

BOURNEMOUTH, CHRISTCHURCH AND POOLE COUNCIL
COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting held on 25 February 2025 at 7.00 pm

Present:-

Cllr L Dedman – Chairman

Cllr S Bull – Vice-Chairman

Present: Cllr C Adams, Cllr S Aitkenhead, Cllr M Andrews, Cllr S Armstrong, Cllr S Bartlett, Cllr J Beesley, Cllr P Broadhead, Cllr D Brown, Cllr O Brown, Cllr R Burton, Cllr P Canavan, Cllr S Carr-Brown, Cllr J Challinor, Cllr A Chapmanlaw, Cllr B Chick, Cllr J Clements, Cllr E Connolly, Cllr P Cooper, Cllr M Cox, Cllr D d'Orton-Gibson, Cllr B Dove, Cllr M Dower, Cllr M Earl, Cllr J Edwards, Cllr G Farquhar, Cllr D Farr, Cllr A Filer, Cllr D A Flagg, Cllr M Gillett, Cllr C Goodall, Cllr A Hadley, Cllr J Hanna, Cllr E Harman, Cllr R Herrett, Cllr B Hitchcock, Cllr M Howell, Cllr A Keddie, Cllr M Le Poidevin, Cllr S Mackrow, Cllr A Martin, Cllr D Martin, Cllr J Martin, Cllr S McCormack, Cllr A-M Moriarty, Cllr B Nanovo, Cllr L Northover, Cllr M Phipps, Cllr K Rampton, Cllr Dr F Rice, Cllr C Rigby, Cllr K Salmon, Cllr J Salmon, Cllr P Sidaway, Cllr P Slade, Cllr T Slade, Cllr M Tarling, Cllr T Trent, Cllr O Walters, Cllr C Weight, Cllr K Wilson and Cllr G Wright

69. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Hazel Allen, Julie Bagwell, Judes Butt, Paul Hilliard, Gillian Martin, Chris Matthews, Sandra Moore, Rachel Pattinson-West, Judy Richardson, Vanessa Ricketts and Vikki Slade.

It was confirmed that Councillor Bobbie Dove was due to join partway through the meeting.

70. Declarations of Interests

None.

71. Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED: - That the minutes of the meeting held on 11 February 2025 be approved as a correct record.

Voting: Agreed with no dissent

72. Announcements and Introductions from the Chairman

The Chairman updated Council on her activity since the meeting held on 10 December 2024, which included attendance at the following events:

- Celebration of the Marriott Hotel refurbishment;

- Opening Southbourne on the Green Christmas lights;
- Sorptomist Christmas celebration;
- Entertaining Glenmoor and Winton School pupils;
- Hall and Woodhouse Community Chest distribution;
- Holocaust Memorial Day at the Lighthouse;
- Holocaust Memorial Day in the BCP chamber;
- Business Awards;
- Stained Glass Launch in Highcliffe Castle.

The Vice Chairman updated Council on his activity since the meeting held on 10 December 2024, which included attendance at a celebration for the Vice-Chancellor of Arts University Bournemouth.

73. Public Issues

Public Questions

Public Question from Clive Block

Can the Council clarify what plans are in place to replace the signs for Poole's lifting bridges? Furthermore, could the Council provide a clear timescale for when this will be completed?

Response by the Portfolio Holder for Climate Response, Environment and Energy, Councillor Andy Hadley

Thank you Mr Block for your question, which I understand you have also asked via your MP, and the Engineering team have already answered.

The team responsible for the bridge signs have been working over several years to try and rectify the malfunctions with the signs which have not been straightforward to resolve, as there has often been no single identifiable cause. I have also myself noticed incorrect information as I have crossed the bridge, from time to time, and have advised the bridge operators of the issue.

We apologise for the negative impact these malfunctions have had on the public, including yourself.

We have identified a way forward and plan, (subject to financial approvals and successful procurement), to replace the current rotating prism signs with modern LED alternatives in the coming financial year.

Public Question from Susan Stockwell

I am advised by White Ribbon that a council which has received their accreditation, is expected to be working towards a licensing policy on strip clubs with a presumption against licensing. Furthermore, BCP's first sex establishment licensing policy was quashed by Judicial Review, following the unlawful failure to consider complaints by women of harassment by strip club customers. Will this council now be apologising to those women?

If it can be arranged for both the cabinet member for diversity and the member for regulatory services to answer this, I would be grateful. It is not clear where responsibility for the decision making which led to the above Judicial Review lies between the two functions.

Response by the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Regulatory Services, Councillor Kieron Wilson

Thank you for your question, Susan. When forming the previous sexual entertainment policy, Licensing Committee members considered all responses and consulted with the community safety colleagues and Dorset Police to assess the evidence of issues linked to the sexual establishment venues. These inquiries did not support the feedback received with little evidence of incidences.

To say that the Council disregarded women who said they were victims of harassment by strip club clients is incorrect. The consultation feedback focused on feelings of safety in the area which is busy in the nighttime economy location. The judicial review found the documented consideration of the feedback received was not prescriptive enough to outline why these views did not form a larger part of policy considerations. It does not mean that these views were disregarded. They were considered and the evidence did not support it. It was recognised at the conclusion of the judicial review as it was reached with some reluctance because BCP had taken an otherwise diligent and extensive consultation.

The judgement against our previous sexual entertainment policy does not have any impact on our ability to enforce breaches of licences in place and their conditions. Since the judgement we have renewed licences and continue to apply stringent conditions to protect both patrons and performers within these licensed premises. We are undertaking member training to empower the Licensing Committee to support decision making around sexual entertainment venue licensing which will include when licences can be refused on the grounds that it would be inappropriate having regard to the character of the relevant locality or to the use of any premises within the vicinity. There is no legal requirement to have a sexual entertainment policy and we are working with White Ribbon on our action plan and the extensive wider work that we do to keep women and girls safe. Thank you once again for your question.

