

Cabinet

Supplementary Information



Date: Tuesday, 14 September 2021

Time: 4.00 pm

Venue: The Council Chamber - City Hall, College Green, Bristol, BS1 5TR

2. Public Forum
Questions and Answers

(Pages 3 - 23)

Issued by: Corrina Haskins, Democratic Services

City Hall, Bristol, BS1 9NE

E-mail: democratic.services@bristol.gov.uk

Date: Tuesday, 28 September 2021



Question: CQ08.01

Cabinet – 14 September 2021

Re: Agenda item 8 – Youth Zone – funding request

Question submitted by: Councillor Tim Rippington

It is fantastic news to see that the South Bristol Youth Zone is going ahead, and I am sure this will be an excellent investment for the future of young people in South Bristol. The area being looked at for the Zone in the current consultation is a long way from Brislington East, however, and I am not sure how much impact it is likely to have on youth provision in my ward. We do have an excellent opportunity at the moment for some additional provision in St Anne's House, which is being managed by Bricks on a Meanwhile Lease from the Council at the moment. **I am hopeful that this provision will be able to expand and continue over the next few years and wonder if we could look at what links could be made between the two sites going forward?**

Answer:

The Youth Zone model is to work in partnership with other local youth services providers to ensure that all children and young people can experience the offer available from the centre.

As plans for the Youth Zone develop, Onside/Youth Moves will work with other youth groups to support plans for access.

We recognise that young people do need their local community youth services as well as a Youth Zone and will be working up the plans to support access to youth services across the City in parallel with these plans.

We will be looking to locate a second site in East/Central, and then search for a third in the north of the city.

Question: CQ08.02

Cabinet – 14 September 2021

Re: Agenda item 8 – Youth Zone – funding request

Question submitted by: Councillor Steve Pearce

During the election, one of Labour's 'big ticket' pledges was to build a Youth Zone in south Bristol. Only a few months down the line and we've delivered it. Well done and thank you to everyone involved. I would like to pay special thanks to Cllr Godwin, as while she can't be here today, I know how much work she put into this in her old portfolio. This world-class Youth Zone is such an important development for south Bristol and will be brilliant for children, not only in south Bristol but across the city. In the age where Tory cuts have seen youth club after youth club close down, Bristol Labour's found a way to buck the trend and not only reopen a youth club, but a world-class Youth Zone.

Anyway, my question is, what manifesto commitment does the Mayor intend to deliver next?

Answer:

Our focus is on delivering on our commitment to build two thousand homes a year, including one thousand affordable homes, so that children across the city have access to a secure and stable home.

There is also an item on the agenda for this meeting that secures provision of equipment for people with health needs to help them live in their own home for longer.

Question: CQ08.03&04

Cabinet – 14 September 2021

Re: Agenda item – Youth Zones - Funding Requests

Questions submitted by: Councillor Christine Townsend

Question 1:

If the plan for this youth hub is achieved, who will own the assets of land and building when complete?

Answer:

The freehold would be owned by the local authority. The intention is that any lease of the premises will be at 125-year, peppercorn lease.

The long lease will be in the name of the Youth Zone charity.

Question 2:

OnSide states its genesis emerged from 'three Victorian businessmen and church ministers who established the Bolton Lads Club in 1889'.

The Trust Deed enables Trustees to 'deposit or invest funds in a manner which the trustees see fit' from philanthropic donors who may choose to remain anonymous.

How will this administration ensure that the OnSide youth hub is funded in a way that reflects the promotion of social and environmental justice when it will not know the activity from which these philanthropic funds were raised or anything about those who fund it?

Answer:

There are currently twelve Youth Zones across the country which have a proven record of engaging with young people and bringing forward much-needed provision.

Manchester Youth Zone is in an area of serious deprivation, the ward it is located in has 16% unemployment and 48% of people in poverty. The ward is the second worst for long-term deprivation of children in the county, it now has 4,000 kids as members, and is open 7 days a week with a kitchen,

and a boxing gym.

