



Member Forum – 5.00 – 6.00 pm, 15 September 2015

**This document sets out details of questions
received from councillors and the replies from the Mayor**

1. QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS:

Procedural note:

- Councillors are entitled to submit up to 2 written questions.
- Councillors are also entitled to ask a maximum of 2 supplementary questions at the forum.
- If a councillor has submitted 2 questions on 2 separate topics, they may ask both of their supplementary questions on just one of the topics if they so wish, or may ask one question on each of the 2 separate topics. All supplementary questions though must arise directly out of the original question or the reply.
- Replies to all questions will be given verbally. A follow-up written reply will be provided within 10 working days of the meeting.
- Via the group leaders/ whips, each group has submitted their questions in priority order.
- At the forum, the Labour group's "top priority question" will be dealt with first, followed by the respective top priority questions from the Conservative, Green and Liberal Democrat groups (the sequence is based on the number of seats held by each group), followed by the question from the UKIP councillor.
- After these "top priority" questions have been dealt with, questions will continue to "rotate" between the groups, taken in priority order as submitted by each group.

The following questions were submitted:

A. Questions from the LABOUR Group (listed in order of priority):

LAB. Q 1 - City of Sanctuary

LAB. Q 2 – Hartcliffe Way Recycling Centre

LAB. Q 3 - BME Make-up of Bristol City Council

LAB. Q 4 - Save South Purdown

LAB. Q 5 - Bicycle Salary Sacrifice Scheme

LAB. Q 6 - East Bristol swimming pool

LAB. Q 7 - Funding for Health Visitors and the 0-5 Healthy Child Programme

LAB. Q 8 - Mental Health Support in Schools

LAB. Q 9 - Proliferation of Off-Licences on Stapleton Road

LAB. Q 10 - Re-Opening Railway Station in South Bristol

LAB. Q 11 - Brownfield Sites

LAB. Q 12 - Access to Work

LAB. Q 13 - Under Occupancy Charge (Bedroom Tax)

B. Questions from the CONSERVATIVE Group (listed in order of priority):

CON Q1 Cllr Goulandris – Closure of Prince Street swing bridge

CON Q2 Cllr Morris – Prince Street bridge

CON Q3 Cllr Weston – Libraries for the Future

CON Q4 Cllr Abraham – Parking on Bristol Downs

CON Q5 Cllr Eddy – Staff beverages budget

CON Q6 Cllr Watson – Impact of swing bridge repairs

CON Q7 Cllr Windows – Swing bridge ‘Snail’s pace’ refurbishment

CON Q8 Cllr Eddy – Hartcliffe Way recycling centre

C. Questions from the GREEN Group (listed in order of priority):

GP Q1 Cllr Hance – Syrian Refugees

GP Q2 Cllr Clarke – Road safety at Ashton Gate Primary School

GP Q3 Cllr Hoyt – Glyphosate use by the council in public spaces

GP Q4 Cllr Telford – Council budget cuts

GP Q5 Cllr Bolton – Bristol Sport and Ashton Gate Stadium

GP Q6 Cllr Fodor – Warm Up Bristol

GP Q7 Cllr Bolton – Cycling on Winterstoke ring road

GP Q8 Cllr Fodor – 20mph limit

D. Questions from the LIBERAL DEMOCRAT Group (listed in order of priority):

LD Q1 Cllr Negus – Port Land Sale

LD Q2 Cllr Morgan – Dementia Aware Training

LD Q3 Cllr Morgan – Tree Sponsorship

LD Q4 Cllr Kent – Solar Energy

LD Q5 Cllr Hopkins – Three Lamps Junction

E. Questions from the UKIP. Group (listed in order of priority):

NONE RECEIVED

Question(s) to the Mayor from Cllr Mike Wollacott, Labour, Brislington East.

City of Sanctuary

In light of the increasing fiscal constraints imposed by central government, what representations has the Mayor made, to ensure that adequate sustainable support is available to meet our commitments as a City of sanctuary?

Reply:

- The City of Sanctuary movement is committed to building a culture of hospitality and welcome, especially for refugees seeking sanctuary from war and persecution. It is a national network of local groups and includes boroughs, towns and cities across the UK and Ireland, all committed to building this culture of welcome across every sphere of society. The best way to support refugees and asylum seekers is to create the conditions for them to be independent and have the means to earn a wage and support themselves and their families to live the lives that they want to live and contribute to our communities.
- I have lobbied government to ease the rules on work, to enable people to work. Officers have been in discussion with Citizens UK and local citizens and representatives specifically to discuss the Syrian crisis and in March this year I wrote to David Cameron setting out the case for a long term and sustainable funding solution. Bristol, like all councils should work with government to ensure that any programme to resettle people is fully funded and fair.
- Officers are working to assess the financial and other implications of any resettlement programme in Bristol and are in touch with the Local Government Association and Home Office to ensure that support to meet not just housing but health, education and social needs and to understand how we can use money diverted from the foreign aid budget to support Syrian refugees for the long term.
- I am thankful to the many Bristol citizens who give up their time and effort to support and welcome asylum seekers in our city and am determined to work with statutory services as well as voluntary groups and others to maximise the benefit of that generosity.

Supplementary Question:

Considering the fiscal constraints the council faces will the Mayor be redoubling his efforts to stop the inevitable friction that will happen if there is inadequate resource put into supporting those most vulnerable in our society at the moment in addition to our obligations to refugees?

Reply to Supplementary Question:

- I think there is an equal obligation. I have had quite a lot of negative responses from people as a result of my offer to house a refugee. One example is that I don't care about military veterans or the homeless which of course is complete nonsense.
- This polarisation I think is very negative and dangerous and I think we need to give equal care and support to those who are less well off than ourselves whatever their circumstances.
- It is impossible to watch what is happening across the world without forming an obligation to help in whatever way we can. That is why I am emphasising that we must identify the ways we can support refugees that are welcomed into this city to avoid accusations we are displacing services already in place for desperate people the city.

Question(s) to the Mayor from Cllr Celia Phipps, Labour, Bedminster

Hartcliffe Way Recycling Centre

Given that recycling levels in the city have declined in the period 14/15 and local residents in South Bristol are experiencing increased problems with fly-tipping and waste management in general, it is disappointing that the proposed Recycling Centre on the Hartcliffe Way is not yet in use, despite the Budget amendment prioritising the facility.

1. Whilst a new “repair” centre is in the early stages of development, can the plans for this, which the Mayor has started, be shared at the earliest opportunity?
2. The banner outside the Hartcliffe Way depot says the facility is coming “soon”. What is the estimated time-scale for a start on-site and an eventual opening?

Question 1 response:

- The opportunity for a Reuse hub/centre is something that I would love to see in Bristol and in time I hope its feasibility will be looked at. I have talked to some of the potential social enterprises concerned who are getting together to see whether they can put a proposal to the cabinet as to how they might work with us. In addition, I’ve asked officers to come back to me on this issue.

