

# Cabinet

## Supplementary Information



**Date:** Tuesday, 1 December 2020

**Time:** 4.00 pm

**Venue:** Virtual meeting via Zoom Cloud Meetings

### 2. Public Forum

(Pages 3 - 6)

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**Date:** Tuesday, 15 December 2020



## **Question: CQ13.01**

**Cabinet – 1 December 2020**

**Re: Agenda item 13 - City Leap Energy Partnership – procurement update and contract extension notification**

**Question submitted by: Councillor Martin Fodor**

The Climate Emergency Programme makes a commitment to decarbonisation and private investment in the city's carbon neutral journey. Opportunities for the community to contribute have been mentioned but not pursued, except independently by the successful Bristol Energy Co-operative.

It is hoped that City Leap will eventually bring carbon savings to the city and a return to the investment being discussed today. It may also be shaped in a way that supports community energy initiatives.

Meanwhile other authorities have proven the ways green bonds, in the form of the model called Community Mutual Investments (CMIs) can successfully pull in sums every few months like £1m per call from private and local savers. These have a low risk, being publicly backed bonds, but a modest and hopefully reliable return to all the savers. [see Motions to council November 10th for details].

Bristol is the only one of 4 authorities cited in the development of CMIs not to have taken this forwards to date.

**Q: What commitment is there to initiate such opportunities for Bristol savers to help create carbon saving projects with council support?**

- 1. We have already assessed the legal position of CMIs through an academic study with the University of Leeds. We are currently testing the appetite of building managers for CMI funded energy retrofits in a number of Bristol's community buildings. This study is being designed and delivered in partnership with the Bristol Energy Network and funded through an EU project called SONNET.**
- 2. One of the key objectives of City Leap is to facilitate significant community investment in and ownership of carbon saving projects whilst creating much needed low-carbon infrastructure for Bristol.**
- 3. Local community organisations have worked collaboratively with the council to explore potential ways that community energy projects could be supported through City Leap.**

**Question: CQ17.01**

**Cabinet – 1 December 2020**

**Re: Agenda item 17 - Avon Mutual Regional Community Bank**

**Question submitted by: Councillor Don Alexander**

I welcome the development of increased local banking capacity. **Could Cllr Cheney please explain any differences between Avon Mutual and the Bristol Credit Union and whether they will be complementary?** Thanks.

**1. Differences**

- Credit union licenses allow a restricted range of products specialising in providing savings and loans to vulnerable individuals.
- By contrast, Avon Mutual's key added value for vulnerable individuals is the provision of a full-service current account, saving people without a bank account up to 63% on the Poverty Premium. Approximately 12,500 people in Bristol do not have a current account, including 13% of Bristol Credit Union's (BCU) loan customers.
- Avon Mutual will also provide larger loans to more people at larger scale (£500m lending compared to BCUs £5.9m) including mortgage provision. Avon Mutual will also provide significant banking and lending to businesses. This represents a significant opportunity for AM to further improve financial inclusion and resilience within the region.

**2. Complementary activity**

- They attract very different types of savings - money, shares versus deposits. There is demand for both models in Bristol.
- What unites BCU and Avon Mutual is the desire to provide relevant, affordable, and impactful financial services to businesses and individuals in Bristol and the West of England. Credit unions and community banks actively collaborate around the world in the mutual interests of their members

**Question: CQ18.01**

**Cabinet – 1 December 2020**

**Re: Agenda item 18 - HRA Asset Management Strategy 2021-2026**

**Question submitted by: Councillor Don Alexander**

I recently attended a number of Local Housing Forum meetings and have been very pleased to see new vision and enthusiasm for council housing amongst both officers and tenants. **Could Cllr. Godwin please share her ambitions for the coming years of council housing in Bristol?** Thanks.

**Housing is the single biggest policy intervention we can make in a person's life – which is why we are so determined to drive on building council houses, and maintaining our stock as much as possible.**

**The regulatory and investment framework for social housing is being transformed by the government's Housing White paper, and the expected Fire Safety Bill & Building Safety Bill. This is a challenging context for us, with a government that will not give local authorities the tools and resources we need to make the change in Bristol we need to see and tackle the housing crisis.**

**But we do have our own projects which will help us:**

- **Working more closely with our tenants – listening to concerns and responding to their priorities.**
- **Increased focus on health and safety in all our homes (especially high rise blocks)**
- **Better energy standards – reducing fuel poverty**
- **Improved standards – not just within our homes but also in communal spaces**

**The HRA Asset Management Strategy sets out how we intend to meet these challenges and continue to improve our homes and estates.**

**Question: CQ21.01**

**Cabinet – 1 December 2020**

**Re: Agenda item 21 - Rough Sleeping Drug and Alcohol treatment grant**

**Question submitted by: Councillor Clive Stevens**

I was pleased to read this and the joined up approach too. The only thing apparently lacking (assuming that they end up in a home of their own) is assistance with retraining and or getting a job.

I appreciate the extra information in the reissued report and I have no doubt that this type of treatment is cost effective.

My line of questioning seeks to add evidence of the cost effectiveness of building more affordable and council housing and so (part) preventing this type of dependency from occurring in the first place

Q1) What proportion of the people needing this type of intervention might have been prevented from becoming homeless in the first place if the city had had enough affordable and council housing?

Q2) I see the value of the bid is to be around £600,000 across four years. How many rough sleepers might this program actually succeed with?

**There are a multitude of factors that contribute to people being homeless and the amount of time they are homeless-drug and alcohol treatment being only a part of this.**

**It is therefore exceptionally difficult to put a number on this. In terms of retraining and gaining employment, if the bid is successful, workers would link in with the work that is already on-going to enable a comprehensive level of support that will help sustain tenancies.**

**Officers will follow up with you regarding your additional questions.**