

Long Ashton Annual Parish Meeting
Held in the Village Hall on Monday 27th April 2015
Chairman - Councillor Rod Sterland
The meeting was attended by 38 electors

1. Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting 2014

The minutes of the meeting held on Monday 28th April 2014, copies having been circulated to those present, were signed as a correct record by the Chairman.

2. Chairman's report

The Chairman, Cllr Rod Sterland, welcomed everyone and gave his report:

"I would like to start by reviewing some of the issues that we have been involved in during the past year.

I said last year that construction of the South Bristol Link was inevitable and it has started. We made representations at the public inquiry and obtained some minor concessions. We have met more recently with the contractors and with project management at North Somerset (NS). I think they appreciate our concerns and we hope that any problems can at least be mitigated. We know that there will be disruption and a permanent negative effect on our environment not least with the routing of the footpaths. I recently walked part of the route and the destruction of hedges and trees is quite appalling.

We are very concerned about the number of houses that NS has been forced to accept in the Core Strategy. We have written to the Secretary of State expressing our concern that this will lead to over-development, too much housing in the wrong place and lack of control over the developers. Uniquely, the Secretary of State has called in the report and is reviewing it himself. We await his decision.

We have endured the closure of the Yanley Viaduct. Whilst we had fears at the outset that this would bring chaos to the village, the officer from NS in charge of the traffic management, fortunately a resident of LA, met with us on several occasions and was receptive to our suggestions. In the end, it was not as bad as we feared and was completed on time.

So in partial compensation perhaps, or the result of lobbying by our District Councillors we have had the main road resurfaced. More disruption and not without problems, but I am sure worth it in the end.

Taking the opportunity of the resurfacing we discussed with NS some of the ideas in the NDP for improvements to the road. However NS made it clear that their budget was for the resurfacing and there was no money available for anything more than minor changes. Although NS were initially receptive to some minor low cost changes that we suggested, in the end these were rejected and they put back more or less what was there before, with the exception of leaving out the central white line, which we have been told should reduce vehicle speeds. We should also have four areas of coloured and textured tarmac, which will be installed in late May.

Our NDP has been through its many stages of consultation, and finally has passed examination without too many changes being imposed. It has to be said that we have not achieved everything that we set out to; nevertheless it does include a number of policies that can have a real benefit for the village. The NDP group was well aware of the issues that concern villagers and we have done our best to include as much as we are allowed to in the plan. The NDP can only cover the development of land so is limited in its scope. The referendum will be in July and I urge you all to vote for the plan. Although we only need a simple majority a good turnout will give the plan authority and legitimacy. It is clear from events that I have attended that the authorities regard areas with a plan rather differently to those that do not, so having the plan has significant spin off benefits.

What issues do we face in the future? The residents parking in Clifton is having a major impact on parking in Leigh Woods and some action will have to be taken. Traffic speeds through the village continue to be a problem and we are going to purchase a second speed awareness camera. Development and the potential impact of the large number of houses that NS is being forced to accept may impact on the village. Otherwise business as usual - such as dog bins and litter and all the other things that the Parish Council does.

The PC elections coincide with the general and district elections, however this time you will be saved the task of identifying your favourite 19 councillors as there were insufficient applications so there will not be a vote. The council is a team and each member brings particular skills. So I thank all councillors for their contribution and in particular the chairs of the subcommittees, who inevitably have particular responsibilities. The council also employs a number of people, most important of whom is our clerk, Janet Turp, without whom things would just not work. We also have an assistant Vicky Lacey, who joined us during the year taking over from Liz Price and ably takes the minutes of the meetings. In addition, we have the village orderlies. So my thanks to all the team."

Planning Committee report

The Chairman, Cllr Miss Uppington, gave her report.

"Although the Planning Committee has, once again, been asked for comments on a wide range of applications, by far and away the most frequent requests are for extensions or other additions to existing properties. In every case careful consideration has been given as to what impact any alterations will have on neighbours and the character of the surrounding area and we have always aimed to make constructive comments to North Somerset.