OnSide have a Gift Acceptance Policy overseen by the Trustees through their Due Diligence Committee. OnSide is also registered with the Fundraising Regulator and our Gift Acceptance Policy and fundraising activity is aligned to their Code of Fundraising Practice.

The Youth Zone charity would adopt a similar policy and Bristol Council will have a seat on the Youth Zone charity Board to ensure all policies developed and adopted by the Youth Zone charity suit Bristol Council interests and further the objectives of the Youth Zone charity. The Youth Zone Charity's Board members will be aware of the identity of all funders of significance and will ensure their funding is acceptable according to the policy.

My encouragement is get involved – we can look for problems, or we can collaborate on opportunities.

Question: CQ11.01

Cabinet – 14 September 2021

Re: Agenda item - Consultation on leisure investment options

Question submitted by: Councillor Mohamed Makawi

What assurances are there for residents using Kingstown Sports Centre about the future of these facilities?

Answer:

We are undertaking a public consultation where residents feedback will be taken into consideration when a decision is made.

For those facilities which we propose to stop operating we would be open to the possibility of transferring them to another commercial operator at zero cost to the council or to be run by the community.

If you wanted to support the community in taking on the running of this facility, just like we are exploring with Friends of Jubilee, and have successfully done with the Ardagh trust in Horfield, we would welcome it.

Question: CQ11.02&03

Cabinet – 14 September 2021

Re: Agenda item - Consultation on leisure investment options

Question submitted by: Councillor Martin Fodor

Preamble

As Chair of Communities Scrutiny, I'm attending Cabinet to pose questions and make a statement in a personal capacity, but informed by my role as the Bristol City Council Chair of the Communities Scrutiny Commission. I can't presume to speak for the Commission members as we have not met yet, due to the induction and preparation period following the recent election. Our scrutiny agenda is due to be set in September for meetings after that. However, we have started work and last month we met to discuss the city council's draft Ecological Emergency Action Plan and to initiate a sub-group that is also underway. I have welcomed helpful conversations with the three Cabinet members in our scope and the service managers whose work we scrutinise. We are currently drafting priority topics for scrutiny this municipal year. Our work is supported by a partnership with the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny, who are supported by the Local Government association, and who are working with the council on the vital role of member scrutiny. Effective scrutiny is validated by them when they say:

"Governance and scrutiny are essential for the successful working of any organisation. Now, more than ever, trusted decisions are needed. We believe that decisions are better made when they are open to challenge and involve others – [whether that's] democratically elected representatives, those affected by decisions, or other key stakeholders." [emphasis added].

What's hampered our work and been a barrier to effective pre-decision scrutiny – the best kind – is the absence of reports in the council Forward Plan. We can't plan meetings when we have minimal notice and no draft reports to study, and without a discussion on policy options we can't debate the choices being made and their implications for the city. We were waiting for the draft Ecological Emergency Action Plan since it was promised last December 2020, but received it this August, already designed for publication. Our 90 minutes of deliberations with the author and the Cabinet member were detailed, wide ranging, and fruitful. Our summary of recommendations does not however seem to have led to any significant change to the plan.

Last month we knew there might be Cabinet report 11, but then had to wait to know what was in them.

The Leisure Investment Options report says:

"This report presents the council's proposed leisure investment strategy and describes the scope of the forthcoming public consultation in relation to this strategy. 5. The council's proposed leisure investment strategy includes the retention of seven sites, improvements at up to three of these sites and to stop operating two of its other facilities. 6. The proposed leisure investment strategy puts forwards options for consultation which the council believes can have the greatest impact from both a financial and social value perspective and contributes towards the delivery of the Bristol Sports and Physical Activity Strategy."

But the cross party scrutiny members have not been able to discuss the proposed strategy or discuss the merits or alternatives to the proposed facilities before your decision. This is despite lengthy procedures to prepare and draft reports and informal news that major strategies like Parks and Open Spaces or Leisure Facilities investment are being planned.