Question 2 response:

- The council has identified that a third Recycling Centre in the south of the city is something that it believes is a priority. However it is still necessary to identify where the full funding can come from to be able to run such a facility and make it effective. We have the capital funding identified but not the revenue funding identified to run such a facility and make it effective. As I have always said, it will happen when there is a business case.

Supplementary Question:

Do you have a specific date in mind as we have a major issue with waste management in South Bristol?

Reply to Supplementary Question:

I have spent a lot of time looking at the issue with waste management officers and from my observations the proximity of a recycling centre does not have a great effect upon the level of fly tipping that takes place across the city. However, we do recognise that an additional recycling centre that’s based near Hartcliffe Way would be a benefit.

Question(s) to the Mayor from Cllr Afzal Shah, Labour, Easton

BME Make-up of Bristol City Council

According to Bristol City Council's own figures, the make-up of the existing workforce demonstrates a comparative lack of diversity.

BME managers by directorate as at March 2015:

Business Change and City Director – 6.41%

Neighbourhoods – 4.86%

People – 6.33%

Place – 5.33%

What action is the council taking to rectify the imbalance of BME representation of senior officers in post at Bristol City Council to fully reflect the diversity of the city of Bristol and support the Council's claim of being an equal opportunity employer and can I also ask for the City Director to take action in this regard?

Reply:

- I am supporting the Race Equality Manifesto for the City with whom I have been working closely.
- The Council is currently establishing a Corporate Equalities Group, which will take the lead in ensuring that our workforce at all levels reflects Bristol's diversity. This new group will be chaired by a Strategic Director, and will be made up of representatives from across the Council, including from the new Staff-Led Groups for BME, Disabled, LGBT and Young employees. The first meeting of the new group is being arranged for the autumn.
- We are also promoting staff led groups for all of the equalities protected characteristic groups including BME employees

Supplementary Question:

As an equal opportunities employer, how do these figures stack-up with other Core Cities?

Reply to Supplementary Question:

- It is a comparison we should make and I will look into that comparison as part of this process.
- I don't think it is a matter of whether we are better or worse than other Core Cities. I think the more the Council's staff and elected members reflect the nature of our population the better we serve that population.

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Estella Tincknell, Labour, Lockleaze ward

Save South Purdown

Local residents are extremely pleased that the proposals for the development of sports pitches on the South Purdown open space are now 'on hold' pending various reports.

Could the Mayor therefore please provide an update on the timescales and progress in relation to the wildlife survey, the mapping exercise of current uses, and the assessment of alternative locations that have been promised?

Reply:

- I share the pleasure of local residents regarding the plans for South Purdown being on hold – not least because that is what I asked for. I strongly favour the land behind Eastville Library as a workable solution for the school and the community and have asked officers to bring a more detailed feasibility study exploring viability of the best alternative locations – due for completion 16th October 2015.
- In specific answer to your questions:
 - Ecology survey that considers the wildlife of the proposed pitch locations on South Purdown – Completed April 2015
 - High level option appraisal considering possible alternative locations and mapping of current uses – Completed August 2015
 - A more detailed feasibility study exploring viability of the best alternative locations – Due for completion 16th October 2015
 - A schedule to allow the findings to be shared with Mayor, Elected Members, local residents and other key stakeholders to be agreed.

Supplementary Question:

Local resident do still have considerable concerns about these proposals.

I would like to ask that those reports are sent to Cllr Kirk and myself. We have asked for them and haven't received them except for the wildlife survey that was completed before the meeting in June and yet no one informed us that had taken place.

Would the Mayor meet with me, Cllr Kirk and other local residents who are concerned about South Purdown so we can discuss the proposed plans?

Reply to Supplementary Question:

I will meet you when we have an answer to the practical feasibility of the alternative option and I am absolutely with you in wanting to save South Purdown.

Question(s) to the Mayor from Cllr Chris Jackson, Labour, Filwood

Bicycle Salary Sacrifice Scheme

Can councillors and mobile workers have access to the salary sacrifice bike purchasing scheme?

Reply:

- Yes
- In line with HMRC rules, the bike salary sacrifice scheme is open to all Bristol City Council employees and Councillors who are UK taxpayers and who will be in post for the 12-month salary sacrifice period, as long as their earnings are more than the National Minimum Wage after the salary sacrifice is taken. In the case of employees, they must also have passed their probationary period in order to access the scheme.

Question(s) to the Mayor from Cllr Ron Stone, Labour, St George West Ward.

East Bristol swimming pool

1. East Bristol Pool was stolen from our residents over 10 years ago. At the Budget Meeting in May two Capital Projects were reinstated in the declared Capital Programme. One the new Recycling Plant in South Bristol, the other a Replacement Pool for East Bristol.

With the City Mayor refusing the new Recycling Plant and cancelling the project, what are his intentions regarding our Swimming pool and it's much demanded replacement?

2. With the Revenue Costs for running a new pool forming part of any decision, a Demand Survey is an obvious tool in calculating those costs year on year. Is it true that a Demand Survey is being carried out in South Gloucester areas and NOT in local adjoining Wards to the suggested Pool siting in Speedwell, if so WHY?

Question 1 Response:

- I have asked officers to bring me a report on the feasibility of East Bristol Pool in October, on the strength of the business case for this facility. The business case must be able to demonstrate no subsidy as this is the approach we are working towards for all our leisure facilities.

Question 2 response:

- South Gloucestershire, like us, are undertaking demand modelling work. In Bristol, officers are working with Sport England to gain an updated understanding concerning supply and demand across the whole city. This work will come back as part of the report on Bristol East Pool in October.

Question(s) to the Mayor from Cllr Gill Kirk, Labour, Lockleaze.

Funding for Health Visitors and the 0-5 Healthy Child Programme

This October 2015 the responsibility for commissioning public health services for children aged 0-5 (the 0-5 Healthy Child Programme) will transfer from NHS England to local authorities. The 0-5 Healthy Child Programme will be the main universal health service for improving the health and wellbeing of children and their families. Health visitors are key to leading on this programme, as they cover areas such as maternal mental health, breastfeeding, safeguarding including domestic violence and sensitive family relationships, reducing obesity, managing minor illness and accident prevention, and school readiness.

At the same time we know that the Government is cutting £200 million from local authority public health budgets.

What measures will the Mayor be taking to safeguard the funding of health visiting and 0-5 children's services in Bristol?

Reply:

- In October this year the Council will take over the commissioning of the health visiting service from NHS England. We already commission school nurses, so this will mean that we are responsible for the commissioning of the healthy child programme from 0-19 years old.
- The funding will be transferred to the public health budget in Bristol City Council. The funding that currently is paid to commission health visitors has seen a substantial increase over the last 2 years and this funding will be used to continue to fund the health visiting services at its current capacity for this year and 2016/2017.
- We do not yet know how the reduction in funding to public health nationally will affect us in Bristol in the future but we acknowledge the importance of investing in Early Years and will continue to prioritise this work as co-chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board with my colleague Dr Martin Jones, Chair of the Clinical Commissioning Group.