The plans to convert the Burwalls House site into flats and dwellings have been granted and we look forward to seeing these alterations to a Listed Building completed.

It was so pleasing to see so many people attend the exhibition which Audley Retirement staged to show their draft plans for a retirement Care Community on the Redwood Lodge Hotel site. A full application has now been made to North Somerset and we were able to see these plans and comment on them at our April meeting. Although we fully support this development for 124 apartments with other communal facilities we were somewhat disappointed by the proposed designs for the buildings. They did not reflect those shown at the exhibition, being very similar

in appearance to some buildings found in Clifton and were not in a style appropriate for their rural location.

We are very aware that such a development will put our existing medical facilities under increased strain and have suggested consideration should be given to make available medical provision on the site.

This time last year we knew the Nash Partnership would like land at Gatcombe to become available for housing. Since then, along with other representations, we were able to give English Heritage information which enabled them to recommend that Bridgeman's Field at Gatcombe should be added to the schedule. So, in November, we were delighted to hear that the Secretary of State for Culture, Media & Sport had decided to amend the entry for Bridgeman's Field and add it to the Schedule of Monuments. We hope this will ensure that this good quality agricultural land, in the Green Belt, will remain in its present state.

Following the examination of Remitted Policies in connection with the North Somerset Core Strategy the Inspector's Report was received in March - it did not bring good news!

The Inspector is recommending a minimum of 20,985 dwellings should be delivered within North Somerset between 2006 and 2026. By April 2014 6,752 dwellings had been completed leaving 14,233 to be delivered between 2014 and 2026 - and the Council will also need to identify sufficient sites to give a five year's supply of housing. This seems an unrealistic outcome - but all may not be lost! North Somerset Council, backed by our MP, have written to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, Eric Pickles, and we understand he is to review a decision on the number of new homes to be built in North Somerset.

However, whatever the final number is, we know developers are waiting to pounce as soon as they see the chance and they will do all they can to encourage any alteration to Green Belt boundaries. We know the Green Belt could become vulnerable so the Parish Council will continue to defend the Green Belt which surrounds our village, particularly the important area of green land between the eastern end of the village and the Bristol boundary.

Over 1500 new dwellings have been built in our village in the last 65 years so Long Ashton has done its fair share.

Work to be done on trees and hedges is regularly being requested and we appreciate the help and advice which the North Somerset Tree Officer readily gives. Residents are generally very helpful in keeping hedges under control so that pavements and footpaths are not obstructed with overgrown foliage.

Our District Councillors Bob Cook and Charles Cave, who are also Parish Councillors, have once again had a busy year and worked hard for our parish. It has been so helpful that they have always been so ready to take any contentious issues to either the appropriate officer or District Planning Committee at North Somerset.

Members of the Planning Committee have continued to make a valuable contribution to all our discussions and have been helpful in so many ways - and here I want particularly to give a very sincere thank you to Harry Williams and Bob Cook who, this year, have resigned as councillors. Harry has been a member of this committee for 42 years and Bob for 32 years and the local knowledge they have of our village is second to none - it has proved to be invaluable on so many occasions

and their input will be greatly missed. I wish also to thank Charles Cave who has been a very supportive vice chairman, to Vicky Lacey, who has minuted our meetings and to Janet, our clerk, whose ready help and advice is so much appreciated.

This concludes my report for the last 12 months, as we look forward to what the coming year will bring."

Highways and Burial Ground Committee Report

The Chairman, Cllr Mrs Mackwood, gave her report: "As our Chairman has already stated, we have had a great deal of Highways activity in the last year, beginning with repairs to the Yanley Viaduct which started in August and finished more or less on time in January. For the most part, all the arrangements, and the liaison between North Somerset and the PC went well. During the Yanley Viaduct repairs, the PC asked for a 7.5 tonne weight restriction which was a successful move and North Somerset has said that it will apply for a permanent restriction on our behalf as a result.