Questions:

Does the Mayor agree that 1. Cross party pre decision scrutiny is a valuable contribution to good governance and decision making; and,

Answer:

Sometimes, though not as an absolute rule.

I think scrutiny needs to consistently prove it offers a valuable contribution to good governance. Scrutiny boards have worked best when they have been proactive – for example the High Streets enquiry.

I would welcome scrutiny moving more toward policy, and helping to solve the conflicting pressures on this city.

2. Will the Mayor commit to including the scrutiny function in his decision pathway so adequate cross-party scrutiny can be scheduled in advance of the Cabinet's key decisions?

Answer:

An effective overview and scrutiny function has a significant role to play in good policy and decision making. No doubt scrutiny members will want to have a balance of policy development and pre-decision scrutiny in their work programme.

On the whole, councillors themselves say that the most effective scrutiny is done on policy issues, in working groups (such as the development of our

social value policy).

Routine pre-decision scrutiny of all decisions does not seem like a good use of anyone's time, and experience suggests would add little value. So I do not intend to insert scrutiny into the decision pathway.

It needs to be independent of the executive powers, and issues scrutinised need to be totally independent of me.

Question: CQ14.01&02

Cabinet – 14 September 2021

Re: Agenda item 14 - Digital Transformation Programme (DTP)

Question submitted by: Councillor Heather Mack

Predicted savings of £5.3m p.a. are listed, but with an acknowledgement that more work is needed.

Questions:

1. If the predicted saving does not outweigh the spend (as currently predicted) when the business cases come forward to the Executive Director for Resources and the cabinet member, will all aspects of this project definitely go ahead?

Answer

This funding is a 'growth bid' rather than an 'invest to save' initiative. The predicted savings are not directly as a response to the work being delivered through this funding.

2. Will these business cases be made available to Resources scrutiny members?

Answer:

Yes, if Resources Scrutiny decide to consider it. The officers' understanding is that an overview of the programme is part of the planned Resources Scrutiny Committee activity, which will include performance measures to demonstrate delivery against schedule and benefit realisation (including savings). Resources scrutiny members are therefore welcome to prioritise this aspect of the project in their work programme if they choose to do so.

The business cases will be made available to the Digital Transformation Governance Board for consideration and approval, in line with the governance and assurance approach that has been agreed.

Question: CQ14.03&04

Cabinet – 14 September 2021

Re: Agenda item 14 - Digital Transformation Programme (DTP)

Question submitted by: Councillor Emma Edwards

I welcome BCC's investment in its Information Technology Infrastructure. Looking at the table of indicative costs, I am concerned that the contingency fund of 20% is not realistic as we are already halfway through the first financial year, and IT projects, as a rule of thumb consistently overrun. Six of the stated projects do not have any spending associated with them in 22/23, and the allotted contingency figure for 22/23 from an "optimism bias adjustment" is only £53,321.

Questions:

1. Can you provide reassurances that the contingency fund is realistic?

ANSWER:

All of the proposed projects have detailed financial tables behind them, which include resourcing estimates and supplier/vendor quotations.

These will be confirmed through the development of business cases which will then be approved by the Digital Transformation Governance Board.

At this stage, a 20% contingency across all projects is deemed sufficient and is in line with finance officer recommendations.

2. Given the recent history of missing decision pathway goals in the IT Transformation Project, how often will the Digital Transformation Governance Board provide updates to Full Council?

Answer:

The projects are monitored as part of the Council's Change Programme and with oversight of the Council's Internal Audit function.

The Deputy Mayor with responsibility for Finance, Governance and Performance, will be a member of the Digital Transformation Governance Board.

All the Governance functions have routes to escalate to Full Council.