Question(s) to the Mayor from Cllr Gill Kirk, Labour, Lockleaze

Mental Health Support in Schools

At full council in May 2015 representatives from the Bristol City Youth Council told us one of their key priorities was to see a more pro-active rather than reactive approach to the mental health issues in young people, providing early help and equipping young people with the skills needed to manage their mental health.

Head teachers are more concerned with pupils' mental health than any other issue related to well-being, a survey of 1,180 school leaders suggests.

In February 2015 a Labour budget amendment of £51,000 was agreed, to fund a mental health worker to support schools in caring for their pupils' mental health.

Could the Mayor tell us how this money has been spent?

Reply:

- On 7th July the Emotional Health & Wellbeing Commissioners, chaired by Rebecca Cross, met to discuss with Bristol school representatives a number of options in relation to the £51,000 budget amendment.
- Central to the discussion was how to make best use of a limited resource given a) the large number of schools in the city b) the need to achieve the best outcomes for as many schools as possible in line with identified need.
- It was agreed that the Healthy Schools team would undertake a small commission to develop a resource pack for Secondary Schools, working with schools, to support positive emotional wellbeing. In addition, the successful provider would also work with Healthy Schools to co-ordinate a launch and subsequent training package to support the resource roll-out.
- Healthy Schools are now in the process of developing a tender package in order to commission this piece of work.

Question(s) to the Mayor from Cllr Afzal Shah, Labour, Easton

Proliferation of Off-Licences on Stapleton Road

In the light of 12 off-licences operating and selling alcohol along Stapleton Road, with four granted 24 hour opening licences, night-time noise-nuisance and disruption to local residents is increasing.

Any further addition to these off-licences would prove to be disastrous and totally unacceptable for local people.

They want a solution and I now suggest, on their behalf, that we seek the ability to introduce a Cumulative Impact Assessment designation for Stapleton Road.

Will the Mayor help facilitate a meeting of the relevant licencing officers, local police officers, local councillors and the Council's Director of Public Health as a matter of urgency?

Reply:

- The setting up of Cumulative Impact Areas to help address the oversupply of licensed premises can be a useful tool to ensure that communities do not suffer from associated disturbance and anti-social behaviour from a proliferation of licensed premises. However there may be other approaches using the Licensing system that could achieve the same objective. I will ask for a meeting to be arranged to discuss the issue as requested.

Question(s) to the Mayor from Cllr Mike Langley, Labour, Brislington East

Re-Opening Railway Station in South Bristol

While we are keen to get as much as we can out of the existing rail track in North Bristol with the Henbury Loop as a commuter line, I would like to ask what the Mayor has done to encourage the establishment of commuter lines in South Bristol.

1. What progress has been made on the idea of re-opening the railway stations first at Ashton Gate with the obvious convenience this would afford visitors to the stadium – as well as eliminating hundreds of car journeys?
2. The re-opening of the disused railway station at St Anne's would allow city centre travellers from the wider Brislington area access to the centre within 10 minutes instead of the 45 minutes they now waste on the No. 36 bus service. What progress has been made on re-opening this station?

Reply:

- Phase 1 of the MetroWest programme includes the re-opening of the Portishead branch line which is expected to serve Bedminster and Parson Street stations.
- A feasibility study has been undertaken to explore options for a new station at Ashton Gate. The initial study found that while it is not currently feasible to build a new Ashton Gate station as part of Phase 1, it will stay in the MetroWest 'new stations package' and could be developed when funding and business case allow.
- Regarding the former station at St Anne's; as part of the MetroWest Rail programme, transport consultants Halcrow undertook a study in 2012 which included an examination of the feasibility of introducing new stations on the MetroWest network. The study concluded that only one additional station on the Bristol to Bath section would be operationally feasible and it was recommended that any new station located be in Saltford.

Question(s) to the Mayor from Cllr Olly Mead, Labour, Horfield

Brownfield Sites

What steps is the Mayor taking to promote development on agreed potential development sites in Bristol, especially brownfield, rather than green open spaces that presently provide the few pockets of good quality air in the city?

Reply:

- Maximising opportunities to re-use previously developed land – brownfield land – is central to Bristol's planning and regeneration strategy. Since 2006 between 86% and 98% of all new homes completed annually have been on previously developed land. This approach is set to continue. The Bristol Local Plan allocates 130 sites for development, 107 of which are brownfield sites. Bristol Temple Quarter is one of the UK's largest regeneration projects which will bring forward the arena, workspaces and new homes on brownfield land in the centre of the city.
- The Bristol Local Plan protects more than 500 green spaces across the city as Important Open Space.

Question(s) to the Mayor from Cllr Sue Milestone, Labour, St George West**Access to Work**

I am very concerned about changes to Access to Work support for BSL users and disabled people. Changes to Access to Work mean that deaf, blind, hearing impaired and disabled people have had their funding cut resulting in unrealistic budgets for in-work support that no longer meets their needs. The budgets are insufficient to fund qualified interpreters and personal assistants and prevent personal choice and control, placing jobs at risk.

Access to Work isn't a benefit and doesn't incur a cost to government - in fact it brings money into the treasury. Yet deaf and disabled people are having their support allowance capped or cut, meaning they can no longer afford to use qualified interpreters or access the support they need. This places jobs at risk and has already resulted in job losses and demotions. People currently in work are potentially being forced out of work and onto benefits, which goes against everything the government is telling us they are trying to achieve. Deaf and disabled people bring a vast amount of skill and insight to the workforce and we can't afford to lose them. Personal choice and control needs to be handed back to the individual deaf and disabled people who use the scheme.

What measures is the Mayor putting in place to ensure that full support is provided for BCC employees and councillors, so that people are able to gain, maintain and progress in their chosen careers and what measures will the mayor put in place to bridge the gap left by the changes to Access to Work support for BSL users and disabled employees and councillors within Bristol City Council?

Reply:

- Research is currently being undertaken with the Department for Work and Pensions and a small group of current recipients of Access to Work funding in order to establish the likely impact of these changes. The Council has a limited budget that can be used to top-up funding. However, as an employer the Council has an overriding duty under the Equality Act 2010 to make adjustments to a job role and working environment where an employee has a disability.

Question(s) to the Mayor from Cllr Sue Milestone, Labour, St George West

Under Occupancy Charge (Bedroom Tax)

How many tenants have received notices seeking possession because of rent arrears brought about by the Under Occupancy Charge (Bedroom Tax) and what advice and support is being provided for them this year and in 2016?