Leigh Woods is having great problems with parking following the parking restrictions both in Ashton Court (owned by Bristol City Council) and Clifton. The Leigh Woods Society, Long Ashton Parish Council and, we hope, our North Somerset representatives will work on a scheme to assist residences and the new Suspension Bridge Visitor Centre.

Flood management Chairmen Rod Sterland and David Neale have worked hard to try and assess if the bund is correctly calibrated so that we don't get flooded in a 1-in-100 or even 1-in-30 year event. The building of the South Bristol Link Road (SBLR) and the drainage of the railway line will affect water run-off through our valley.

Throughout the last year the Transition Group has kept a wild flower meadow and soft fruit in the burial ground. This has been well maintained and is an interesting addition to the Parish.

By the middle of March, we were back into roadworks again. This time resurfacing through the village from Ashton Court to Cambridge Batch (or as a DCMS official once suggested, Cam Brid Gee Batch). The PC resurfacing group opted to only have work between 9:30 and 3:30pm so that the commuters and school children could get away from and return to the village with their usual ease. There were hiccups with tarmac within the quarry but generally speaking all went as planned with regular updates on the village website to keep people up to date with progress. The workmen have asked me to thank villagers for their general good humour and forbearance during their work. One slight hiccup was with double yellow lines being painted in error outside the Little Tipple. Mr Gover offered himself as a Traffic Warden and Mrs Gover said that they would come back and remove them or she would paint them black herself. Back they came, and Mr Gover will not need to see if he has missed his vocation.

Work has now moved on to Gatcombe Lane, which is due to be finished by Wednesday night.

Now work has started on the SBLR, footpaths will be affected as the road will cut across some of them, but negotiation with North Somerset has we hope provided reasonable alternatives to the network throughout the Parish that we can be proud of. I would like to thank Tony Hibbett, retiring leader of the footpath group for all his hard work on your behalf. It seems we will not be entirely free of road works for some time, but generally we will not know ourselves. We hope the village will enjoy its smooth passage for several years as only emergencies are allowed to dig up the new road for some time.

I would like to thank Janet for her good sense, guidance and support and Vicky for minute taking."

Finance and General Purposes Committee Report

The Chairman, Cllr Hardingham, gave her report: "The Finance & General Purposes Committee sees to the business side of running the Parish Council to make sure our books balance and that we comply with our statutory obligations. It also oversees staffing matters. The Council has five employees: Janet, our Parish Clerk, Vicky, our new assistant clerk, Tara and Archie, the two village orderlies, and Roger, the gardener for the burial ground and Church Lodge island. All are part-time, with Janet working four days a week in the office in the Pavilion.

Each year the Parish Council makes a number of grants to local organisations. The largest grant is to the Long Ashton Community Association (LACA) for the running of this Community Centre. Last year, the grant was approximately £27,000. As the village now has a population of just over 6,000, that works out at about £4.50 a head a year. I believe this is very good value for the facilities available: the playground, football pitch, bowling green, tennis courts, café, the variety of classes and clubs that meet here. It ticks all the boxes for physical activity, healthy living, social interaction and it is used by all ages. Thanks to all the volunteers who make it work. I would like particularly to pay tribute to Sara Taylor for her long service as LACA's treasurer and wish her well on her retirement from LACA.

You may be pleased to know that agreement has now been reached with the University so that the drainage of the main football pitch will be improved. The maintenance of Peel Park, the amenity areas and the two newish playgrounds is covered by the Section 106 payment received from the developer. £218,000 stands in earmarked reserves for that and was originally calculated on the basis of lasting 15 years. We are still at loggerheads with Taylor Wimpey over the issue of Public Art, which they were obliged to provide in the new development. Reluctantly it seems that litigation is inevitable.