Public Question from Alex Harman

Firstly, I'd like to thank the council for your response from the 10th December Council meeting which outlined some of the Environment & Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee's considerations regarding increased plant-based options in council-controlled food services, limiting unsustainable food advertising, and launching public education campaigns. These are positive steps.

However, given the urgency of the climate crisis, which is affecting lives around the world, with clear scientific evidence about the impact of our food systems, decisive action is crucial.

Could you please share what decisions the committee has made regarding these considerations, including any timelines for implementation if possible? We count on you to demonstrate the necessary leadership on this critical issue. The Plant Based Treaty team offers their full support and resources to aid in this process.

Furthermore, to highlight these important internal ongoing efforts, will the council finally endorse the Plant Based Treaty?

Response by the Portfolio Holder for Climate Response, Environment and Energy, Councillor Andy Hadley

Alex, thank you for your question.

The Place and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee continue to explore the most significant impacts of humans accelerating climate change, and how we reduce our impact. They are about to review our annual report for progress on Climate mitigation.

Global food supply accounts for around 30% of Carbon Emissions, and about 20% of that relates to international transport of food, including fruit and vegetables.

There is no doubt that the footprint of meat eating is a significant multiplier, and that a low meat, vegetarian or vegan diet is beneficial in terms of carbon footprint. So is eating locally produced and seasonal food, and this together with reducing processing and packaging all contribute to improving the Carbon footprint.

The OSC is not a decision making body, but make recommendations to Cabinet. We are grateful for the offer of support from your group.

In a democracy we need to advise people, give them opportunities, but ultimately to respect that people will choose what they eat and why.

Public Question from Julia Burg

This year will be the first year we will exceed the 1.5 degrees global temperature increase, a limit set by the Paris agreement. This is not a political target, this is a physical limit of the planet. Action must be taken to ensure we achieve a stable climate. The Food system is one of the leading causes of the climate crisis. We are aware that the issue of diets is something that affects our culture and daily lives.

Will the Council Endorse the Plant Based Treaty, and be transparent with the public and local community, to address and explain environmental and health consequences of animal agriculture and products on the population, to educate children and the next generation in the community about the climate emergency, and support a transition to a plant-based food system?

Response by the Portfolio Holder for Climate Response, Environment and Energy, Councillor Andy Hadley

Julia, thank you for your question.

It is indeed a rising challenge that there has been inadequate clear leadership and education nationally and internationally on the climate crisis facing our planetary home.

The biggest contributions that individuals and the Council can make to reducing our carbon footprint are around how we heat our homes and other spaces, how and where we choose to travel, and whether we are prepared to reduce our consumption of all things, not just food.

Reducing consumption of meat, and any food products which are imported, highly processed or otherwise stored out of season are all good steps to reduce environmental damage.

I agree that Education, particularly for the next generation, about the Climate Emergency and what individuals can do to reduce their footprint is important. They will be the ones to inherit what we leave behind.

We are ensuring that plant-based options are available and promoted in Council run outlets, and that we support a transition to a plant-based food system.

Public Question from Sarah Abbott

The IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change), is telling us that our food system has to move from being a source of emissions, to being a carbon sink.

Cities and councils are absolutely essential in climate solutions. A few changes, even at a local level, can have a huge broader impact on other councils and can influence change at a national level.

Cities such as Amsterdam and Edinburgh have endorsed the Plant Based Treaty, followed by impact assessments, action plans and implementations, such as increased plant-based options in public institutions, reducing advertising of environmentally harmful products, and introducing more plant-based options in schools, even having one day a week 'Earth days' where 100% plant-based options are offered.

Is there any reason why the BCP Council cannot endorse the Plant Based Treaty like so many other councils are doing?

Response by the Lead Members for Destination, Leisure and Commercial Operations, Councillor Richard Herrett

Sarah, thank you for your question. The Council are seeking to introduce more plant based options around our own catering outlets, which are mostly on the seafront. In that setting, there is direct competition with private catering organisations, and in order to retain customers, and maintain income that helps fund vital Council services, we need to balance our offer.

The principal demand is for ice-cream and coffee, and whilst we do have vegan offers, and are looking at how we can promote these, it ultimately requires customers to choose them.

If a plant based offer is engaging, tasty and wanted, then it could not only increase overall sales, it would also shift the balance to a larger proportion of sales being plant based. This would be an outcome that provides a win win scenario.

As I said at the beginning, we are working to increase options for plant based products, but this does take time. We are also reviewing the carbon footprint of our packaging, supply chain and waste streams alongside this other work. These are also important mitigation matters

We are not, as a council in a position to mandate to schools their menus, or curriculum. Thank you again.

Public Question from Brian Knight

Did Councillors ever discuss the implementation of the second home levy by way of a graduated introduction over, say, a 3-to-5-year period from 1 April 2025 for Senior Citizens, because this is a significant level of increase, and why was there no process encompassing adequate consultation, with a referendum, which would have been a more fair and democratic process?

Graduating payment would assist pensioners to financially plan for the future and pending health care costs. It would also reduce the stress and anxiety yet to be managed on looming inflationary pressures related to utility bills, food, insurance, etc.

Our experience of communications, including the validation process of the recording of second home ownership, has fallen short. There appears to have been little regard given to the consequences and outcomes of billing double council tax (plus 5% increase) in this way.

Response by the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Councillor Mike Cox

Councillors discussed the implementation of the second homes premium in June 2022, July 2023 and when the final determination was made by Full Council in January 2024.

The process has been fully compliant with the provisions of the relevant legislation namely the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill. In fact, the council has gone further than actually required and the approach of numerous other councils, by writing to all the people it believes will be liable to the premium in the summer of 2024.