Reply:

- In June 2015, a snapshot of tenants subject to the Under Occupancy Charge (UOC) showed 2,115 BCC tenants subject to Housing Benefit reduction due to under occupation. 365 tenants have received a notice of seeking possession which includes bedroom tax arrears. Some of these tenants will have had pre-existing arrears prior to the introduction of UOC in April 2013.
- UOC tenants in higher arrears are offered a range of advice including:
 - Diagnostic arrears discussion with a Housing Adviser
 - Advice for claiming discretionary housing payments
 - Income maximisation advice
 - Debt and budget advice
 - Referral for tenancy support
 - Affordable repayment plans
 - Advice on rehousing options and exchanges
- In October a separate team (four posts) is being formed within Rent Management focusing on tenants impacted by welfare reform changes including UOC, benefit cap and universal credit.
- In January 2015 Housing Delivery launched pilot to help tenants downsize. Currently we are working with 40 tenants affected by the UOC, 20 tenants have moved and we have prevented three tenants from being evicted. We are extending the pilot to 2017 to identify resources required to support those tenants affected by UOC and wider Welfare Benefit Reform (WBR) changes, as part of the council-wide project to help mitigate impact of Welfare Benefit Reform.

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor John Goulandris

Subject: Closure of Prince Street swing bridge

1. What mitigating measures (such as changing traffic light phasing) are in place to cope with any increase in displaced traffic volumes created by the closure of the Prince Street Swing Bridge?

2. Can the Mayor confirm that motorists will be able to use this strategically important crossing once it reopens next year?

Question 1 response:

- Traffic capacity is limited by existing road space. The traffic control centre uses a variety of tools to manage the network and react to road works to make the most of the capacity available. CCTV cameras, variable message signs and the SCOOT traffic control system are all being used to mitigate the impact of the changes in traffic flows caused by the closure of Prince Street Bridge. This happens on a second by second basis throughout the day.

Question 2 response:

- These proposed works are essential structural repairs as part of urgent maintenance requirements for the bridge. There are currently no plans at the moment to change the traffic requirement use of this bridge which includes maritime traffic, motorists, cyclists and pedestrians.
- The intention is to replace up to 15 heavily corroded steel beams and other urgent structural repairs works to ensure the continuing performance of this swing bridge. The bridge deck and surfacing will be replaced with new materials and subject to programme time and budget restraints the bridge will hopefully also be repainted throughout.

Supplementary Question 1:

We have a situation where there is a queue a mile long on one road going back from Marsh Street right the way through to the bridge area and the traffic is flowing freely on Baldwin Street. Why is that happening if SCOOT is so wonderful?

Reply to Supplementary Question 1:

The capacity of the city is overstretched. If you get over 50,000 people driving into the city at roughly the same time you are bound to get some problems in the centre of the city.

Supplementary Question 2:

I passed by the works today twice and very little was happening. Can you tell me when we are going to put some people onto this job because there was only one person working on it today?

Reply to Supplementary Question 2:

- There has been a huge amount of activity already and a lot of the survey work has been done which could not have been done until the bridge was made accessible.
- They are currently working on the right hand half looking from Prince Street Bridge while the left hand half is used for cyclists and pedestrians.
- The temporary bridge which is well advanced in its construction, when that is in use then activity will increase.
- Survey information is being used to order the materials.
- It is timed as a sixth month project and I have made it very clear that I do not wish for it to take longer than six months.

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Graham Morris

Subject: Prince Street bridge

1. Whenever a temporary road closure is made in the City Centre e.g. when the Harbourside Festival takes place, all nearby businesses and residents receive a letter from the Council. What prior consultation took place and/or how many letters have been sent in respect of the closure of Prince Street Bridge?
2. Given the traffic chaos that has ensued, has the Mayor written to employers, asking them to consider staggering arrival and departure times for their staff?

Question 1 response:

- The TTRO (Temporary Traffic Regulation Order) for Prince Street Bridge was submitted on the 1st June 2015. The dates of the closure were advertised on site from the 17th August 2015 for a period of 6 months. The normal TTRO notification process was followed which includes the placement of statutory adverts in the press.
- The works on the bridge are normal structural maintenance and BCC are not required to undertake a formal consultation exercise. However given the impact these urgent works would have on the public and the short window of opportunity to design, procure the works and commence on site, BCC undertook the following notifications and consultation:
 - Closure signs on site 31st July.
 - Information letters to all relevant stakeholders on 28th July.
 - "Letter Drop" on Prince Street and Wapping Road on 29th July.
 - Council Officers visited some additional businesses that would be directly affected by the proposed works.

Question 2 response:

- Flexible working arrangements are in place with a large number of employers in the city and it would be usual practice for employees to agree suitable working time arrangements with their employer. Local businesses in the vicinity of Prince Street and Wapping Road were given prior notification and presumably appropriate arrangements would have been made with their employees. As is the case with most road closures, any perceived "spike" in delays to motorists has now reduced significantly as commuter's use the approved alternative diversion routes provided, or have sought alternatives routes to work.

- It should be noted that the swing bridge is only being closed to motor vehicles for the duration of the works and that cyclists and pedestrians are able to use the temporary footbridge provided as normal to cross at this point.

Supplementary Question:

Redcliff roundabout has about ten weeks worth of road works planned and the city centre has now started phase one of the metro bus project. I am concerned about the traffic impact of this activity and concerned for the general public trying to get to their jobs.

Reply to Supplementary Question:

We do everything we can to avoid these types of repair and construction works happening at the same time. We do have some major infrastructure projects happening across the city. Metro Bus will cause some disruption but the payback will be huge and positive.

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Mark Weston**Subject: Libraries for the future**

1. Can the Mayor explain why it is not possible to use the new volunteer corps in the remodelled Service to maintain the existing pattern of opening hours for the branch network?
2. What is the financial saving achieved in reduced overheads/salaries through the proposed across-the-board 25% cut in opening hours?

Question 1 response:

- It is current Bristol City Council policy not to replace paid staff with volunteers and the new library volunteering programme in the library service is to add value to the service and activities that the libraries deliver. The programme has just started and we are looking to develop a programme of community use and volunteers to extend access to libraries outside staffed hours and that will be done in conjunction with each individual library as one size doesn't fit all.

Question 2 response:

As put forward in the cabinet paper:

- Central Library reduces hours by one day and changes to working practices £160,000
- 25% reduction in current opening hours for all libraries with over 20 hours of opening time. £345,000
- Eastville building closure and relocation of some provision is £20,000
- This is a total of £525,000. The library service is also investing in new staff roles and technology which is an additional cost

Supplementary Question 1:

Could you explain why two libraries that are without any input from the community are going to be self-serviced as that does seem to be a centralised motive and not a community move?

You are trialling this in Henbury without anyone in the community being spoken to about it.

Reply to Supplementary Question 1:

Before it is implemented I am sure there will be discussions with you and the community and it is right that there should be.

Supplementary Question 2:

If this information (response to Question 2) is in the Cabinet report and being voted on, doesn't that mean it is going to happen and wouldn't it be better to have the consultation prior to the Cabinet decision?