The first Community Grant for Long Ashton was decided last July: £2,000 was awarded after a vote at a public meeting here. A Community Grant is a good way of enabling residents to play a direct part in Council spending; and a small grant can make a big difference to a local project. Out of five proposals put forward, the winner was the Long Ashton Growers Co-operative which grows fruit and veg communally on a plot the other side of Ashton Brook from Theynes Croft. They have used the grant for fencing and the initial work in making the land ready for cultivation.

The Youth Club received a grant of £17,000 from the Parish Council. EPIC Youth work hard to provide positive and fresh activities to the young people, such as street dance, dodge ball and cookery. EPIC have been successful in obtaining other grants as well but as ever I am happy to mention their 500 club as they really need this funding and there is the chance of winning a prize each month.

Residents were delighted to see the Christmas lights in the village. This was a good example of a group of residents seeing through a project with great enthusiasm while working with the PC to sort out the necessary details of insurance and funds.

You may have noticed that the Village Directory has not been reprinted for a number of years. The number of activities has grown in the village and details change rapidly to the extent that it is a mammoth task to stay up-to-date.

There is a great deal of information on the Parish Council website and anyone who does not have access to this, please ask Janet who will always print out the relevant pages for you. But organisations have not always updated their details so if you are involved with any group, please check the Parish Council website and let Janet know of any changes.

For the very latest updates, the Parish Clerk has started tweeting. Do try following her on Twitter; you can also see the tweets on the Parish Council website, so for example last week she flagged up the blood donor session in the village hall and what was happening on the road resurfacing. The cornerstone of Parish Council communication remains the village newsletter three times a year but we want to reach as many residents as we can, using the new media available.

In the last month, you will have received your Council Tax demand for the financial year just started. The part of Council Tax that is paid to the Parish Council is £145,000: this means a 1% increase for a Band D property to £56.60, about an extra 1p a week. We believe this is a reasonable and realistic budget for the variety of activities and responsibilities that the Council funds. The fighting fund for any development issues now stands at £75,000. The cost of emptying a dog bin has gone up to £5 a week so a total of about £6,000 for the Parish Council for the year.

Finally thank you to Janet, who deals so well with all that is thrown at her. The Council now has the general power of competence, thanks in large part to Janet's hard work and qualifications. Thanks also to Vicky, who has quickly got to grips with our work and to the members of F&GP for the time they have given. Unusually we had nine councillors retire after many years of service on the Council and in many cases, on F&GP; thanks to all of them for their input over many years.

A copy of last year's audited accounts are available at the door as you leave."

Long Ashton Neighbourhood Development Plan

Cllr Fordham gave a report: "I'd like to start by giving a bit of background to the NDP, for those who don't know what it is. The plan has been developed by the PC with the help of local residents, businesses and interest groups.

Background

The Localism Act 2011 introduced new rights and powers to allow local communities to shape new development by coming together to plan development in their area.

Long Ashton Parish Council received front-runner funding in 2011 to produce a neighbourhood development plan for the Long Ashton neighbourhood area. The neighbourhood area, the whole of Long Ashton parish, was confirmed on 11 March 2013. A draft plan was published for consultation in February 2014.

Neighbourhood planning can be taken forward by town and parish councils in North Somerset in the following ways:

- Town and parish councils can prepare planning policies for the development and use of land in a neighbourhood - a mini local plan. They can allocate sites for development and shouldn't promote less development than the existing local plan for the area.
- neighbourhood development orders
Communities can use neighbourhood planning to permit the developments they want to see - in full or in outline - without planning applications.
- community right to build order
Communities can prepare a right to build order, allowing them to build new homes or facilities without the need for a separate planning application. For more information visit the Homes and Communities Agency website.

What conditions do neighbourhood plans have to meet?

