAL ORGANISER TO
COUNCIL MEETING 16TH NOVEMBER 2010**

**ITEM 9- COMMUNITY HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE SERVICES - FUTURE
PROVISION**

1. The Council the staff and the services users are facing the biggest upheaval and attack on Public Services for decades. The overall future looks bleak but the fight back against Budget Cuts is growing as we all know.
2. We contend that the way in which the Council has been considering the future of the provision of Adult Social care has been seriously influenced by the short term thinking of the ConDem coalition and its clear political agenda for the public sector, its ethos and the very concept of the Welfare State.
3. The impact of the Budget nightmare is further compounded by the effects of the White paper on the Future of the NHS which has signalled the abolition of Primary Care trusts and Strategic Health Authorities. It is at that crossroad where the future of Adult Social Care and the NHS meet .It is at that crossroad where Local Authorities and the PCTs can now decide which way to turn.
4. In many ways the Board of the PCT has fewer and more obvious decisions to take regarding how it integrates . I say this because as a Trust it will cease to exist and is therefore forced to effectively oversee its own destruction. This is not the place to attack the White Paper, that battle is taking place elsewhere but it is an extremely important element of the decision which you as a Council is considering .BANES Council on the other hand is not being abolished, well not yet anyway, and therefore the decision making has wider scope for progressive outcomes while maintaining high quality service delivery and democratic accountability.
5. Partnership working between the LAs and the local NHS has been active, to a greater or lesser extent, for some years with varying success. In BANES our members working in Adult Social Care have experienced productive working relationships with NHS staff in the front line. This has not always been the case at senior management levels where some partnerships have been 'difficult' as a result of management failures rather than as a result of the way front line staff work together on a day to day basis.
6. The papers before you contain a number of options on the future of Adult Social Care. The Joint trade Unions have already commented on the options to the Overview and Scrutiny Panel On 28th October 2010. You have copies of that statement. I particularly draw your attention to the strong comments on the prospects of Social Partnership and the 'leap into the unknown' it would represent.

7. The overwhelming wish of the staff in Adult Social Care is that they should remain employed by the Council. This is not because they are somehow afraid of change. It is because they sincerely believe that they are much more likely to be able to continue providing high level services in a Public sector organisation . They also understand through their own direct experience that there is no reason why they cannot continue to work in partnership with NHS providers into the future. The Council however seems to have discounted this as an option. We ask why !
8. The options which has been put forward swing between forms of integrated services ,either vertically or horizontally, and the formation of a Social Enterprise. We will state as strongly as we can that we are opposed to the Social Enterprise model .This is also the position taken by the Union Nationally. I here draw your attention to the Unison leaflet ‘ Social Enterprises: know the risks’ which you all have a copy of. The risks to your staff are clear, the risks of privatisation are clear, the impact of a profit driven motive is clear. The obvious uncertainty carries clear risks to the delivery of Adult Social Care for which you are ultimately responsible ! We totally reject the myth that some form of salvation for the economy or the delivery of public services to the public rests with the private sector.
9. A fundamental element of moving towards a Social Enterprise model is that it must have the support and agreement of the employees. There is no evidence that such support has been given either by BANES or NHS staff. A minority of staff have attended briefing sessions and invited to ask questions but no ‘consent’ has been evidenced. Where the staff do not support this model then the Social Enterprise is thoroughly undermined and SHOULD NOT GO AHEAD.
10. You will all have noted that even in its owns point scoring matrix the Council paper does not indicate any clear ‘winner’ among the options considered.
11. In view of Government imposed deadlines we believe that that there has been widespread panic and a rush to leap into the dark via Social enterprise. This is the worst environment in which to make far reaching decisions.
12. As part of its BIG SOCIETY by-line the ConDems aim to create the largest Social Enterprise sector in Europe and beyond. If this Council in any way supports the concept then perhaps it should consider holding a referendum of the people of Bath and North East Somerset to gather their views ! I don’t think so!
13. The creation of a Social Enterprise means that the Council will be paying someone else to deliver the service. Every ‘business’ knows that it is always more expensive and more risky to pay another profit making organisation to do what it can readily do itself. It just makes sense.