Question: CQ16.01

Cabinet – 14 September 2021

Re: Agenda item 16 - Parks Capital Maintenance Programme

Question submitted by: Councillor Ani Stafford Townsend

In February this year the Green Group brought forward a budget amendment that would seek to make £12.5 million of CiL money available to parks and liveable neighbourhoods projects across Bristol. The administration stated that said CiL money was allocated to fund several park projects to a total of £24 million, including projects in Castle Park. Councillor Beech, then Cabinet Member for City Design and Spatial Planning, told the Bristol Post: “By using a funding pot called Strategic CIL we can get on with designing an improved Castle Park and don’t have to wait for any of the surrounding developments”.

Question:

Seven months on, could Cabinet confirm the precise amount allocated to improvements in Castle Park?

Answer

We will be able to give a complete number for required investment at Castle Park in Autumn 2022.

During the 2021/22 budget we identified opportunities to support areas of growth and regeneration. This included Castle Park and the Frome Gateway area in St Jude’s.

Question: CQ17.01&02

Cabinet – 14 September 2021

Re: Agenda item 17- DfT Active Travel Fund (ATF) Tranche 3

Question submitted by: Councillor Marley Bennet

Question 1)

I'd like to state on record that I welcome this item, as I understand how necessary it is, and that this is significantly more than some other local authorities are spending on active travel. I appreciate that there's limited funds and other areas may need to be prioritised, so I understand why my ward of Eastville didn't get funding on this occasion, but is there another tranche of funding, and if so, when, and can we expect Eastville to be eligible for that funding?

Answer

There will be a further tranche of Active Travel Funding in 2022. In addition, we will be applying for funding under the 5-year City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement to start the roll out of Liveable Neighbourhoods across the City.

Between these pots of funding, we will deliver active travel improvements, including a number of the aspirations of the adopted Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan.

Question 2)

I note it also states: 'The competition also seeks to identify Local Authorities (LA) interested in receiving development funding to deliver a national pilot Liveable Neighbourhood scheme and/or partake in a GP Prescribing Pilot.' Please could you provide an update on our liveable neighbourhoods policy?

Answer

Officers are currently developing a Liveable Neighbourhood Strategy, due to go out to public consultation in autumn of this year. The Strategy will

include detail and invite comment on how we propose to prioritise areas across the city for schemes to be developed and implemented over the coming years. A range of metrics will be used to determine which areas should be prioritised, to ensure schemes are delivered equitably and by those areas which are in most need. Once adopted, the Strategy will set the policy context and framework for delivering liveable neighbourhood schemes across Bristol.

We have also submitted, via the West of England Combined Authority (WECA) an 'Expression of Interest' for an area in Bristol to be 1 of 12 locations to develop and trial a pilot liveable neighbourhood scheme in East Bristol, centred around the areas of Barton Hill, Redfield, and St Georges West.

Question: CQ17.03

Cabinet – 14 September 2021

Re: Agenda item 17 - DfT Active Travel Fund (ATF) Tranche 3

Question submitted by: Councillor Tim Rippington

I am very pleased to see that we are applying for additional money to help progress both our walking/cycling plans and also our ambitions to roll out Liveable Neighbourhoods across the city. Last week I brought a petition to Full Council signed by 91 residents of Wyndham Crescent calling for improvements to their neighbourhood to counter the disruption regularly caused by large numbers of visitors to Eastwood Farm. The transport department has suggested a Liveable Neighbourhoods approach would be appropriate in this location and I agree – the area is small, self contained, has a lot of social housing and occupied by a significant number of people with mobility issues. It is also an area of relative deprivation compared with many other parts of the city where citizens are calling for similar measures. **I would therefore ask if this area can be considered a priority area when plans are drawn up for the initial schemes to be rolled out in the city?**

Answer

The Liveable Neighbourhood Strategy, is currently being drafted and is due to go out to public consultation in Autumn 2021. The Strategy will include detail and invite comment on how we propose to prioritise areas across the city for schemes to be developed and implemented over the coming years.

A range of metrics will be used to determine which areas should be prioritised, to ensure schemes are delivered equitably and by those areas which are in most need.