Please bear in mind there is limited local discretion as to how council tax legislation can be applied. Council Tax is based on the band of the property and the occupants age is not relevant. It should be emphasised the purpose of the second homes premium is to help councils address the impact on local communities from people deciding to own more than one home.

Public Question from Steve Harper

Have the council's planning officers reviewed all the relevant documents regarding the Canford incinerator, particularly the health assessment by Gair Consulting Ltd, which altered child weight parameters to 20kg, and the now-removed Calderdale Council peer review by Bureau Veritas UK Ltd?

Additionally, have officers assessed the omission of key water treatment plants—Longham Lakes Reservoir (2.55km from the proposed incinerator), Longham Water Treatment Works (2.91km from the proposed incinerator), and Bournemouth Water Treatment Plant (1.8km from the proposed incinerator)—from the application documentation?

Finally, have officers received Bournemouth's catchment risk assessment from the water companies, particularly regarding trade effluent, wastewater discharges, and industry, in line with the Drinking Water Inspectorate's August 2024 PFAS monitoring and risk assessment guidance? If so, will these documents be shared with the planning committee and the public before they make a decision?

Response by the Leader of the Council, Councillor Millie Earl

Thank you, Mr. Harper. As required by legislation, the recommendation will be made in accordance with the development plan and planning policy, unless there are material considerations that indicate otherwise. If the planning officer considers that additional information is needed, this will be raised with the applicant who will then need to provide further information on the impact of development and the operation of an incinerator and to merit a recommendation to approve the development plan. The applicant will need to demonstrate to the council as the local planning authority that it meets planning requirements.

The Environment Agency is currently undertaking surveillance of PFASs or forever chemicals, such as part of their groundwater quality monitoring network and water companies are also monitoring for a range of these in raw water. The August 2024 document is guidance from the drinking water inspector to water companies. If the water companies or the environmental agency consider that the proposal increases these concerns, then we expect them to raise this with us as part of their representations and provide supporting documentation such as the risk assessment you've mentioned. Thank you.

Public Statements

Public Statement from Nicholas West

Question: Why implement a 20mph limit in residential areas? Answer: To enhance road safety. However, this approach may not lead to the desired outcomes. Why is that? It could result in significant congestion at roundabouts and traffic lights as evidenced by traffic from certain directions approaching Cooper Dean, causing added pollution. According to the 'Drivers Awareness Scheme', the main cause of collisions is lack of driver and pedestrian attention. Many other issues contribute, including distractions, fatigue, substance use, and the challenges posed by e-scooters and cyclists who often lack proper lighting.

I also asked a Councillor about the concept of 15-minute cities only to hear that it was not on the agenda. Thus the underlying motive behind speed restrictions appears to create chaos, with the proposed solution being the implementation of 15-minute cities. So we must advocate thoughtful effective measures that truly enhance safety without compromising the flow of traffic.

Public Statement from Dolores Wallace

Thank you for allowing me to speak today.

My son, Tommy, was a kind, loving young man with his whole life ahead of him. He was taken from us in a senseless act of violence by someone who should never have been here—someone who had already taken lives before and yet was allowed to enter our country.

We have been told there were missed warnings and failed systems. But knowing this does not bring my son back. It only leaves painful questions: How was this allowed to happen? Who failed to protect us?

The government has rightly ordered a public inquiry into the Southport murders. But justice must not be selective. The same failures that led to those deaths failed my son too. His murder must be included in the inquiry.

I ask you to support Councillor Salmon's motion and demand full accountability.

Public Statement from Patrick King

The perilous condition of roads and many defects concerns all users.

Especially for cyclists, and other two wheelers much more vulnerable to the external hazardous influences and subsequent consequences.

Beryls electric scooters are extremely vulnerable as small wheels exponential exacerbate any road defects.

Even with cycle route networks it still necessitates utilising narrow urban routes whereby avoidance of defects are precluded without exposure to incremental personal risk.

Example. Fiveways to Richmond Hill littered with innumerable defects and hazards of all types to be negotiated and is not to be undertaken where perceived risk exceeds any benefits. Cars suffer suspension, wheel and other damage.

These additional distractions for ALL road users, on occasions necessitating action, especially two wheelers, may contribute to increased incidents.

Liability rests individually and collectively in this chamber and is incumbent to ensure safe passage and comfort of road users by more rapid, efficient highways maintenance.

Public Statement from Nick Greenwood

The 150-word limit statement may be intended to streamline discussions, but it raises concerns about the depth of engagement with the public especially given the BCP's poor history of consultation. This approach undermines democratic values and hinders progress. By limiting discussions around key projects, such as your adherence to Agenda 2030, it appears BCP focus lies more with international agendas than with the concerns of local residents.

It's crucial to engage the public fully, particularly on significant initiatives related to costly Net Zero projects which are met with widespread skepticism from legitimate scientific information. Are you claiming the public is well-informed regarding proposed 15-minute city ambitions? While phrases like "convenience" are appealing, they mask the Orwellian reality of potential movement restrictions and demands to ask permission to leave designated areas. This is fostered by dubious climate change claims used as a trojan horse, driven by misplaced ideology.

Public Statement from Elizabeth Glass

Democracy at its best. Said after the devolution debate. Residents not consulted. True democracy flows from the people to government not the other way round.

Replacing perfectly serviceable council vehicles with EVs to achieve UK100 ambitious net zero targets ahead of the government's legal target plus council's own pledge to become carbon neutral by 2030.

As reported in the Echo, cost to the taxpayer nearly 20 million loan for the EVs plus potentially 3 million per year for not reaching said targets; and how much more?

Just 2 examples to illustrate that we are paying a high price both financially and to the detriment of services. This is without providing any evidence of the necessity for the pursuit of these goals and without a mandate from us. Democracy at its best? No council, no democracy at all.