- 14.** The thrust of this address is to press the Council to think again. Think about why you should retain the control of Adult Social Care and not why you should not. Think about your staff and the service they deliver, think about how you should continue to employ them and not why you should not. Think about why you should keep the service as part of the Public Sector and not be driven merely by the political
- 15.** Gloucester, Wiltshire, Somerset and Devon Councils have all rejected a Social Enterprise model and instead have gone for vertical integration. I only state this to demonstrate that there are clear alternatives . We are concerned that the PCT will opt for the Social Enterprise model ,although we and other unions are opposing. This Council should not allow the potential decisions of others to prevent it making its own decisions in the interests of the staff and the service users
- 16.** On behalf of Unison members and indeed members of other trade unions working in Adult Social care and on behalf of your service users we call upon you to retain you staff within the Local Authority family ,make a decision in the interests of financial prudence and don't waste precious resources funding a Social Enterprise .

**STATEMENT OF B &NES JOINT TRADE UNIONS TO COUNCIL
MEETING 16TH NOVEMBER 2010**

**ITEM 9 - COMMUNITY HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE SERVICES -
FUTURE PROVISION**

The Committee will no doubt have been advised about the benefits of integration and joint working that has come about as a result of Adult Care and PCT Health Services working together in recent months. However, Staff Side do have a number of major concerns about the way in which the requirements under TCS have been interpreted and that the options appraisal process we believe has not fully considered all the options.

Therefore, we believe as our Joint Secretary said recently, that you can have “an engagement without a marriage” which would preserve all the benefits of working together (which everybody including Staff Side fully agree with) without a formal merger. Indeed, shotgun marriages very rarely work! The idea that the only way joint working can be achieved is by a formal merger is quite mechanical, and is a product of thinking from on high which does not take account of real joint working – at the front line real working relationships have been built over years and come about through pride in the service you are delivering for service users. At the same time this can be destroyed very quickly by ill thought out reorganisations which undermines people’s good will and morale.

We believe that this is driven by national policy regarding the NHS, and because of the current integrated working with the PCT, B&NES is being asked to make a leap into the unknown in order to preserve the Partnership. Therefore, we believe this is driven more by the needs of senior managers (and their job security?) than being an absolute requirement. It feels like we have bounced into thinking there is no real alternative to Social Enterprise and indeed many of our members think the decision has already been made. However, these proposals are being made at a time when there is great change on the horizon and it is debatable whether this will be fit for purpose within a couple of years’ time.

At a time when consistency and quality of care for elderly and vulnerable people is being highlighted in the news, due to the increased role of the private sector and their considerable shortcomings, Staff Side has major concerns that a Social Enterprise is really back door privatisation, for which there is no mandate or desire from the Public. Unlike a statutory organisation, there are no guarantees as to what would happen if the Social Enterprise did not work and went bankrupt. What would happen to the services our members provide, and what would happen to our members? Feedback from our members indicates they have major concerns about what would happen regarding their pensions, after TUPE and the whole sustainability of the Social Enterprise, together with the impact on the people whom we provide services for.

Furthermore, as other privatised services have demonstrated, perhaps the greatest loss that can and does occur regards staff morale and motivation. There is considerable pride in both social services departments and the NHS in “providing a public service”. Surveys have shown the biggest amount of unpaid overtime occurs within the public sector and people have always been prepared to go the extra mile – the greatest loyalty to the public sector is at the bottom of the organisation. When a service is taken out of the public sector, many people vote with their feet and leave (eg Agincare) but perhaps more importantly the quality of the service can suffer, due to the loss of pride in working for the public sector and instead working for a business.

