

**Minutes of the Town Council meeting held on
Tuesday 18th November 2025 in The Space, Market Walk, Keynsham at 7.00 pm.**

PRESENT: Cllrs Alex Beaumont, Adrian Beaumont, Dave Biddleston, David Brassington, Caitlin Brennan (late) Martin Burton, Edmund Cannon, Chris Davis, Deb Cooper, Andy Halliday, Clive Fricker, Hal MacFie and Andy Wait.

IN ATTENDANCE: Dawn Drury – Town Clerk

191. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

RESOLVED:

That apologies be received and accepted from Cllr S Leach (formerly Alenshasy) and C Leonard.

192. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

RESOLVED:

There were none.

193. DISPENSATIONS

RESOLVED:

There were none.

194. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were 3 members of the public present.

195. RECORD OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Extra Ordinary and Ordinary Town Council meetings held on Tuesday 21st October 2025 (previously circulated), be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

196. CHALLENGES FOR NEW BUILD DEVELOPMENTS IN B&NES

A local resident, Ian Sanders, of the Hygge Estate constructed by the Developers Curo and Crest Nicholson, addressed the Council on the subject of challenges for new build developments in B&NES, focusing on unaffordable service charges funding public

amenities on the developments and local implications of the Government's recommendations for:

- 1) Mandatory Council adoption; and 2) Common adoptable standards.

His presentation to the Council, which forms part of these minutes is appended on page 15.

Having listened to Mr Sanders presentation on the challenges that the residents of the Hygge Estate and others in the Bath and North East Somerset area had, Councillors had the opportunity to ask questions:

Cllr Biddleston suggested that when Mr Sanders presents on this topic again, that he delivers his headline thoughts in a simpler way to allow the listener to follow exactly what he is saying. Cllr Biddleston then asked, ***"What are the three major stresses that people suffer on these estates?"***

Mr Sanders responded:

"Financial service charge costs that may in some cases be equal to or greater than council tax. Nature of the services and facilities that the people have and adoption delays".

Cllr Burton said that the question is ***"What we do as a Council could we possibly pass a motion to write to B&NES Council asking them to follow the initiatives that Mr Sanders has suggested and ensure that B&NES Council do come up to the standards of other Councils and start looking at adopting new Council areas so that people are not paying and incurring double taxation?"***

The Chair of Council responded that ***"We could do this, but Council needed to be aware that there are reasons why B&NES cannot adopt the estates at this stage"***. Mr Sanders responded by asking ***"How do you mitigate the issues whilst adoption is not happening?"*** The Chair responded, ***"That the issues are related to legal regulations that the Developer has not fulfilled or adhered to, and I do not believe the Government would ignore a legally binding contract"***.

Cllr Brassington asked, ***"You mentioned sewage, what is the problem there I thought that these were new houses?"*** Mr Sanders responded ***"the charge you gave with adoption is that most of the development does not involve the resident but a matter for the Resident Management Company, the Developer, Highways and other teams from the Local Authority Council and the sewage company and in this case Wessex Water. Due to drainage problems in the last three years, there has been sewage spilling out in the Teviot Park Green space and at least four other points along the same sewage network right up to the A4 and so far nothing has been done about it. However, Wessex Water is on the case"***.

Cllr Biddleston said that this is a new learning experience that we must take forward, especially with all the future proposed planning to ensure that it does not happen in the future. We need to make sure that the parties are improving things and that as a Council we are involved in the development stage of new estates and that the double taxation stops.

Cllr Wait asked if Mr Sanders could simplify some of these points for the minutes and send them to Council for inclusion in the minutes. From the notes Council will produce a letter to be sent to B&NES Council to raise the issue.