Public Statement from Alex McKinstry

Thursday's Audit and Governance Committee should endorse the suggested investigation into Carter's Quay. Issues include the whirlwind romance conducted between the Council and Inland Homes, including the latter's email to Planning on 24 August 2021: "*The agreement it will be built for BCP Council has now been confirmed*". At that point the proposals hadn't even been before Cabinet - let alone full Council, which was three weeks away.

We need to know, too, what credit checks were carried out on the actual development company, Inland Partnerships Ltd, which had been trading at a seven-figure loss for two years running. Drew Mellor told full Council, 14 September 2021, that the scheme carried "no risks". Since then, Inland Partnerships and its parent company, Inland Homes (guarantor of the scheme) have both entered administration, and the Council has effectively paid £15,300,000 for extensive piling on land it does not own.

74. Petition: Stop the closure of Redhill Paddling Pool

Consideration was given to a petition calling for BCP Council to continue funding of the Redhill Paddling Pool.

The petition organiser, Ms Joscelyn Holbrook, provided Council with background relating to the submitted petition.

Members thanked the petition organiser for bringing the petition to Council, and Councillor T Slade moved the following motion:

"Ask Overview and Scrutiny to commission a new Task and Finish Group to investigate how we arrived at this situation, propose a long-term financial plan within council resources, and report back to Full Council at a later date."

Councillor C Adams seconded the motion.

Council debated the motion, and Councillor C Rigby moved an amendment to the motion, to delete words so that the motion read:

“Ask Overview and Scrutiny to ~~commission a new Task and Finish Group to investigate how we arrived at this situation, propose a long-term financial plan within council resources, and investigate ways to keep the paddling pool open~~ and report back to Full Council at a later date.”

The proposed amendment to the motion was accepted by Councillor T Slade and Council unanimously voted to approve the amendment.

Council debated the substantive motion and this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED: - That Council ask Overview and Scrutiny to investigate how we arrived at this situation, and investigate ways to keep the paddling pool open and report back to full Council.

Voting: Agreed with no dissent

Councillor B Dove joined the meeting at 19:44.

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE CABINET AND COMMITTEES

The Chairman confirmed that, as set out in correspondence from Democratic Services, agenda items 7 & 9 had been added to the agenda in error. These items had been resolved at the Council meeting held on 10 December 2024 and had therefore been withdrawn.

The Chairman agreed to vary the order of the agenda to take item 11 first, followed by item 8, as these items were linked.

75. (Duplicated in error, resolved at Council 10 December 2024)

The item was added to the agenda in error and was withdrawn prior to the meeting.

76. Recommendations from Audit and Governance Committee 27 January 2025 - Minute No. 64 - Increased Borrowing - Hawkwood Road and Housing Delivery Council Newbuild Housing and Acquisition Strategy (CNHAS)

The Chairman of the Audit and Governance Committee, Councillor M Andrews presented the report on the Hawkwood Road and Housing Delivery Council Newbuild Housing and Acquisition Strategy (CNHAS) and outlined the revised recommendations circulated to all members prior to the meeting.

RESOLVED: - That Council agrees the

- (a) **Approval of an increase of £9.3m in the authorised borrowing limit of the Council to accommodate in the HRA £6.1m for social rent/shared ownership and £3.2m in the general fund of prudential borrowing for Option 1 of this scheme and the proposal in the business cases for the financing of this debt; OR**
- (b) **Approval of an increase of £6.9m in the authorised borrowing limit of the Council in the HRA for social rent/shared ownership**

of prudential borrowing for Option 2 of this scheme and the proposal of the business cases for the financing of this debt if Option 1 cannot be delivered.

Voting: Agreed with no dissent

77. Recommendations from Cabinet 10 December 2024 - Minute No. 90 - Hawkwood Road Phase 2

The Portfolio Holder for Housing and Regulatory Services, Councillor K Wilson presented the report on Hawkwood Road Phase 2 and outlined the recommendations as set out on the agenda.

RESOLVED that Council: -

- (a) approve option 1 for the Hawkwood Road development scheme for 68 units and a clinical facility at a total scheme cost of £28.7m (preferred option);**
- (b) approve option 2 (fully residential) to be delivered at total scheme cost of £26.6m in the event we are unable to deliver Option 1 (the mixed-use scheme which includes the clinical facility);**
- (c) approve the financial strategy for the scheme for both options inclusive of borrowing level over 50 years from both Housing Revenue Account and the General Fund;**
- (d) approve the procurement of construction works of Hawkwood Road Ph2 through an open and competitive tender for the preferred option, subject to securing Homes England Affordable Housing Grant and a viable HRA business plan;**
- (e) approve of the delegation to the Chief Operations Officer in conjunction with the Director of Finance and the Director of Law & Governance authority to enter contracts for building works, the Memorandum of Understanding with the NHS Dorset and the lease for the Clinical Facility, providing all key parameters (including delivery within approved capital budget) are met;**
- (f) Approval of the appropriation of part of the main Hawkwood Road south site for housing purposes under section 19 of the Housing Act 1985 following its appropriation for planning purposes, once the required car parking area has been formally closed; and**
- (g) Approval of the transfer of land to be held for housing purposes from the general fund (GF) to the Housing revenue Account (HRA) for an appropriate certified financial consideration.**

Voting: Agreed with no dissent

78. (Duplicated in error, resolved at Council 10 December 2024)
Recommendations from Cabinet 10 December 2024 - Minute No. 94 -
Transforming Urgent and Emergency Care Services

The item was added to the agenda in error and was withdrawn prior to the meeting.

79. Recommendations from Licensing Committee 12 December 2024 -
Consideration of revised Scrap Metal Dealer Policy 2025-2030

The Chairman of the Licensing Committee, Councillor D Flagg presented the report on the revised Scrap Metal Dealer Policy and outlined the recommendations as set out on the agenda.