Therefore, Staff Side is proposing that council staff should remain with the council during these uncertain times. Why can't it be possible for a social services department to be sustainable (particularly if Children's Services are included) and this would have the advantage of potential referrers (eg GPs) understanding the system. We have already had strong indications from our colleagues in the health sector that they wish to remain with the NHS (eg BAOT, BMA, SCP) and this does not undermine the principle of joint working as mentioned earlier. What it would do is preserve the working relationships that have been built up to-date without having to take a leap into the unknown with services which are by definition provided to assist the vulnerable and the elderly.

**STATEMENT OF ROWENA HAYWARD, GMB SOUTH WEST REGION
ORGANISER TO COUNCIL MEETING 16TH NOVEMBER 2010**

**ITEM 9 - COMMUNITY HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE SERVICES - FUTURE
PROVISION**

The GMB wish to make the following statement :

Health, Adult Social Care and Housing

The GMB are very concerned about the proposal to enter into a social enterprise to provide these services. Whilst we acknowledge the concerns of the local authority and the risk to take over this service we would urge Council to reconsider it's position.

If the main concern is the continuation of commissioned work from the GP's then this would also be a high risk for any other organisation taking on this work, including a social enterprise. We understand there are some concerns around the transfer of staff especially around their existing local government pension scheme.

The GMB consider the timeline is too tight and would strongly urge Council to reconsider and at the very least extend the consultation process in order to ensure all options have been properly explored and the final decision is the best possible one for both service user and provider including employees.

**STATEMENT OF DIANA HALL HALL, CHAIR OF B&NES LINK TO
COUNCIL MEETING 16TH NOVEMBER 2010**

**ITEM 9 - COMMUNITY HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE SERVICES - FUTURE
PROVISION**

General Comments

1. Integrated Health and Social Care Commissioning

We consider it essential for the public well being that the good progress already made by B&NES in this area should not be lost or diminished under any new arrangements.

2. Timescales

The LINK feels that the consultation and decision-making process has been reduced to almost impossible timescales, and wishes to register its concern over this. The timescales seem to be of an arbitrary and politically driven nature, making meaningful consultation very difficult. **We feel that politics is being put before patients.**

Comments on the Proposed Options

Assessment of the Options and Risks

- (i) We suggest that very high risks attach to the Social Enterprise option when compared with the options of using established and stable statutory health and social care providers. We think that insufficient weight has been given to these risks. In particular, we wish to highlight the following:

Affordability Challenges - the statutory providers have been given a risk-level of "3", whilst the Social Enterprise has been given an only slightly lower level of "2", despite what the LINK sees as a very much higher level of risk.

Sustainability - the Social Enterprise option has been scored at the same risk-level as the NHS Trusts, but the established Trusts seem to us to provide a much better chance of sustainability.

Efficiency - the Social Enterprise option has been given a higher score than any of the statutory providers. We can see no justification for this.

We suggest that the scoring of the risk assessment systematically understates the high level of financial and organisational risk involved in the Social Enterprise option, and that the statutory providers offer a far lower risk.

We would like to ask the PCT and the Council: in what other circumstances would you award a contract with a value of £50 million to a new organisation with no trading or financial management record?

Bearing on the last point, will a substantial and realistic Performance Bond be required from any non-statutory contractor?

- (ii) A number of the original options have been ruled out because they would be "difficult to deliver in the timescales required for the NHS".

The LINK would like to ask why this would not apply just as much to a new Social Enterprise as to any other of the options excluded for this reason, for example, the GP Consortium option. The GP Consortium option could be treated as a managed transfer of services in exactly the same way as the Social Enterprise option, and this would resolve the problem of meeting the April 2011 deadline for the GP Consortium option.

**STATEMENT OF JOCELYNE TAGG, DIRECTOR OF OFF THE RECORD
B&NES - COUNSELLING SERVICE TO COUNCIL MEETING
16TH NOVEMBER 2010**

ITEM 14 - YOUTH SERVICE PROJECTS

As a consequence of the cuts to the Youth Service it is proposed that the Off The Record Counselling contract is terminated as of 31st March 2010.