RESOLVED:

- (i) To receive and note the information presented by Ian Sanders (resident).*
- (ii) To send a letter to B&NES Council raising the issue.*

197. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair reported as follows:

- He expressed thanks to all Councillors involved in distributing and promoting information on the Local Plan Site Options Consultation. Thanks were also given to the Town Council Officers for their assistance in promoting the consultation and support with the production and printing of the Local Plan booklet, which was extremely helpful for residents. Approximately 50 copies were filled in and returned to the Town Council Office for collection by B&NES Council. He commented on the IT issues that arose for some residents when completing the online consultation. Also, he mentioned the Saltford and Bath Petitions that had been set up.
- Remembrance Parade on 9th November 2025 – Cllr Wait said he was very pleased with the turnout of Councillors for this important event. Eleven out of our fifteen Councillors took part in the procession. He said he was overwhelmed by the size of the parade and the number of people that stood watching the parade. This was probably the largest Remembrance event that he had attended in Keynsham.
- CashAccess Banking Hub – He reported that he would be cutting the ribbon at the opening of the CashAccess Banking Hub on Friday 21st November 2025.
- Councillors were encouraged to get involved in the forthcoming Winter Festival on Saturday 29th November 12 noon – 6.00 p.m.

198. QUESTIONS ON NOTICE BY MEMBERS

There were none.

Cllr Brennan arrived for the meeting.

199. KEYNSHAMNOW

Amelie gave a report on behalf of KeynshamNow as follows:-

- The start of the last KeynshamNow meeting began with welcoming new members to the group. New members result from undertaking assemblies in the local secondary schools and from existing members inviting new young people along.

- At their meeting the members discussed:
The Remembrance Parade and members participation in the Parade.
Issues with the buses. KeynshamNow members will be writing a letter to the bus companies.
The Teviot Play Area and Green Space Consultation responses, theme suggestions and feedback from local residents.
The Local Plan Site Options Consultation.
- The group have been busy preparing numbered photos for the Winter Festival stall and they decided on which members were going to man the stall.
- The Headteacher from Wellsway has made a request to attend a future meeting to speak to the young people and observe the meeting.
- KeynshamNow are holding an assembly at Broadlands School on 1st December 2025.
- The next meeting of KeynshamNow is on 3rd December 2025.

RESOLVED:

To receive and note the report.

The Chair of Council requested Councillors permission to bring forward item 27 on the agenda.

200. TEVIOT ROAD PLAY AREA AND GREENSPACE

The Town Clerk and Chair reported that a consultation had been undertaken in respect of the Teviot Play Area and Green Space upgrade, the results of which were in the Councillors agenda pack. Two face-to face consultations took place on the project site which allowed young children (with a sticker system), teenagers and adults to indicate the pieces of existing play equipment that should be kept, street furniture that could be changed and replaced, types of new play equipment that could be sourced, sought the popularity on introducing trim trails for both smaller children and teenagers, detailed possible improvements to the basketball area and possible themes for the play area.

The online consultation received over 100 responses. Responses coming from various age groups. There was a bit of contradiction between the two parts of the consultation, as you would expect with the younger ones only being able to express their views by putting stickers on the mood boards that were on display.

There were a lot of views expressed through both methods of consultation and any additional feedback received. All suggestions and comments will be taken into consideration, and it will not just be a case of who shouts loudest gets what they want. Sometime decisions need to be made that disappoint but the upgrade to the play area

and the green space will be undertaken carefully and with a lot of thought. The consultation process was a good lesson for the young people of KeynshamNow as they expressed first hand that people have different views.

Some additional feedback from residents of 13, 15 and 17 Harpsichord Way circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting was also received. The additional feedback stated that the residents' properties were approximately 1.5 metres from the boundary of the Teviot Road Playground and Green Space and directly overlook it. At the time of reporting the Clerk stated that she thought that the distance was incorrect, which has been pointed out as an incorrect fact, as the boundary of these properties not only include gardens but the pavements and private block driveways. Other items within the feedback from the residents included items that were beyond the Town Council's remit for example, sorting out parking issues and installation of bollards that are outside the play area and green space project area, and which would not be covered by the S. 106 funding.

The feedback also suggested that because their properties were closest to the play area they should have a really good say on what should or should not be in the play area. They seemed to be against any suggestion that the project should include equipment for teenagers including trim trails. One of the residents had attended one of the face-to-face consultations and expressed a wish that the actual play area be moved further into the Green Space.

The Clerk has had some correspondence with the lead resident, and it is thought that at some point in the near future he may want to come to one of the planning meetings and inform the group what he and the other residents actually want for the area.

Cllr Burton asked for the survey data on ages and genders etc. Amelie reported that the online survey resulted in 20% of responses coming from young people and children with other responses coming from those over 18 years of age.