To make sure the plans are legally compliant and take account of other local and national policies, the plans have to meet a number of conditions before they can be put to a community referendum and legally come into force. Neighbourhood plans must be in line with:

- national planning policy
- strategic policies in the development plan for the local area, for example our core strategy
- EU obligations (strategic Environmental Assessment, Environmental Impact Assessment, Habitats Regulation Assessment, as necessary) and human rights requirements
- plans must also promote sustainable development

Long Ashton's neighbourhood plan

This was submitted to NS council on 5th August 2014 for assessment and publicized for consultation between 25th August and 13th October 2014. The NDP group then went through responding to all consultation comments, of which there were many.

An independent external examiner was appointed who visited Long Ashton and assessed the plan. North Somerset Council fed back our combined comments to the examiner a few weeks ago. The examiner's final report came in today and will be taken to NSC Executive on 23rd June for approval and then is ready to go to referendum in July. There may be some final tweaks before it is sent to the executive, but they are broadly happy with it.

Once approved it will replace other North Somerset Council planning policies which cover Long Ashton. This means that developers wanting to build in Long Ashton will need to refer to the Long Ashton NDP and comply with the standards we have set.

Other policies within the neighbourhood plan will:

- protect areas of local green space from development
- protect the open countryside between Long Ashton and Bristol
- protect recreation and community facilities
- support shops, services and businesses within the village

- reduce traffic speeds through the village and make it a more pedestrian-friendly environment.

Other North Somerset neighbourhood plans

The Backwell Neighbourhood Plan went to referendum on Thursday 26th February, with 96% of votes being in favour of the Plan, which asked:

"Do you want North Somerset Council to use the Neighbourhood Plan for Backwell to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?"

It is likely our referendum question will be similar.

Other plans in progress are:

- Winscombe and Sandford
- Wrington
- Yatton
- Claverham.

3. Parochial Charity Accounts

The accounts of the trustees to the Parochial Charity for 2013-14 were displayed on the noticeboard at the end of the room.

4. Resolutions of which written notice has been given to the Clerk of the Parish Council

None.

5. Question & Answer session:

John Ives Q: With regard to the Neighbourhood Development, it's always been unclear to me who funds the expensive projects within that plan - especially within highways. Does the PC have any powers to raise funds from the precept to pay for what's in the plan?

A: We identified things that we wanted to do in the village and put these in the NDP. We don't have money for all of them. However, we asked the consultant who helped us with the NDP for ideas for funding and the general advice was that we'd have a better chance of getting funds with the NDP than without. The Parish Council, however, can raise money for some projects in the NDP.

John Ives Q: Will a cap be put on taxing local people? Is it a bottomless pit as to what you fund?

A: The PC has to be responsible for funding using public money. Whatever we fund will be open and transparent and electors will be able to see it.

A: We have put aside small amounts of money for the village enhancement scheme already.

John Ives: Q: But there will be no veto?

A: The PC is an elected body. We accept your trust. We are trusted with money that's raised through the precept.

John Ives Q: If you want to raise more money for earmarked reserves, you would simply raise the precept?

A: We balance the needs of the village with asking people to pay more and I believe that we have taken a responsible approach to setting the precept.

John Ives Q: When you mention the speed cameras? What's the budget and do you have any evidence that the current camera has reduced speeds?

A: The budget is £3,500. An article I've recently read from the Department of Transport says that speed cameras do reduce speeds.

John Ives Q: Have you had any evidence for Long Ashton?

A: No, not for Long Ashton as such. What the speed sign does do is collect data on drivers' speeds, along with dates and times. We can record an average of these speeds and take this to North Somerset and the Police in order to implement any necessary changes.

John Ives Q: The first one hasn't worked or you don't know if it's worked, why are you buying another one?

A: It's fair to say that when people encounter the speed sign and their speed comes up in red, that we see people applying their brakes.

Mrs Blanks Walden Q: Where are you going to put the new speed sign?

A: We need to talk to North Somerset about an appropriate position.

Mrs Blanks Walden Q: What other steps are you taking to tackle speeding in the village? Will you be considering a 20mph limit?