RESOLVED: - That the Scrap Metal Dealer Policy 2025-2030 be approved.

Voting: Agreed with no dissent

80. Recommendations from Cabinet 5 February 2025 - Minute No. 115 - Phase
2 - Council Sustainable Fleet Management Strategy and Fleet Replacement
Programme

The Portfolio Holder for Climate Response, Environment & Energy, Councillor A Hadley presented the report on Phase 2 - Council Sustainable Fleet Management Strategy and Fleet Replacement Programme and outlined the recommendations as set out on the agenda.

RESOLVED that Council: -

- (d) Approve the phase two fleet replacement programme of £19.857m over 3 years;**
- (e) Approve the use of £18.692m new prudential borrowing for the Fleet Replacement Plan and the capital investment necessary in increasing associated EV charging infrastructure recognising the impact of this on the annual revenue budget requirement; and**
- (f) Approve use of capital receipts from the sales of vehicles of £1.165m to fund part of the phase 2 fleet replacement plan.**

Voting: For: 50, Against: 1 (12 abstentions)

Note: resolutions a) to c) were resolved matters by Cabinet.

81. Appointment to Outside Bodies

The Leader of the Council, Councillor M Earl, presented the report on appointments to Outside Bodies, and outlined the recommendations as set out on the agenda. The amended appointments found in the supplementary appendix were highlighted.

It was agreed that members would forward any further amendments to Democratic Services for review.

RESOLVED that Council:-

- (a) approves the appointment of individual Councillors to the external bodies as set out Appendix 1 of this report; and**
- (b) Council delegates the appointment of any listed vacancies or any individual changes to the Monitoring Officer in consultation with the Leader and appropriate Group Leaders**

Voting: Agreed with no dissent

Councillor C Goodall left the meeting at 21:01.

Councillor C Goodall returned to the meeting at 21:05.

Council adjourned at 21:05.

Councillors J Challinor, A Filer, D Flagg, B Hitchcock, M Phipps and C Weight left the meeting.

Council reconvened at 21:15.

Councillor A Martin returned to the meeting at 21:24.

82. Questions from Councillors

Question from Councillor Gavin Wright

Owing to the growing controversy in the local newspaper and on social media regarding the traffic wands on Wimborne Road, Poole. As well as the unwanted difficulties these impediments cause to the residents where the wands have been installed.

I would like to ask what consultation process had been carried out specifically regarding the wands. How were the residents directly affected consulted, before the wands were installed. If more of these wands are going to be installed around BCP how the council consult and engage with the residence that are going to be affected.

Response from the Portfolio Holder for Climate Response, Environment and Energy, Councillor Andy Hadley

Councillor Wright. Thank you for your question.

As Ward Councillor for the area, I understand that residents at 8 properties along this road complained about the location of the wands outside their homes. The positioning was reviewed and adjusted by the team as a result. That does not constitute a controversy on this topic, and there have been no further concerns raised in the last 7 weeks.

The Councillor knows very well that there was an in-person consultation with the public, he was at the meeting and gave me his view on the scheme at some length. In addition, there were online materials and multiple letter-drops to the residents along the road. The letter was sent on 7th September 2023.

The design was adjusted to reduce the risk of flooding into residents gardens and homes.

A few people continue to park inside the wands, across the cycleway and pavement. This is illegal. Double yellow line restrictions apply to the back of the highway boundary.

Given the increasing width of vehicles, and the manner of driving by some, the use of measures like wands to protect schoolchildren in particular, is an important tool, and where officers recommend their use, they will form part of the consultation process on future schemes.

Wands are a cost-effective measure of installing some form of physical barrier to protect vulnerable road users. Re-aligning kerbs and drainage is preferable, but more expensive.

Supplementary Question from Councillor Gavin Wright

As you mentioned about vehicles using their cycle lanes, I'd like to know what the correct procedure is, or advice for cars, vans and lorries delivering to the addresses along Wimbledon Road. There's now no room to stop on the highway as it's too narrow so that packages from cars, vans and lorries can't safely be delivered. Are delivery vehicles supposed to negotiate their way down the cycle lane which they wouldn't be able to do in the case of lorries anyway because the bollards are too close together? Or are they supposed to stop in the driving lane which would block it completely on one side? This is a particular problem for building materials as has been mentioned by a couple of residents as they're delivered by HIAPs, lorry mounted cranes. They can't reach over the cycle lane and path to their houses and probably shouldn't be parking on the cycle lane. It would seem that these bollards have not been sufficiently thought through and should be removed and replaced with less obstructive solutions such as white lines or cats eyes. Any advice would be welcome so I can pass it on to transport managers who have asked me or sat in their offices scratching their heads at this what the correct procedure is for delivering to Wimbledon Road where these bollards are. Thank you.

Response from the Portfolio Holder for Climate Response, Environment and Energy, Councillor Andy Hadley

A written response will follow once I have consulted with the relevant officers.

This response has now been provided and is set out below.

There are three schools in the vicinity of the Wimborne Road scheme, and if you travel the route at times when the schools are active, you will see the pavements and lanes being well used. Encouraging trips by walking and cycling is good for reducing traffic congestion for all, and we have a responsibility to make that safe, especially for children and those with limited mobility.

Delivery vans can either stop on driveways which remain fully accessible, or stop in the road to load/unload, or on side roads and walk the final few metres to complete their deliveries. Emergency vehicles including ambulances can again stop in the road, or on driveways.

Prior to the wands being installed delivery vehicles would straddle the pavement and cycle lane forcing vulnerable highway users into the carriageway putting them at greater risk of being struck by a passing

vehicle. The wands not only provide better protection for cyclists but also keep the footway clear for pedestrians. This is especially beneficial for people with disabilities, or parents with pushchairs.