Standing Order 3 (e) was not followed by the Chair but he allowed Mr Sanders to speak on this matter.

Mr Sanders commented that he was aware of this matter and knew of the residents from Harpsichord Way and that he believed that he was not saying that there should not be activities for older children but that they should be positioned in a different place within the park. He mentioned a planning enforcement complaint in place for screening

between the play area and the edge of the highway of Harpsichord Close. There have also been incidents of anti-social behaviour from children that the resident has had to deal with on numerous occasions late at night. This is not a concern that is unfounded but a significant concern and we are currently engaging with an officer in respect of these concerns.

The Chair explained that possibly some anti-social behaviour could be occurring due to the lack of facilities for the young people in that area. Mr Sanders replied that his feedback and that of the residents was that it was appropriate to have facilities for that generation but not right next to the houses. Amelie responded that it was not the intention to have the trim trail near the play area or houses but much further into the green space and in respect of the screening the Town Council are not in control of this. It is a matter between Curo and the Council. Mr Sanders replied that it was okay that the trim trail would be at the other end of the Green Space, but the residents do not want significant development design for older children right next to the boundary. Council will reassure residents that there are no plans to put equipment for older children near the boundary opposite the properties which are 1.5 metres away as the property pavement is actually the pavement.

Amelie explained that at the face-to-face consultation it was explained that any trim trail/teenage facility would not be sited close to the play area. Mr Sanders requested that that clarification be provided again and it should hopefully resolve a lot of the concerns.

The Clerk highlighted that whether teenage equipment is provided or not anti-social behaviour can still happen, it happens at other play areas that the Town Council run, Holmoak, Park Road etc. Mr Sanders confirmed that they were aware of this.

The Chair of Council confirmed that Council will respond to the group of residents taking into all of Mr Sanders comments and with Amelia's help. Mr Sanders was thanked for his contribution to this item on the agenda.

201. ALLOTMENT ASSOCIATION QUARTERLY UPDATE

RESOLVED:

To receive a verbal report from the Allotment Association as follows:

Annie Stewart representative from the Allotment Association reported as follows:

- The Allotment Association members expressed thanks to the Keynsham Town Council Grounds Maintenance Team for clearing a huge pile of dumped leylandii chips, apples and lumps of wood. It is not clear how anyone entered the allotments to tip such a large pile of waste in the car parking area, but they must have been let in through the main gate.
- There is still a long waiting list of 35. One plot holder resignation has been received, and the plot is being re-let on 19th November 2025. It is the time of year when resignations start to arrive.
- It was reported that the new proposed allotments are only going to be let by the Developer's Management Company to homeowners living in the following roads:

Alexander Road (1 - 47), Alcina Way (1 – 33), Serse Close (1 – 8) and Semele Close (1 – 9). The Town Clerk will check the Section 106 agreement for this development in respect of the conditions associated with the provision of allotments.

The Plots at this site are to be let at £120.00 per annum. Keynsham Allotment Association charge £20 per annum depending on the size of the plot.

It was brought to the attention of the Council that currently the allotment site in this location is being used as a dog exercising area. It was suggested that if this is the use that local residents want then it should be left to them to negotiate this with the Developer, and the Town Council should not get involved.

- One plot is being used by a lady in a wheelchair, and it is hoped that some of the Section 106 funding can be used to set up an accessible plot near the track should a plot become available.
- A request was made to use some of the Section 106 funding for hedge cutting and the Clerk asked the members to obtain a quote for the work.
- The Crop Drop initiative has not been so successful this year due to the bad growing season (very hot, dry weather). Members were supportive with their contributions, and the recipients of the fruit and vegetables were very grateful. The allotment usually receives a summary report regarding their donations but to date they have not received this. A copy will be forwarded to the Town Council on receipt.
- There was a larger number of Allotment Holder entries into the Keynsham In Bloom competition with members receiving Silver Gilt or Gold. The Allotment site

as a whole was awarded Level 5 Outstanding in the RHS South West In Bloom It's Your Neighbourhood Awards. The judge mentioned accessible planting beds as an addition to the Keynsham Allotment site.