A: We may be able to consider it in the central area of the village. North Somerset's criterion for a 20mph limit is that the road has to be a design or layout where people would drive at that limit.

Mrs Blanks Walden Q: I've been told that there are two criteria: that the police would enforce it and that the Parish Council needs to pass an order that makes it legal.

A: We've tried for a 20mph limit for 12 years with Providence Lane, and all we got was a white line in a bit further into the road, although some of the regulations may have changed on 20mph.

A: We're sympathetic and it's something we'll discuss.

A: We've put forward four possible sites for new speed cameras, but we can't use these sites unless the police and North Somerset approve them. It costs £250 to erect each post.

Angela Neale Q: Can I say how pleased we are to have a new road surface. Could you also pass on our thanks to the workmen for their courtesy? One carried my shopping for me as I couldn't access my drive. Please will you let us know whether they'll be coming back, however, to ensure that the gully covers can be removed for emptying? Most are tarmacked in at the moment.

A: We'll investigate this. Thank you.

Mary Magro Q: Could you let me know what the situation is with the shops, such as Wool & Things, for example? Do we have any influence over the shops or are they private?

A: The area just outside the shops belongs to the shops.

A: But North Somerset owns halfway across from the pizza shop, and they have resurfaced this land.

A: With regard to influence over what happens with the shops, we can only comment on planning applications. Our NDP says that shops should remain as shops, but there are permitted development rights. We can't do much.

Stafford Gundry Q: Last year I asked about the clock. Can I have an update please?

A: It's with a clock mender in Bristol that's been very slow.

Bob Cook Q: When the Chairman says that the road was resurfaced as compensation or by lobbying by district councillors, what actually happened is that when we got confirmation that the money was available, we also realised that the bypass would be closed and we had to delay the resurfacing. My question is: Why do cyclists not want to use the cycleway?

A: On the last day of resurfacing, the contractors spent another two hours resurfacing and had to redirect cyclists, who were told to use the cycleway. Two out of three cyclists said 'what cycleway?' It seems that they don't recognise the cycleway. However, we're hoping that pedestrians will now find it easier to use the pavement on other side of the road, and that more cyclists will use the cycleway.

David Neale Q: - We were told by Cllr Miss Uppington that the core strategy is going to the Secretary of State and that he's going to review it. Given that the Neighbourhood Plan has got to comply with the Core Strategy, is there any certainty that the Secretary of State will have responded in time for the referendum?

A: This is an issue that we've had to recognise throughout the plan preparation. We've been told we can go ahead with the NDP although core strategy hasn't been finalised. There's no allocation for housing in Long Ashton. If there's an allocation for Long Ashton then we'll have to look again at the plan.

David Neale Q: Would we need a second referendum?

A: The NDP stands as long as it's approved by the executive. When we vote for it, if it complies with core strategy at the time, then it stands.

Stuart McQuillan Q: What's the prospect of other Long Ashton roads getting attention now the main road resurfacing has nearly finished?

A: North Somerset has put aside money for resurfacing side roads, and we had an action at the last highways meeting, to identify a priority list of roads that we will send to North Somerset.

Angela Neale Q: White lines only exist in places. What's the difference in status between white lines and not?

A: Nothing. You can park anywhere where there's a white line.

Melanie King and Elizabeth Summers from Bristol Airport gave a presentation on the airport's history and its future development plans.

Bristol Airport was first used by passengers in 1930 and remained popular throughout the war, and to politicians and other passengers who valued its quiet, out-of-the-way location. In 1957, the Duchess of Kent opened the first terminal and since then, adaptations have regularly been made to accommodate increasing passenger numbers. In 2014, 6.3 million passengers came through Bristol and, bearing in mind the airport's catchment area of the South West and South Wales (10 million potential passengers) it's now necessary to expand the site further. In 2009, the airport applied for – and received – planning permission to grow its infrastructure to deal with 10 million passengers; extensions to the east and west terminals that are currently underway will mean a bigger departure lounge in July 2015 and better car parking. There will be a multi-storey car park on the main north side of the airport, and a Hilton hotel which will open next year. There will be more seating, shops, as well as an upstairs terrace, restaurant and bar. There are developments planned for surrounding roads and junctions to manage the increased traffic flow, whilst the airport has also contributed financially to updating the road network around Bristol, as part of its broader commitment to the local area.