Reply to Supplementary Question 2:

- There is an order of doing things but there is also the practicality of implementing change.
- Yes there is a cabinet decision but no cabinet decision is entirely cast in stone. This is a matter for discussion.
- You should welcome the fact that Henbury Library is trialling this initiative. I think there are many benefits from it.

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Peter Abraham

Subject: Parking on Bristol Downs

1. There has been a massive public response to the TRO consultation on Downs Parking. Residents support parking restrictions on Stoke Road (the main road linking Clifton to Stoke Bishop and beyond) to allow better flow of cars, buses and public service vehicles, but have robustly opposed other restrictions, which are seen as unnecessary and akin to a sledgehammer to crack a nut. Will you listen to the public?

2. The Stoke Road parking restrictions have been discussed for a very long time. They enjoy public and stakeholder support and failure to implement these much needed changes has caused problems with the local bus service. Extending the debate to wider and unwelcome parking restrictions on the Downs has not helped. We were promised completion by August. When will action be taken?

Reply:

- We want to ensure that the Downs remains a place that everyone can come and enjoy, whilst encouraging greener travel modes
- The general support for the proposed restrictions on Stoke Road is welcomed for all the benefits that these should bring to the movement of through traffic and the reliability of bus services
- The wider restrictions were proposed in order to address other concerns that had been raised over recent years regarding the impact of commuter parking and the availability of parking spaces for visitors to the Downs.

Supplementary Question 1:

The problem is the scheme is too wide. There are elements of it that the public support and other elements that are over the top. Please can you look at these elements?

Supplementary Question 2:

Stoke Road is critical on a daily basis because of the delays, and we are in danger of losing the bus service there unless we get this right. Can you bring this forward for Stoke Road?

Reply to Supplementary Questions 1 & 2:

1. All elements of the scheme are being considered through the objection report and so detailed responses will be given. All of these elements have received both support

and objections so the ultimate decision needs to be based on the balance of all these views.

2. Given the stage we are now at, it would actually take longer to separate out the Stoke Road elements than to continue the process as this would require it to be re-advertised. All comments received during the Statutory Advertisement need to be considered and reported whether these elements are ultimately implemented or not. The decision on what will be implemented will form part of the report.

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Richard Eddy

Subject: Staff beverages budget

Can the Mayor confirm the total cost to the Authority and any budgeted amount of providing unlimited 'free' tea & coffee for staff at the Temple Street and 'Parkview' Council offices?

Reply:

- It costs approximately £50,000 per year to provide milk, coffee and tea for staff, visitors and Councillors at the Temple Street and Parkview offices. This is to service approximately 1,500 staff and works out at £33 per head.
- NB – between September 2014 and August 2015 a total of £19,154.14 was spent on refreshments for Councillor meetings. This figure does not include spend at Mansion House. There are 70 councillors so it works out £273.63 per Councillor.

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Alastair Watson

Subject: Impact of swing bridge repairs

1. Marsh Street now inevitably has a lot more traffic, which backs up for some distance. Has the traffic light sequence been extended at the junction of Marsh Street and Baldwin Street to help the traffic flow and, if so, by how long?
2. Will the road changes to the Centre regarding Metrobus be delayed whilst this bridge is repaired?

Question 1 response:

- Marsh Street has always suffered from long queues at its junction with Baldwin Street due to its proximity to the city centre and associated queues. The junction is managed by the SCOOT system and is linked to the signals across the centre. Timings are adjusted based on overall flows and congestion. No specific changes have been made to the Marsh Street junction but the SCOOT system will automatically make changes as required when flows change.

Question 2 response:

- The intended timing and phasing of these works are specifically targeted to ensure that there is very limited conflict with both the City Centre Works and the Metrobus Schemes. The proposed works programme is to have these essential works completed on Prince Bridge and to have the bridge fully back in operation by mid February 2016.

Once the structural issues on the Bridge were known to Council Officers careful consideration was given as to whether it was feasible to undertake and complete these works within the timeframe available. Unfortunately due to the condition of the bridge we are unable to delay the repairs. The repairs have been programmed to be completed before Metro construction has a significant impact on the network.

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Chris Windows**Subject: Swing bridge 'Snail's Pace' refurbishment**

1. In other European cities such as Amsterdam, critical road works are undertaken on a 24-hours-a-day, 7-days-a-week basis. Why are these urgent repairs set to take 6 months?
2. What is the works programme for Prince Street Bridge?

Question 1 response:

- At the present the extent and scope of the proposed works are not fully known as the bridge deck needs to be totally removed to expose the total extent of corroded cross beams. Once the full extent of the works is known a detailed programme of works will be prepared and programmed for the works durations required. If the extent of the works required are more than originally anticipated within the timeframe available to us, consideration will be given to working 7 days a week or working on a shift cycle basis.
- The timeframe of 6 months was estimated and considered sufficient based on the information available to BCC at the time of procurement of the works. The timeframe also was chosen to ensure that any potential clashes with the other major City Centre Works and the Metrobus Schemes is generally avoided or at least carefully controlled and minimised.

Question 2 response:

- At present the extent and scope of the proposed works are not fully known as the bridge deck needs to be totally removed to expose the full extent of the corroded cross beams. An initial estimated Draft Programme at this stage would be as described below, but it must be stressed, that due to the uncertain nature and extent of the works required, this programme may be subject to major change and amendment as work progresses.
 - 17/08/2015 Road Closure on Prince Street and Wapping Road
 - 18/08/2015 Diversion of Cyclists and Pedestrians
 - 19/08/2015 Setup Site Compound area
 - 20/08/2015 Scaffolding Erection commences on Temporary Footbridge
 - 28/09/2015 Temporary Footbridge Opened to Cyclists/Pedestrians
 - 29/09/2015 Commence removal of bridge decking
 - 12/10/2015 Commence removal of corroded cross beams
 - 09/11/2015 Commence installation of new cross beams.
 - 04/01/2016 Commence reinstallation of Bridge Deck.

- 25/01/2016 Commence removal of Temporary Footbridge
- 15/02/2016 Reopen bridge to motorists, Pedestrians and Cyclists

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Richard Eddy

Subject: Hartcliffe Way recycling centre

"As a relatively 'old-fashioned' Elected Member, who hasn't yet caught on to the fact that Council policy is now formulated by the Mayoral Twitter account, can the Elected Mayor kindly summarise for me the Authority's present Recycling Policy with regard to the proposed Hartcliffe Way Recycling Centre?"

Reply:

- The Council has identified that a third Recycling Centre in the south of the city is something that it believes is a priority. However it is still necessary to identify where the full funding can come from to be able to run such a facility and make it effective. Work is continuing on this.