202. OUTSIDE BODIES - LARGER GRANT APPLICATIONS 2026-2027

RECOMMENDED:

- (i) To receive and note the questions responded to by Dial-A-Ride, as requested at the October Town Council meeting.*
- (ii) That Council approve in principle the grant sum requested, in the sum of £4.500.*

203. REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

Cllr Brennan reported on behalf of the Keynsham Music Festival Association that approximately 25% of the crowd funding target of £10,000 had been reached and that all the tickets for the ABBA night had been sold.

RESOLVED:

To receive and note the information.

204. MINUTES OF MEETINGS

RESOLVED:

- (i) That the Minutes of the meetings as listed on the agenda are received and noted.*
- (ii) That the recommendations that are not subsequent Town Council Agenda Items are approved.*

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION REQUIRING A DECISION:

205. RESOLUTION FOR TOWN COUNCIL FOR CEMETERY FACULTY WORKS

RECOMMENDED:

- (i) To receive and note this report.*
- (ii) To resolve that the Chairman sign the attached resolution on behalf of the Council.*

206. CAMPING IN THE MEMORIAL PARK

A discussion was had as to whether the Bath City by-law in respect of camping in Parks could be extended to Keynsham.

RESOLVED:

- (i) *That Council receive and note the request for a by-law in respect of camping in the Keynsham Memorial Park.*
- (ii) *That this matter be taken forward by Keynsham Ward Councillors.*

Councillor Alex Beaumont said that he would action this.

207. KEYNSHAM NATURE ACTION PLAN

The Chair spoke of the huge amount of work that had been undertaken in respect of the producing the Keynsham Nature Action Plan. He expressed thanks to John Aldridge of the Avon Wildlife Trust who had assisted immensely. The Clerk presented information in respect of the feedback from Stakeholders who had been given the draft document for consideration.

Councillors acknowledged the document as being accessible in the way that it had been put together and as an excellent piece of work.

RESOLVED:

- (i) *To receive and note the Town Council Keynsham Nature Action Plan.*
- (ii) *To approve the plan with a mention of Beavers on the River Chew and the inclusion of information on the Keynsham Memorial Park River Chew Improvement Project submit as an appendix.*
- (iii) *That with the amendments the document be submitted to B&NES Council, promoted to the Community of Keynsham and link to the same be put on the Town Council website.*

208. WECA FUNDING – SPECIAL MOTION RESCINDING OF MINUTE NO. 136 FP6

The Clerk has been waiting for notice to be received from 7 Councillors as per Standing Order 7a requesting that the decision made under minute number 136 FP6 at the Town Council meeting held on 16th September 2025 be rescinded to allow Town Council Officers to work with WECA Communications Team on the marketing campaign (including social media, press article and leaflets/posters) to promote the K1 bus service to be funded by WECA in the sum of £5,000.

RESOLVED:

- (i) *To receive and note the Special Motion.*
- (ii) *To note that written notice has been received from Councillors Chris Davis, Deb Cooper, Caitlin Brennan, Dave Biddleston, Edmund Cannon, Andy Wait and Andy Halliday.*
- (iii) *That the rescinding of minute no. 136 FP6 be approved.*

209. CONSULTATION RESPONSES – THE GAMBLING ACT STATEMENT, THE MOVEMENT STRATEGY FOR BATH AND WECA A4 BRISTOL TO BATH

RESOLVED:

- (i) To receive and note the consultation response in respect of the Gambling Act Statement (as requested by B&NES Council).*
- (ii) To receive, note and approve that Keynsham Town Council have noted the contents and have no comments in respect of the Gambling Act Statement.*
- (iii) To receive and note the responses in respect of the B&NES Council Movement Strategy for Bath Consultation.*
- (iv) To approve the responses to the B&NES Council Movement Strategy for Bath consultation.*
- (v) To receive and note the consultation responses to the WECA A4 Bristol to Bath Consultation.*
- (vi) To approve the response to the WECA A4 Bristol to Bath Consultation.*

210. TO NOTE AND RECEIVE UPDATES ON THE FOLLOWING DELEGATED ACTIONS TAKEN SINCE THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING ON 21st OCTOBER 2025

RESOLVED:

To note that there were none.