Wands were selected for this route to overcome drainage related challenges that would have been created if a stepped cycle track had been pursued. If a stepped cycle track had been pursued it would have likely been complemented with wands to prevent vehicles mounting it. Most properties have driveways and/or rear accesses along Wimborne Road and can therefore be served by deliveries - builder's merchants have smaller vehicles i.e., Transit flatbeds that can deliver items onto driveways and to properties with tight accesses. Delivery vehicles can also park along nearby side roads (which were surveyed for capacity prior to the delivery of the scheme) and walk deliveries to properties – if items are too heavy, they could use a sack trolley. They could of course also deliver goods by bike or cargo bike. If being close to the property is necessary, then a vehicle could stop in the road outside of the wands treating it like any other 2-way road with double yellow lines. The double yellow lines universally apply to the back of the public highway ie to the back of the footway.

Wands are not new; they are commonplace across the country. If any residents are struggling with specific issues, they can of course contact the Council.

Question from Councillor Patrick Canavan

The Labour Government has given BCP Council £9.2m to help prevent homelessness and support rough sleepers. An additional £509,000 has been awarded for this financial year specifically to support those who are at risk of sleeping on the street.

Could the Portfolio Holder outline details of how this money will be spent, what recovery intervention work will be delivered, what additional accommodation will be acquired, and what actions will be taken to deliver long term housing options for those at risk or experiencing homelessness?

Response from the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Regulatory Services, Councillor Kieron Wilson

Thank you, Councillor Canavan, for your question.

We are grateful to the government for the grant they have allocated BCP to support local homelessness and rough sleeping services. The additional grant represents over a £1 million uplift in the grant received in this financial year. Like the majority of councils across the country, this grant provides critical support to subsidise the cost of almost all types of temporary accommodation.

We have around 500 households in temporary accommodation across BCP, because caps on housing benefits subsidy remain inadequate to cover the true cost of temporary housing. The grant also resources around half of our officers in our Housing Options team who deliver the council's statutory responsibilities to prevent and relieve homelessness. A service which has seen a 13% increase in demand in the past year, whilst improving the rate in which we've prevented homelessness for residents by

30%. The most tangible impact being our recent achievement in assuring no families and children in BNB.

This week, last year, there were 93. The grant has also used commission a number of supported housing providers to deliver housing and support to people who find themselves homeless and require additional support. In particular, our successful Housing First service, which we can now continue for a further year. The additional grant specifically received this year has been critical in providing an increase in outreach workers for St. Mungo's, increase in our homeless social work team capacity, and provided more best spaces in hotel rooms to provide additional support workers to help people move on from our silted supported housing system.

I'm pleased to confirm this has resulted in a 38% reduction in single night rough sleeping count from the previous month for January, and the lowest recorded count in almost two years. We are keen, where the additional resources have demonstrated positive outcomes, that these are continued into the following financial year. We look forward to the government confirming a multi-year settlement for ring-faced events grants as part of the forthcoming spending review. And this will give us great protection to our workforce and also our long-term vision for ending homelessness.

In summary, our priority will be to continue to fund what works to prevent homelessness, ensure good quality and appropriate temporary accommodation is available when needed, and protect local services that support people's long-term recovery from homelessness. Our local priorities will be reviewed as part of our strategic review with an updated homelessness strategy due to be published early next year.

Supplementary Question from Councillor Patrick Canavan

Can I just ask if, and you don't necessarily need to do it now, but if you could respond to the point about recovery intervention, because that whole aspect of health and recovery for rough sleepers, I think is something which we need to address specifically. Thank you

Response from the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Regulatory Services, Councillor Kieron Wilson

Yes, I'm happy to answer you now. In terms of that, that is something we're looking at. There are partners across the conurbation who provide services in terms of providing health to those who are suffering from homelessness or rough sleeping. We have still a little bit of grant to be allocated, so we're having a review meeting in the next week with officers to establish where that goes. So I think I'll take that point on board in terms of where the allocation goes, thank you.

Question from Councillor Peter Cooper

Could you confirm that funding for the replacement of the malfunctioning bridge signs has been fully secured, as stated in the officers' reply to residents' enquiries? Additionally, can you provide a clear timeline for when the new LED signs will be installed, given that Blandford Road is a main arterial route and must be treated as a high priority? Residents in Hamworthy are at the end of their tether with the ongoing issues.

Response from the Portfolio Holder for Climate Response, Environment and Energy, Councillor Andy Hadley

Councillor Cooper, thank you for your query, which relates to a question the resident asked earlier.

I have only very recently had sight of the response to the resident, but that answer clearly states that the work is intended to be completed in the 2025/26 financial year “subject to financial approvals and successful procurement”. This needs to go through due process.

The Transport budget attempts to respond to many high priority items. We hope to commence the procurement early in the coming financial year.

Supplementary Question from Councillor Peter Cooper

Can I ask what is the commitment and where are we going to get the money from?

Response from the Portfolio Holder for Climate Response, Environment and Energy, Councillor Andy Hadley

It does depend on a couple of things. So, we haven't agreed our strategic CIL as yet. That is one potential source to tie in with the works that need to be done on the bridges themselves. And if not that, then the local transport plan would be the route. So those are the two routes that we're looking at for funding, which of those it will be does depend on decisions that are yet to be made. Thank you.

Question from Councillor Michelle Dower

I have received 15 complaints in the past 10 days from various residents of Brooke Road and Cartwright Close who feel that their road has been abandoned and forgotten by BCP. Many of the issues raised impact the residents of West Howe and Kinson because this road is used to access Kinson Road from East Howe Lane.