Question to the Mayor from Councillor Fi Hance

Subject: Welcoming Syrian Refugees

1. I understand that a very productive meeting was held between the Mayor's office, members of the Syrian community, refugee organizations, and civil society on September 1st to discuss Bristol's participation in the government backed Syrian Vulnerable People Relocation Programme. Can the Mayor confirm what action is to be taken to research how Bristol can participate in this programme?
2. Can he also confirm his commitment to Bristol's status as a City of Sanctuary by making every effort to attend the next meeting in October?

Question 1 Response:

- Following the positive meeting held on 1st September, research commenced immediately to obtain further information about the Government's Syrian Vulnerable People Relocation Scheme. This included contacting the Home Office to obtain current information on the Vulnerable Persons Relocation (VPR) Scheme. We agreed in the meeting that what Bristol needs to do is to consider what might be possible in order to create a plan and approach which is sustainable in the long term and services which will be able to meet all of the needs of any resettled people, housing, health, education and social needs.
- We have made contact with the Home Office, Local Government Association and the South West Regional Strategic Migration Partnership to start to pull together information and research to support our approach.
- This is a rapidly changing situation and we have, with our partners, set up a multi-agency working group to look at the financial and other local implications of any resettlement programme in Bristol. In summary, notwithstanding the significant challenges to accommodate, address the health and education needs of any beneficiaries of the scheme, the group is positive in supporting the Council to progress the work required to prepare a one year orientation package in order to make representation to the Home Office to participate in the Syrian VPR Scheme. We are in touch with a number of individuals and organisations representing refugees and asylum seekers and are, with the working group looking at how we can harness and maximise the benefit of the enormous generosity of the people of Bristol.

Question 2 response:

- I will look into it and if my diary allows, would love to come and offer my support.

Supplementary Question 1:

Will you be talking to other local authorities such as Manchester and Glasgow who have already taken the decision to get involved with the government's scheme?

Reply to Supplementary Question 1:

- We will get involved with the government's scheme.
- There is a danger in making a commitment without knowing what you committing to.
- At a time when we have to be more efficient with our services, there is a danger we make a commitment that is a 'blank check' and I simply cannot allow that to happen.
- I need to know what the cost is before making a commitment.
- No other local authority to my knowledge has any more detail from the government than we do.
- It is very important as local authorities, through the Local Government Association, that we co-ordinate this discussion with government in order to make sure the number of refugees we take is sustainable.
- I am very proud of the way Bristol has reacted to this and I want to make sure that Bristol is playing its part but is doing so in tune with local government as a whole and not going out on a limb.

Supplementary Question 2:

Do you have any idea when a decision will be made?

Reply to Supplementary Question 2:

- I am hoping that within a few days we will know the real cost in for one year and five years because those are the crucial times.
- The Government will subsidise the first year. But there is a danger that we reach a cliff edge in Government funding and then we will find ourselves unable to afford what we have promised.
- I want to make quite sure that we can see our way to being able to deal with those long term costs as a city.
- Unfortunately I am unable to give you a date.

Questions to the Mayor from Councillor Stephen Clarke

Subject: Safety at Ashton Gate primary school

Numerous local parents have contacted the two Southville ward councillors (Cllrs Clarke and Bolton) raising concerns about the new Ashton Gate primary school site on Upton Road. The site is unusual in that the playground is separated from the school by a road. There are a number of dangers created by this layout especially as cars are parked along a significant portion of the road, there is no obvious signage that a school is in place and there is no zebra crossing. The potential for disaster is a great worry for parents, especially as the 20mph speed limit seems to be often ignored by motorists. One parent described the scene on the first day back to school as 'chaotic and dangerous' with a considerable number of parents and children crossing the road in the morning – at the same time as traffic goes down the street. Another parent described it as 'an accident waiting to happen'.

Can the Mayor give Southville residents assurances that all necessary actions will be taken to ensure the safety of children attending the new school on Upton Road? Can he further advise us what measures will be taken to ensure their safety?

Reply:

- Cllr Bolton and Clarke have invited me to come and see this issue in person and I will be in touch with them to arrange this.
- I am aware of the safety concerns that have been raised following the opening of the new school building on Upton Road and we are working hard to address these.
- The highway works that have been installed were those that were approved when planning permission was granted.
- A safety review of the highway works has already been undertaken. This supported the concerns about drivers cutting across the new wider footways at the junctions. It also agreed that the School Warning Signs should be installed as soon as possible. It did not identify any other safety issues as needing immediate attention.
- Additional bollards will be installed on the corners of the junctions but as these have a 6 week delivery time, cones have been placed there in the interim.
- The School Warning Signs will be installed on the 17th September.
- These changes should address the immediate concerns however, a review is being undertaken to consider if there are any viable measures that could improve safety further.

- A report is due by the end of next week, so until then I am unable to give any definitive answer as to if and when any additional measures may be installed.

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Gus Hoyt

Subject: Glyphosate

1. Can the Mayor provide information on glyphosate usage in Bristol including:
 - a. environmental management system documents on weedkiller or glyphosate usage by council employees and sub-contractors
 - b. any excerpts from sub-contractor contracts outlining guidance and controls for weedkiller or glyphosate use?
2. Does the council record glyphosate usage in public spaces in Bristol and where is this information available?

Question 1 Response:

- The use of Glyphosate is a pragmatic decision. The only alternative is to use old fashioned labour intensive methods is unaffordable.
- So I am asking that we seek every possible environmentally friendly way of replacing Glyphosate.
- I will provide you with the written and more detailed response.

Supplementary Question:

There are many other technologies now that are used by councils around the world. If we are going to be looking into the use of Glyphosate in the city can we also be looking at the alternatives which can and are used in many cities around the world? I am not sure if you are aware that California recently as a state, has declared that it does cause cancer.

Reply to Supplementary Question:

- I take notice of that about California.
- If the only alternative is to use labour intensive methods then it would be unaffordable. I am waiting for a report back into the best environmentally friendly alternative.
- I am sure the Assistant Mayor Daniella Radice will play a leading role in this and would have an interest in doing so.

Question to the Mayor from Councillor Rob Telford

Subject: Budget cuts

At the Member Forum before our Full Council meeting on 21 July 2015, I asked whether the Mayor thinks that budget cuts forced on Bristol City Council are a necessity.

The Mayor was not able to answer, as he was out of Bristol meeting the Pope.

The response from Cllr Gollop only spoke about the local context. Thus, he completely ignored the question, which is about whether the budget cuts FORCED on Bristol City Council are a necessity.

Does the Mayor think that budget cuts forced on Bristol City Council are a necessity?

Reply:

- Cllr Gollop's response when you last asked the question explained that we have a legal requirement to set a balanced budget.
- In the circumstances that we find ourselves in then yes, cuts are a necessity. I don't welcome those circumstances and I do think there are some cuts forced on us that are unreasonable.
- It is necessary to live within the means that to a very large extent are defined by Westminster and Whitehall.

Supplementary Question 1:

So you are in favour of the austerity measures?