Off the Record has been providing its free and confidential information, support and counselling service to children and young people across Bath and NE Somerset since 1998. The charity was set-up by volunteers and is an excellent example of local people creating a service to meet local need. It is well known and has an excellent reputation across B&NES.

We have 20 qualified counsellors who volunteer their time - between them they have over 70 years of experience supporting young people. Over the last twelve months 140 young people aged 10 to 19 years have used our counselling service with over 2000 counselling sessions made available in any one year.

Counselling is a last resort for many young people - it takes courage to ask for help from such a service. Young people come to us with a range of issues including family and relationship difficulties, depression, anxiety, anger, abuse, bullying, health issues (including eating disorders), self-harm and problems in education. Young People feel able to share with us concerns which they have not felt safe enough to disclose to statutory agencies. Our independence and confidentiality enables young people to access vital support.

We regularly respond to child protection and safeguarding issues as well as young people's suicidal thoughts and plans. These, along with other challenging emotions, can require referral to Social Services and/or Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services.

Counselling provides an empowering process. As a result, recorded outcomes show that young people:

- Are better able to engage in education.
- Increase their aspirations for their future.
- Develop their ability to solve their own problems.
- Develop a range of coping strategies to deal with the complexities of young people's lives.
- Are able to avoid using other health services.
- Are more easily able to access appropriate specialist services (statutory and non-statutory).

Counselling is a preventative service which equips young people to deal with difficult issues with confidence and improve their emotional health.

We understand that there is a need for cuts, and there are a range of opportunities which we will follow to seek alternative funding. However the

short timescale threatens the likelihood of raising funds with enough time to avoid losing the expertise of volunteers and staff. The short timescale will mean that we will have to close the service and re-start when alternative funding arrangements are found.

We ask the Council to therefore support the proposal for funding that will allow the organization a more realistic opportunity to find alternative funding.

STATEMENT OF JUNE PLAYER TO COUNCIL MEETING
16TH NOVEMBER 2010

ITEM 15 - HOUSES IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION

Until a few years ago, there was a far more even balance between HMOs, and family houses in areas such as Westmoreland and Oldfield Park. There was far more harmony and community spirit. People knew, and chatted, and related to each other, and there was a friendly feel all around. People with children had other children to play with. Elderly people felt safe and unthreatened as they recognised and acknowledged their neighbours, who were far more than just the people they lived next door to. There was a vibrant mix of all the different sections of society, including transient groups such as students and young professionals, with younger people having role models to learn how to respect and take a pride in themselves and their neighbourhoods.

Neighbourhoods which had a cheerful and well-looked-after feel to them. Where gardens were pretty and cared for. Rubbish and recycling came out on the right day and the streets and roads were kept tidy. Houses were properly maintained, and areas were pleasant to walk about in, and the main factor for all this, was - because a good percentage of the people living in the houses were either the owners or long-term residents who had an interest and concern in their neighbourhoods.

The rise in HMOs has led to house prices being out of reach for so many, that most are now snapped up by investors, the majority of whom do not live next to, or even in the area of, their properties, and so are unable and do not keep an eye on them or their tenants.

The consequences of this has led to areas now looking neglected and unkempt, unattractive, deserted for weeks on end and with no real community spirit.

I am not saying that there is NO Place for HMOs and their tenants, usually transient groups of people, because they can and do contribute to an area, and it is an important learning process for these groups, BUT, when their numbers are far greater than those of the other sections of society, and take over street after street, then it is time to say that there should be rules in place to deal with and prevent this situation so that the character, fabric and community spirit is not destroyed.

ⁱ Simon de Bruxelles article The Times 15th May 2010 , “Alpaca Farms Offer Country Landowners Potential for Planning Permission”)