The issues raised are:

1. Rat Run; The road is being used as a rat run, causing concern for children's safety due to speeding traffic.
2. Neglected Road Surface; The road surface is severely neglected with multiple potholes, making it resemble a farm track rather than a regular cut-through.
3. Litter; Despite a recent ticket raised for litter clearance, it remains a recurring issue, exacerbated by litter being released from bins during emptying.
4. Unauthorized Car Business; A resident is running a car business from their privately owned home, resulting in multiple cars parked along the roads and in the residents' flats car park.
5. Overgrown Shrubbery; Neglected and overgrown shrubbery is obscuring visibility for drivers, particularly at the junction of Brook Road and East Howe Lane, making it difficult and dangerous to turn right.

Additionally, there is a BCP pathway at the side of 60 Brook Road that has not been maintained in the memory of the residents. It appears to have been forgotten due to its hidden location. A BCP Homes resident had to privately pay to cut back overgrown trees that damaged her cable, and to pay to cut back overgrown bushes. The ground is slippery from moss, and there is no lighting at all. One of the residents regularly sweeps and jet washes the public path to clear the moss and leaves buildup.

Would the Portfolio Holder commit to looking at these issues and providing me with a timetable for resolving them that I can share with the residents to ensure their safety and well-being?

Response from the Portfolio Holder for Climate Response, Environment and Energy, Councillor Andy Hadley

Councillor Dower. Thank you for your question.

You highlight the challenges we face with increasing traffic flows on many of our minor routes that were not built to take the number of vehicles attempting to use them.

I am happy to look at the issues you raise. Some of them are likely to be more intractable than others.

I have made enquiries since receipt of this question at the weekend.

Both roads are subject to annual highway safety inspections with the last ones completed on 19th February 2025. Two locations for safety repairs were identified for repair on Brooke Road.

On planned maintenance and resurfacing, our Unclassified Roads are subject to a SCANNER survey on a 4 yearly rota and the results used to help form a forward programme of works.

Brook Road was last subjected to SCANNER on the 13 January 2023, It is already deemed beyond a stage where a simple surface treatment would be an appropriate solution although that may still be practical for Cartwright Close.

Regarding the footways, they were last subject to a Footway Maintenance Survey on the 24 November 2022, following the same 4 yearly rota regime as the carriageways. Both sites, given a moderate presence of minor defects – mostly from utility reinstatements, seem suitable for a future footway slurry scheme within the next 5 years.

I am grateful to the residents who are sweeping and looking after the path.

I note that in addition to the overgrown pavement issues that you raise, there is part of the road with no pavement at all on one side. I have asked the team to attend to the vegetation, and they have advised that this is underway.

We would encourage all residents and fellow Councillors to use the BCP Report-it tool to raise issues requiring attention, as this is the most streamlined way to get them logged and acted upon.

I am always receptive to Councillors bringing unresolved matters to my attention. This is however, a very detailed and localised query to be raising

at full council. I will attempt to get you further answers outside of the meeting.

Question from Councillor Sharon Carr-Brown

Like many of my colleagues, I've been contacted by several residents asking about delays in the renewal of blue badges. This is a vital service we carry out for some of our most vulnerable citizens and is the difference between their being able to get out and about and carry on their lives, and not.

In October 2024, the Overview and Scrutiny Board looked at this service and found that we were missing our 12-week processing target and the average time was 14 weeks. This is as a result of an entirely predictable spike in renewals three years after the pandemic. We were told that service improvements were underway to improve this situation. BCP's website currently says that new badges are being processed in 12 weeks and renewals in 9; yet the phone line says all badges are taking 14-16 weeks.

- So, which is correct?
- What measures have been taken, such as staff recruitment or training, to improve the service?
- What measures are still to be taken?
- When will we reach our 12-week target and then progress to the 6-8 weeks that was the medium-term goal?
- Are we now consistently informing people of the 3-month grace period for BCP parking for people whose renewal is delayed? I can't find this information on our website. How do we inform them?

The grace period is only of limited use. As one of my residents put it to me; "It helps a little, but of course not with hospital and doctor appointments or places like Castlepoint or Littledown where I go to the gym." But it's no use at all if we don't inform people and, of course, it only applies to renewals.

Response from the Portfolio Holder for Customer, Communications and Culture, Councillor Andy Martin

Thank you to the Councillor for her question.

I am as aware as anyone of the worry and frustration caused by delays in the Blue Service having dealt directly with a number of residents from across BCP and of course our own ward. Indeed, only this afternoon I visited a resident aged 90 to collect her form and assist her as she cares for her elderly husband, in fact a former Christchurch councillor.

Since we discussed the Blue Badge service at Scrutiny late last year, I have been receiving weekly reports on renewal and new application times and regular updates on staffing levels.

In order to drive progress on processing times, additional staff have been redirected from within the wider customer service team to assist the Blue Badge service, and a streamlined assessment process has been adopted for renewal applications.

This has led to a significant improvement in decision times, currently 8 weeks for new applications, and 7 weeks for renewals, as you will be aware, both well within the Department of Transport guideline of up to 12 weeks.

The additional staff that are supporting the improvement currently taking place will nevertheless have to return to their core function of Council tax and benefit customer enquiries for the month of March to provide support when the new Council tax bills are issued.

However, to mitigate the impact of this an apprentice has been recruited to work alongside the team and started in post on the 10 February.

The existing Blue Badge team have also been undertaking extra hours to work through applications which will continue where possible.

Work also continues reviewing our processes, including visiting neighbouring authorities to understand how they operate and what we can learn from them.

The current grace period where expired badges are not enforced for 3 months is not widely advertised, as it is not a permanent arrangement and only applies to council operated car parks and roadside parking.

The website and the council's telephone line has been providing notice to applicants that processing times were more than 12 weeks but given recent improvements that is no longer necessary. Consequently, messaging has now been updated.

I would like to thank the Blue Badge team and wider customer services for their efforts.

Question from Councillor Peter Cooper

Can the Council provide a full breakdown of where our recycled waste is sent, including which companies or organisations it is outsourced to?