Local councillors can report any concerns or comments to the airport at regular community meetings, while the airport also runs a Local Community Fund which gives grants to local bodies operating in parishes right around the airport. In all, the airport contributes more than £100,000 every year to local environmental, transport, educational and sustainability projects.

The airport is also working with airlines to reduce noise and carbon emissions, and last year launched a bio bus run by human and household waste to mark Bristol's year as European Green Capital. There are also plans for some airport workers to use electric vehicles on their around airport journeys.

Ultimately, the airport aims to reduce leakage from its catchment area to London airports, and to encourage local people to fly from Bristol airport. While it also hopes to attract more long-haul transatlantic flights, it keeps careful track of the numbers of aircraft using the airport, and noise levels.

A question and answer session followed the presentation:

Q: With new car park, when you expand upwards, you knock out space. What's your strategy?

A: We have surface level car parking approved already. When we do the expansion, we need to still be providing car parking, so the development is planned for over the winter, when we have fewer passengers.

Q: Is the extra car parking on the south or north side?

A: There is some extra car parking planned for the south side, which hasn't been built yet. There's no more space for surface level parking on the north side. When the multi-storey car park is finished, it won't just mean more spaces, it's a lot to do with a better Public Transport Interchange. A bridge will take passengers from the top level right into the terminal.

Q: With regard to the surface access car parking, will there be rapid transit?

A: No, there are no plans for rapid transit for passengers.

Q: You're signalling the Downside Road junction. Are there any plans for signals at the West Lane junction leading to Winford?

A: Originally it was to be signalised too but North Somerset has now said that it doesn't want to signalise West Lane, so there will be a box there for waiting traffic.

Q: In terms of leakage to Heathrow, and the cheaper cost of flying from Heathrow, how are you going to make the cost to passengers of flying from Bristol Airport competitive?

A: The cost really depends on where you're flying to. EasyJet and Ryanair are competitive, and we're looking at plans for more long haul flights in the future. However, we don't set the prices; it is the airlines that do this.

Q: With regard to your target of reducing carbon target emissions; won't your carbon footprint increase rather than decrease?

A: The carbon footprint will increase a bit, but not dramatically. For example, we're doing things as we develop to reduce our carbon emissions – with the Western Walkway for instance, we fitted new, more efficient, lights. Also, up to 15% of our passengers use public transport – 21,000 passengers alone used the Airport flyer bus service in 2013.

Q: Can we improve local public transport to the airport? There's no way to get there very early or very late from surrounding local villages.

A: We will look at this in the near future. We do contribute to transport networks through our section 106 payments, and at the moment, we're looking at getting a better direct service from Weston-super-Mare.

Q: Are there any times when there are no flights allowed?

A: We operate 24 hours a day. Between 11:30pm and 6:00am, however, we are only allowed a restricted number of flights: 3,000 in the summer, 900 in winter. There are also limits applied on the amount of noise that any aircraft can make.

Q: Could I ask that when you're developing the airport, you add lots more seating, and consider reducing the space given to your retail offering?

A: The extensions will mean that, from July, there's plenty more seating space and an improved experience for passengers.

Q: Cardiff Airport has been taken over by the Welsh Government and they say they'll abolish transport tax. This will obviously affect numbers of passengers flying from Bristol?

A: Yes, there's a chance that APD – airport passenger duty - could be devolved to the Welsh Government. We're aware of this, and keeping an eye on it.

Q: Could there be an interchange at the Long Ashton Park & Ride for the Airport Flyer bus service?

A: I don't know where our stops will be at the moment, but this is something that we'll look at.