Reply to Supplementary Question 1:

I am no more in favour of the austerity measures than you are. We need to make sure we get a proper balance between the needs of the population and the money available.

My judgement would lie somewhere between the Government and a reconstituted Labour Party.

Supplementary Question 2:

Which cuts do you think are a necessity and which ones are not? You haven't made it clear.

Reply to Supplementary Question 2:

I do not give simplistic answer to a simplistic question.

Question to the Mayor from Councillor Charlie Bolton

Subject: Council engagement with Bristol Sport re: Ashton Gate Stadium

Bristol Sport is currently building a new stand for 11,000 people which will make a total capacity of 27,000 at the ground. They also intend to be the biggest conference facility in the South West. Together this will mean a total of 3m visitors a year. Despite this, they claim to have had very poor engagement with the council when discussing parking, Metrobus stops, the opening of Long Ashton Park and Ride and a new Ashton Gate station. They say that one of the major difficulties is identifying a named point of contact within the council i.e. a person who is responsible for managing traffic issues in and around the stadium.

Does such a person exist – if so – who is it, and if not, could someone be appointed?

Reply:

- There is no one, single, dedicated person responsible for managing all of these issues around the stadium, and by their nature issues of this sort need a co-ordinated approach from a variety of agencies. However, David Bunting (Traffic Manager) who is responsible for the day to day traffic in the city has agreed to act as an initial point of contact for queries.
- There are planning conditions related to the development, which include additional parking and public transport options. We are working across Council departments to ensure that the conditions are fulfilled and providing assistance to Bristol Sport in so doing.
- Officers from Sustainable Transport have met with Bristol Sport on a number of occasions to help identify how the public transport offer can be improved, and this includes the use of Park and Ride. They are also working with the Metrobus team to identify how this major project can support the stadium
- Civil Enforcement Officers from the Traffic Service also regularly patrol on match days and enforce the existing parking restrictions in order to facilitate the free flow of traffic in the area.

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Martin Fodor

Subject: Warm Up Bristol progress

We welcome the ambitions for a citywide retrofitting programme with government funds to upgrade the energy efficiency of existing owned and privately rented homes in the city. Will the Mayor comment on how to improve delivery of the programme and ensure a responsive service for those who take up the scheme - specifically can he say how partnership with community energy groups could be improved and built on to tap local enthusiasm and expertise and build links to local energy initiatives across the city in ways that can help us deliver the targets?

Reply:

First part of question Programme Delivery

- The programme has delivered nearly 50% of its targets with DECC resulting in over £5.5m worth of investment into the city. The initial teething difficulties at the start of the scheme have been improved with an overall satisfaction score of 4.3 out of 5 (86%)

Second part of question community involvement

- The involvement of community groups was designed as part of the programme delivery and community groups have been supported through referral fees and direct funding such as the show home, or administration and promotion of the scheme.
- As we progress forward and operate across the city further community energy group will be brought into the scheme and the partnership with these groups strengthened.

Question to the Mayor from Councillor Charlie Bolton

Subject: Cycle and bike priority on Winterstoke

With the building of the ring road between the A38 and A370, does this mean that the levels of traffic on Winterstoke will decrease – and if so – is this not an opportunity to give more priority on this road to cyclists and buses?

Reply:

- There are no current plans for measures to improve facilities for cycling and public transport along this route as part of any wider package of highway improvements linked to this new road.
- However, as part of assessing the cycle network there is an awareness of the ‘pinch point’ on Winterstoke Road. The route is designated on the strategic cycle network as a priority and when funding becomes available we would expect to improve the route.
- There are currently no scheduled bus services that operate on Winterstoke Road, so there are no plans to provide any bus priority measures.
- The traffic model used in the assessment shows only a modest reduction in traffic (less than 10%) both after construction of this road and by 2031 (40/100 vehicles in the AM peak and 100/200 in the PM peak), so any significant reduction in capacity of the road would likely have impacts on the wider network such as on Parson Street and the Winterstoke interchange junctions.
- There are other ongoing developments progressing in the area, such as Ashton Gate, and so any future changes in the road layout would also need to take these into consideration.

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Martin Fodor

Subject: 20mph

Many residents of the city appreciate the safety and civilising effects of the 20mph limit but are frustrated by lack of significant enforcement. They also feel the benefits of 20mph zones need to be disseminated better.

What will the Mayor do to build support?

Reply:

- The council are working with a specialist consultant on a social marketing campaign and have recently appointed a new member of staff funded from the 20mph budget to disseminate the benefits of the 20mph speed limits and build support from the grass roots within communities. There is also a dedicated 20mph website that holds all of the research and explains the benefits of the project which people can refer to. The focus of the social marketing campaign targets all areas of Bristol and officers will continue to work with businesses, schools and communities.
- The police have also signed up to be one of only a few constabularies in the country to trial the 20mph speed awareness course which offers an educational response to speeding and have issued over 600 tickets. The council has also been supporting the police to set up Community Speed Watch groups where required/requested. This allows the resources to be spread over a wide area and helps gather evidence of speeds rather than perceptions. In areas where speeding issues are confirmed, the police will try and set up a CSW group and if applicable the speed enforcement unit may identify a road as a site for the mobile speed camera.

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Anthony Negus

(To be personally answered by the mayor)

Subject: Port Land Sale

In the Lease documents dated 27th August 1991 between Bristol City Council and the Bristol Port Company there is a Pre-emption Clause. This, clause 6, acknowledges the freedom of the company to negotiate for the freehold of the land. It does not preclude other bidders. Indeed the process is required to derive the best price and so any better bids would need to be matched by, now, First Corporate.

1. Will the mayor confirm that this process has been followed and so assure the citizens of Bristol that the request from First Corporate to sell them the freehold held by Bristol City Council was opened to all bids so that they may be assured, in the only way possible, that the best price was obtained for the sale of the freehold?

Despite all the 'hype', the mayor has no greater powers than previous Leaders of this Council, which powers are set out and constrained by the Secretary of State.

2. Will the mayor now, before the members of this Council whose clear guidance he chose to ignore, put on public record that with the appropriate advice from officers, he has undertaken all the necessary checks and procedures required to satisfy the Secretary of State that best price has been obtained for the sale of this city's freehold of the Port land?

Question 1 response:

Yes

Question 2 response:

Yes

Supplementary Question 1:

Will the Mayor confirm how each of the required stages: legal, contractual, lease, pre-exemption and constitutional stages were followed? I want a written response.

Reply to Supplementary Question 1:

Legal, contractual and lease stages were followed by relevant professionals carrying out work which in their professional judgement was appropriate to the matter in question. Pre-exemption was followed by recommendation reviewed by SLT and Executive Board, subsequently noted by Place Scrutiny and Call-in committee. Constitution stages followed all democratic procedures.