Additionally, do we have full traceability of what happens to the materials further up the chain, including their final destinations and carbon footprint? If this information is not currently available, will the Council commit to investigating and providing a full report on the end-to-end journey of our recycling?

Response from the Portfolio Holder for Climate Response, Environment and Energy, Councillor Andy Hadley

I will need to provide you with a written response.

Supplementary Question from Councillor Peter Cooper

Can you confirm the number of contractors we are working with?

Response from the Portfolio Holder for Climate Response, Environment and Energy, Councillor Andy Hadley

This will be included in my written response.

83. Notices of Motions in accordance with Procedure Rule 10

Council was advised that three motions had been received on this occasion.

Motion to expand the scope of the public enquiry into failings leading to violent crimes

The following motion submitted in accordance with Procedure Rule 10 of the Meeting Procedure Rules was proposed by Councillor J Salmon and seconded by Councillor S Armstrong.

Council debated the motion and it was:

RESOLVED that Council resolves to request that the Leader of the Council write to the Prime Minister, Keir Starmer, asking him to ensure that the public enquiry is comprehensive and covers all failures to ensure that future safeguards are put in place to prevent similar tragedies from occurring, and urging him to widen the scope of the public inquiry into systemic failings in the UK's handling of violent offenders to:-

- (a) **Include the case of Thomas Roberts and other similar cases where institutional failings played a significant role in how events unfolded;**
- (b) **Ensure that any review or inquiry examines the processes that allowed Abdulrahimzai to enter the country undetected, the adequacy of police responses to prior warnings about his behaviour, the adequacy of children's services responses to prior warnings about his behaviour and the wider implications for border security and asylum vetting procedures.**

Voting: For: 55, Against: 0 (2 abstentions)

Motion for support for the Safer Phones Bill and local policy development

The following motion submitted in accordance with Procedure Rule 10 of the Meeting Procedure Rules was proposed by Councillor J Salmon and seconded by Councillor A Keddie.

In moving the motion Councillor J Salmon amended the motion to remove reference to the Bill's banning of phones, as this was not factual.

Cllr Burton moved an amendment so that the proposed resolution read:

"This Council resolves to:

1. Instruct the Leader of the Council to write to the Secretary of State for Education and the Secretary of State for Science, Innovation, and Technology, urging them to support and champion the Safer Phones Bill.
2. Request that the Leader of the Council also writes to the head teachers of all ~~local~~ schools within BCP to ~~encourage discussion on the implementation of stronger smartphone policies.~~ recognise the efforts that they have already made to protect their students from the

potential harm of smartphone usage and ask schools to review their phone policies to ensure that they are in line with the Bill.

3. ~~Establish a local task force, in collaboration with schools, parents, and relevant stakeholders,~~ Request the Portfolio holder for Children, Young People, Education and Skills to
 - discuss the requirements of the Bill at the next appropriate Headteachers Breakfast Meeting, to help to develop a suitably consistent, conurbation-wide policy on smartphone use in educational settings, ensuring best practices are shared and implemented.
 - and seek the views of the youth parliament ensuring that they are considered when forming any policy.”

Council agreement was sought to confirm the amendment as the substantive motion which was subsequently carried without dissent.

Council proceeded to debate the substantive motion, where it was:

RESOLVED:- that this Council resolves to:

1. **Instruct the Leader of the Council to write to the Secretary of State for Education and the Secretary of State for Science, Innovation, and Technology, urging them to support and champion the Safer Phones Bill.**
2. **Request that the Leader of the Council also writes to the head teachers of all schools within BCP to recognise the efforts that they have already made to protect their students from the potential harm of smartphone usage and ask schools to review their phone policies to ensure that they are in line with the Bill.**
3. **Request the Portfolio holder for Children, Young People, Education and Skills to**
 - **discuss the requirements of the Bill at the next appropriate Headteachers Breakfast Meeting, to help develop a suitably consistent, conurbation-wide policy on smartphone use in educational settings, ensuring best practices are shared and implemented; and**
 - **seek the views of the youth parliament ensuring that they are considered when forming any policy.**

Voting: For: 45, Against: 3 (7 abstentions)

Motion to strengthen building standards through Local Authority control

The following motion submitted in accordance with Procedure Rule 10 of the Meeting Procedure Rules was proposed by Councillor P Cooper and seconded by Councillor P Canavan.

Councillor D Brown proposed an amendment to add the following to the proposed resolution:

“d) Refer the motion to the Environment and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee for recommendation of the Council’s policy position on this matter.”

Council agreement was sought to confirm the amendment as the substantive motion which was subsequently carried without dissent.

Council proceeded to debate the substantive motion, where it was:

RESOLVED that:-

Council therefore resolves that the Leader of the Council writes to the relevant Secretary of State to:-

- (a) Express this Council’s support to restore Local Authority Control over building inspections, reintroducing legislation that makes Local Authorities the primary enforcers of building safety and standards;**
- (b) Establish proper investment and resources for Local Authority Building Control teams, enabling them to carry out thorough, independent inspections and enforce compliance effectively;**
- (c) End Developer-Selected Inspections, ensuring that inspection processes are impartial, transparent, and free from financial conflicts of interest; and**
- (d) Refer the motion to the Environment and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee for recommendation of the Council’s policy position on this matter.**

Vote For: 50, Against: 3 (1 Abstention)

Councillors C Adams and D Farr left 22:06

Councillor T Slade left 22:36

Councillor R Herrett left 22:51

Councillor R Herrett returned 22:54

84. Urgent Decisions taken by the Chief Executive in accordance with the Constitution

The Chief Executive advised Council that one urgent decision had been taken since the previous meeting, to appoint Executive Directors to the Tricuro board.

The meeting ended at 11.09 pm

CHAIRMAN