211. UPDATES FROM THE RFO

RESOLVED:

- (i) To receive and note the information from the RFO.*
- (ii) To note that the Clerk has sent a letter by registered post stating the Barclays account now has sufficient funds in it for the account to be closed, requesting any surplus funds returned to the Council and for the provision of bank statements.*

212. MATTERS FROM FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING ON 11th November 2025

RESOLVED:

To receive and note agenda items 21 A-D.

213. MATTERS FROM FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING ON 11th NOVEMBER 2025 NEEDING DECISION:

Cllr Adrian Beaumont left the meeting at 8.12 p.m.

FP1 CEMETERY HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

RESOLVED:

- (i) To receive and note the Cemetery Health and Safety Policy.*
- (ii) That the Cemetery Health and Safety Policy be amended to include the following points:*
 - The policy refers to legislation - can the legislation be referenced in the document.*
 - The inclusion of an emergency number for out of hours issues.*
 - The Policy refers to an accident book but does not specify where this is kept.*
 - Reference be made in the Policy in respect of training, see information to be included below.*
- (iii) That the Policy be brought back to the December Town Council meeting for approval.*

Training is mentioned in the Policy but there is no reference as to how often this happens, how often it is reviewed and what levels of training are covered. This information is covered in the Town Council main Health and Safety Policy, the Town Council training records and in the Employee Handbook.

FP2 CIL POLICY AND APPLICATION FORMS

Thanks were expressed to the RFO for all her hard work in pulling together and working on all these documents. A reminder was made that a diagrammatical timeline still needs to be produced.

RESOLVED:

- (i) To receive and note the CIL Policy and application forms.*
- (ii) To receive a recommendation from the Finance and Policy Committee to approve the policy and application forms with the additional amendments.*
- (iii) That the CIL Policy and application forms be approved.*

FP3 STANDING ORDERS WORKING PARTY

Cllr Biddleston requested that the Standing Orders be thoroughly be reviewed.

RESOLVED:

- (i) To receive and note the update from the Council Meeting.*

- (ii) *To receive a recommendation from the Finance and Policy Committee that the Standing Orders Working Party be set up with Councillors Burton and Cooper as members, together with Cllr Biddleston and with the Clerk and RFO in attendance.*
- (iii) *To approve the members of the Standing Orders Working Party.*

FP4 TREE WORKS

RESOLVED:

- (i) *To receive and note the information and quote received from B&NES.*
- (ii) *To receive a recommendation from the Finance and Policy Committee that Council approve the quote for works on the two trees.*

FP5 2026/27 BUDGET

Thanks were expressed to the RFO for all her work on preparing the draft budget documents.

Councillors appreciated having the figures earlier in November rather than December.

RESOLVED:

- (i) *To receive and note the 2026/27 Draft Budget.*
- (ii) *To review the changes made from the Extra Ordinary Finance meeting.*
- (iii) *To defer the approval of the draft Budget until December in case any changes need to be made between now and then. Also, so that Councillors can fully consider the Precept information that has been presented and ask any questions that they may have about the draft budget as it is.*

FP6. EARMARKED RESERVES AND RESERVES

RESOLVED:

- (i) *To receive and note the information supplied on the Earmarked Reserves and Reserves.*
- (ii) *To receive a recommendation from the Finance and Policy Committee that the changes to the Earmarked Reserves be received and noted.*
- (iii) *To defer the approval of the Earmarked Reserves information until December in case any changes need to be made between now and then. Also, so that Councillors can fully consider the Precept information that has been presented and ask any questions that they may have about the draft budget as it is.*

FP7. PRECEPT

The Clerk explained that the Precept Report currently just details the impact, in respect of a weekly sum per household. However, the final report will clearly detail both the weekly sum and percentages required to achieve a balanced budget together with any shortfalls in the budget dependent on the percentages applied.

RESOLVED:

To receive and note the information provided on the precept.

214. SCHEDULE OF PAYMENTS – MONTH 8 - NOVEMBER 2025

RESOLVED:

That the Schedule of Invoices for November, month 8, be approved for payment and copy be signed by the Chair of Council.

ITEMS TO RECEIVE AND NOTE:

215. COUNCILLOR RESIGNATION FROM COMMITTEES

Cllr Halliday submitted his resignation from Committees of the Council.

Thanks were expressed to Cllr Halliday for his service to the Committees.