Supplementary Question 2:

Please will the mayor explain how each of the procedures set out by the Security of State to cover this eventuality have been addressed? I would like a written response please.

Reply to Supplementary Question 2:

There was no eventuality causing any procedures set out by the Security of State to apply in this matter, thus nothing needed to be addressed.

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Glenise Morgan

Subject: Dementia Aware Training

The Mayor signed up to one of the two Dementia Aware training sessions in August but was unable to attend. Given his position as co-chair of the Health & Wellbeing Board and with Bristol's aspiration to be a Dementia Friendly city, is he able to give an assurance that he will attend a session by the end of the year, run by either the Council or another body, and thereby set an example to councillors and Neighbourhood Partnership representatives?

Reply:

- I strongly welcome the Dementia Aware training sessions being made available to staff and to councillors. I heard back from members how valuable they personally found the experience and I regret that I was unable to attend one of the sessions.
- I fully understand the growing importance of dementia awareness as it is an issue that is impacting greatly on our ageing population.
- In light of having missed the recent training I thought it perhaps pertinent to contact my Co-Chair of the Health & Wellbeing Board to see if it is feasible to arrange a training session for all its members.
- I hope that all Councillors and Neighbourhood Partnership representatives don't wait for me in attending a session themselves. The more people who can attend these sessions the better.

Supplementary Question:

Would you agree that if we are able to publicise that you, and the co-chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board, have attended these sessions it would send a strong message out?

Reply to Supplementary Question:

That will be part of my proposal to the Health and Wellbeing Board.

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Glenise Morgan

Subject: Tree Sponsorship

For a number of months I have been working with a street in our ward where issues have been raised regarding litter, trees, lack of street maintenance, street lamps etc. It has been extremely difficult and time-consuming to get responses and action. To quote one frustrated resident: "...lots of individuals with good intentions but little sense that there is a co-ordinated approach to our various concerns – There has been some progress but boy is it hard work to get results !!!"

The last straw has been their efforts to replace a street tree stump. Having carried out a neighbour survey and received pledges to cover the costs, they were directed, mid-July, to the tree sponsorship page but found it impossible to navigate, as confirmed by our local Tree Champion. The mapping didn't work nor the link to the application form and on 1 September I received a complaint that there had been no response to an email sent 24 August to the relevant contact, despite chasing.

Not being able to move forward on replacing a street tree, using resident sponsorship, is particularly galling when Henleaze lost its street replacement budget to the PIPS project.

What message does this send out when the Council is calling on volunteers to help with both parks and library services, and how can residents, who take a pride in their street and offer volunteer support, both practical and financial, be given confidence that it is possible to work with the Council positively and efficiently on local issues?

Reply:

- The sponsored planting of trees on council land is now being managed via an on-line system. The system is progressive and incorporates a map showing the location of trees across the city available for sponsorship, which links to an application form and, via checks, to an on-line payment shop. We did experience teething problems associated with the underlying complexity to this system; these have now been addressed. Further, we have made changes following customer feedback. The system is now fully functional and available for use. To date we have successfully accepted sponsorship and payment for over 30 trees at £295 per tree.

The system can be viewed at <http://www.bristol.gov.uk/page/environment/tree-bristol-sponsorship>

Supplementary Question:

Can you assure me that there are the necessary resources in place to support people who are looking into street tree replacement given that the One Tree per Child trees are not generally suitable for streets?

Reply to Supplementary Question:

The resources are available for the sponsorship scheme.

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Tim Kent

Subject: Solar Energy

1. Can the Mayor inform Council of what effect recent Government announcements with regards to Solar Energy will have on current and planned energy projects by the Council's Energy Company?

2. Hartcliffe Community Park Farm, a Council backed project, is currently working with the Council's Energy Company on a Solar scheme at the Farm that would produce in excess of 100Kw. Given the Governments announcements, timescales to deliver this project are short. Does the Mayor support such projects and can he confirm that if a viable project is agreed Bristol City Council will support the project as the landowner?

Reply:

- Government support under the Feed-in tariff is an important part of the business case for investing in solar. As the cost of installing solar continues to fall the level of tariff support has followed suit. However, the recent proposals to cut the tariff will challenge some of our existing projects. We are currently exploring how big an impact it will have. The hardest hit tariff is at the domestic scale, which means that BCC will be forced to scrap plans to provide solar energy to existing social housing tenants. BCC are also unable to make the most of the solar potential on its new build housing schemes from 2016.

- The Energy Service is working very closely with Hartcliffe Community Park Farm to install solar panels on their roofs as part of the current package of installations that have been awarded to the Bristol Energy Co-op as part of our wider community energy scheme. A share offer will be issued at the end of September with installations planned before Christmas, which will ensure that the scheme still benefits from the current rates.

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Gary Hopkins

Subject: Three Lamps Junction

At a recent meeting the Mayor suggested I looked at a report on the feasibility of a right turn from Wells Road to Bath Road at the Three Lamps Junction.

It is unfortunate that no such written report actually exists and a meeting that I had with colleagues and Officers indicated that not all options had been properly considered.

- 1) Accepting that no solution for this busy junction is ideal will the mayor now undertake to instruct Officers to work with myself and colleagues on the details of this proposal?
- 2) Is the Mayor aware that the proposal for pedestrian and cycle use from Temple Meads towards Bath Road is wholly inadequate and dangerous and will he undertake to work with us to rectify this serious problem?

Response to Question 1:

- The Arena team have conducted a study of the Three Lamps junction in response to requests to look at options for introducing a right turn from Wells Rd to Bath Rd. The study indicates that it is not feasible to introduce this movement for a number of reasons:
 1. There is physically no space to introduce a right turn lane which would be required to prevent right turning traffic from blocking ahead traffic. The only way to achieve this would be to lose the inbound bus lane which would not be acceptable as it provides both bus and cycle priority and is part of the QPS scheme
 2. Introducing a right turn would create an additional stage in the signal sequence which would increase delays at a key junction. Specifically it would add delay to outbound movements increasing queues back to Bath Bridges and Temple Circus which would have significant impact on the city centre and strategic road network.
 3. Traffic flows generated by the Arena from this direction are light so there is no justification for significant changes to the junction

Response to Question 2:

- We recognise that the quality of the pedestrian and cycle facilities along the A4 Bath Road, between Temple Meads and the 3 Lamps Junction, is not as good as we would like given the numbers of people that use this corridor. The width of highway available is constrained by bridges and the space requirements of all modes that need to use this important corridor.

- The likely additional pedestrians and cyclists that the Arena will attract is currently being assessed and this will inform the most appropriate measures to put in place to ensure a safe environment for all users of the highway. The Arena response to addressing issues on the local highway network needs to be proportionate to the scale of its impacts rather than to try and solve all issues.
- A Spatial Framework for the Temple Quarter Enterprise Zone is currently being developed which will help to guide the development of the zone. The Framework has identified these constraints and further studies will help to inform the appropriate response.