Concern was raised in respect of some Committees being short of attendees and the non-attendance by some Councillors who are members on Committees.

It was suggested that Councillors attendance at Town Council and Committee meetings be recorded and shown on the website. The Clerk will look into this.

RESOLVED:

- (i) *To receive and note the resignation submitted from Cllr Halliday.*
- (ii) *That an agenda item be added to the next Town Council agenda to fill the vacancies on these Committees.*

216. CHARLTON HOUSE SEND SCHOOL & CHILDRENS HOMES

RESOLVED:

To receive and note the information.

217. POSSIBLE K2 SERVICE

RESOLVED:

To receive a recommendation from the Bus Services Committee to approve in principle (dependent on a successful funding application) the tested, timed route and planned stops (including temporary ones) that has been trialled by B&NES Council and the Bus Operator, with two slight amends, to allow for the first bus in the morning and one in the afternoon to deviate from the route to allow children to use the bus to get to and from Wellsway and Chandag schools.

218. LETTERS FROM YOUNG RESIDENTS REGARDING THE LOCAL PLAN OPTIONS SITES CONSULTATION

RESOLVED:

- (i) *To receive and note the letters from Ava and Florence.*
- (ii) *To note that the Town Clerk send an acknowledgment reply to Ava and Florence, and also praising them for their interest in this topic.*

219. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

RESOLVED:

To note that the date for the Town Council's next meeting is **Tuesday 16th December 2025 at 7.00pm** in The Space, Market Walk, Keynsham.

220. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED:

In accordance with Standing Order 3(d) to RESOLVE that pursuant to the provision of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business by reason of the confidential nature of the matter to be transacted, Item 31, to progress sensitive and financial issues.

221. MAKESPACE

The Town Clerk read an article published in Keynsham Voice detailing the purpose of the MakeSpace building and how it was funded.

RESOLVED:

- (i) *To receive and note the report.*
- (ii) *That the Town Clerk write to B&NES Property Services, Cllr Paul Roper B&NES, the CEO of Heritage England, the Mayor of WECA, the Leader of the Council.*
- (iii) *That this matter be brought back to the December Town Council meeting so that responses can be considered.*

The meeting finished at 8.40 p.m.

SIGNED: Date:

(Chairman)

Minute no. 222 - CHALLENGES FOR NEW BUILD DEVELOPMENTS IN B&NES

Presentation by Ian Saunders, resident of the Hygge Estate.

Since 2020 Hygge Park residents have experienced many of the challenges typically faced by new build developments. The residents of the estate have made some headway to rectify these challenges. The progress made includes:

The suspension of all service charges, refunds and reversal of estate handover, with residents now leading the selection of a new agent and ultimate handover, but there is still a way to go.

Initial background information presented by the residents was as follows:

- The challenge of unaffordable service charges funding public amenities on developments and local implications and opportunities of the Government's adoption push which was explained as the Government working to mandate the abolition of the practice, driven by developers and councils, whereby councils minimise their adoption of public amenities and infrastructure and force development residents and their Resident Management Companies to adopt and fund these public assets such as public play area, roads, pavements, drainage systems and the systemic factors that lead to service charge issues.
- Service charges issues are predominantly driven by motivation for cost saving and revenue raising; and enabled by significant imbalances of power between the parties.

Service Charge issues – This is the fundamental classic “fleecehold” scenario, where residents “pay twice” with service charges covering services that are covered by council tax for non-fleecehold properties.

In respect of B&NES Local Authority area and the Hygge estate some residents are paying more for services charges than they are for council tax (and they have no discounts or other exemptions).

Mr Sanders explained that various parties will seek to unlawfully use the systemic flaws to maximise revenue through a myriad of tactics:

1. In Hygge charges were 60% higher than benchmarked and levied 5 years early.
2. Although other charge excesses that have been easiest to quantify are insurances: identical flat blocks incurring premiums 10X higher between different freeholders and 25% Year On Year increases [accounted for by unlawful commission], or for social housing a 260% increase over 3 years for buildings insurance.
3. Social housing landlord are unlawfully levying service charges on their tenants on Hygge Park Section 18 and 19 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 - residents are not charged by the resident management company and its Directors have written to advise Curo that no service charges will be levied for the year, but Curo invoice for service charges and may refund some or all over a year later.

In the case of access and amenity considerations this has limited both public access and infrastructure development. For example, the developer's repeated offers to transfer land to B&NES Council ownership through adoption processes have been rebuffed by B&NES Council and led to:

- reduced active travel routes for BANES and WECA active travel infrastructure improvements (e.g. the developer has offered unused land adjacent to the A4 cycle and foot paths, which are narrowed due to the land not being in public ownership).
- related to the above alternative uses site land is impeded due to the failure to adopt (e.g. providing public EV charging facilities off Broadmead Roundabout, addressing parking challenges etc).
- discussions about removing public access to the privately owned play area (following the London private park model).
- exploration of restricting site access at boundary points to residents only to reduce maintenance costs and address security and anti-social behaviour issues.

For at least the last 4 years the failure of adopting parties and critical stakeholders to work effectively towards completion has led to:

- Recurring sewage spills in and around Hygge Park including by Teviot Play Area and on the A4.
- Flooding in and around the site.
- Injuries to people.
- Accessibility issues.
- Property damage.
- Pest control challenges.
- Anti-social behaviour challenges.
- Increased criminal activity.

Example costs aside; the consequences of these dynamics:

1. have a greater impact on those in social housing and lower incomes.
2. reduce public amenity quality, access and benefits.

3. misrepresent council costs, including additional downstream costs, this weekend sewage has again flowed out by Teviot Play Area which the Council will need to pay to fix.
4. impede planning and governance processes with unenforceable but deterrent contract terms (e.g. will not use statutory, regulatory or contractual means to force adoption, will not object to planning applications or changes etc.
5. delay housing delivery.

Our developers often push back on council adoption due to the costs of bringing them to “adoptable standards” - which is a good example of many of the consequences, critically this push for lower quality increases maintenance costs for any party that ultimately takes ownership be that resident management companies or councils.

The systemic issues have led to central and local government initiatives such as:

1. **Code and Ombudsman developments.** Industry and regulatory developments such as iterations of ‘Consumer and Quality Codes’ and a New Homes Ombudsman - which seek to raise standards and add enforcement teeth, would in isolation be better described as “teeth whitening”.
2. **Measures that aspire to address representation issues (i.e. the Leasehold and Freehold Reform Act, 2024** - which seeks to raise rights for freeholders to the levels of that of tenants and remove barriers that exist for leaseholders, tenants and freeholders to exercise their rights and have effective representation, including recognised residents’ associations).
3. **Policy, campaign and consumer initiatives implemented by many councils** (not BANES - who are one of the worst performing councils nationally in this respect).
4. and most importantly **Government’s response to the Competition and Markets Authority’s (CMA) study into housebuilding that endorses recommendations of:**
 1. Prevent the proliferation of private management arrangements e.g. recommending **common adoptable standards and mandating council adoption.**
 2. **Greater protection** to households under private management arrangements.

Unless both Keynsham Town Council and BANES act proactively to address the problem of councils minimising adoption of public amenities and infrastructure:

- the impact on residents will continue and worsen; and
- the final bill for councils inheriting sub-standard managed areas will be significantly greater.

My initial recommendations for the council are

1. In partnership with BANES, lobby for a **lessons learnt review** of recent new build developments and the performance of the various parties involved from conception, through to development and operation.

I would expect the Terms of Reference to include an impact; policy (planning and other elements), planning enforcement powers and management (the function is not under-resourced they simply need the right resources), consumer campaigns, governance requirements etc.

2. Intervene in all s38 agreements not yet fully executed to maximise adoption of public amenities and infrastructure and minimise future liabilities when mandatory adoption arises.
3. Seek to establish, support and resource a resident led group spanning new build developments in Keynsham (e.g. a Keynsham Area Residents' Association Network - not dissimilar to the Federation of Bath Residents' Associations).
4. Pro-actively support the government recommendations in response to the CMA housebuilding report.

I invite the Council to consider the recommendations, understand and explore the matter in more depth.

I also request that the Council and Councillors, as applicable in the context:

1. Share their discussions and conclusions on the matter.
2. Add the matter to any applicable risk and governance tracking records (e.g. risk register).
3. Outline steps to be taken to fulfil their fiduciary duties in respect of this matter.