As well as the metrics, which will help inform priority areas, wider programs of works, such as housing delivery, public transport improvements and links to funding will also inform and dictate where schemes can be delivered. For example, if a liveable neighbourhood scheme can be delivered alongside other developments (e.g., housing developments) we can deliver multiple benefits and reduce disruption.

Evidence shows that liveable neighbourhoods are only successful when delivered at scale, as opposed to a street-by-street level, which often results in only moving a problem somewhere else. When the Strategy goes out to public consultation, residents will be asked for input on where they feel the boundaries of liveable neighbourhood for their communities should be. By doing this across the city will be able to develop an indicative set of boundaries for where schemes would best be delivered within. By doing this we can mitigate the potential risk of moving problems from one community to another and ensure that everyone is able to benefit from the delivery of liveable neighbourhoods.

Question: CQ17.04

Cabinet – 14 September 2021

Re: Agenda item 17 - DfT Active Travel Fund (ATF) Tranche 3

Question submitted by: Councillor Fabian Breckels

I'm pleased to see this administration has found even further funding for active travel improvements. While it can be used to improvements such as cycle lanes, it can also be used to improve road safety, which in turn encourages people to cycle rather than use polluting vehicles.

In a case relating to my ward, residents have been asking me for road safety improvements on the western part of Crews Hole Road, as the section between Strawberry Lane and Riverside Chapel isn't currently safe for pedestrians. There's also a blind entrance that leads straight on to Crews Hole Road which raises obvious safety concerns; I've been told by officers that all these issues will cost up to £100,000 to fix.

Unsafe roads like this make active travel a less attractive prospect for pedestrians and cyclists, so if we want less people using polluting vehicles, it's essential that we invest in road safety projects.

Please could the Mayor or Cabinet Member for Transport let me know if funding can be used for projects like this, and if any is earmarked for Crews Hole Road?

Answer:

I'm pleased you have been able to secure funding for road safety improvements in Crews Hole and appreciate your ongoing efforts to improve safety in this area.

The Active Travel Fund is currently being focused in areas where we expect to see the most return on investment, predominantly around our key walking and key cycling routes and destinations. Adopted Strategies, such as the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) identify key areas for investment and where there is the greatest propensity for people to change their travel behaviour.

We will be taking an area-wide approach to walking, cycling and road safety improvements through development of liveable neighbourhood schemes with the community. Funding through this approach would likely be able to deliver something much more positive and transformational for the area in the future, over localised interventions. The expression of interest we have submitted will allow us to pilot a liveable neighbourhood trial scheme covering this area.

Question: CQ17.05

Cabinet – 14 September 2021

Re: Agenda item 17 Active Travel Fund (ATF) Tranche 3

Question submitted by: Councillor David Wilcox

I welcome the Active Travel Schemes investment as part of the Gear Change programme from Central Government. However, I hope it is 'ambitious' enough to meet the government criteria and is not dragged down by the other WECA participating councils' bids.

I note that the Old Market Scheme is part of the changes announced in the Clean Air Zone Plan. Previous announcements have reported this (e.g. <https://www.bristolpost.co.uk/news/bristol-news/bristols-clean-air-zone-delayed-5601638>).

Question:

Which scheme is actually funding this change and what does the scheme form? I would be thrilled to be told these are different schemes!

Answer

We are bidding as part of our CAZ submission for funding for this scheme.

This funding is not guaranteed and the government have previously

questioned including walking and cycling schemes in our CAZ project.

We are including the same project in our Active Travel Fund submission to ensure it is funded and delivered.

Question: CQ22.01

Cabinet – 14 September 2021

Re: Agenda item 22 Corporate Risk Management Report – Q1 2021/22

Question submitted by: Councillor Katy Grant

In Appendix A of the Q1 Corporate risk report, reference to climate change is only mentioned as a key potential challenge to Organizational Resilience, rather than an entire risk area in its own right.

Question:

In the context of the declared climate emergency, why is the risk that the City Council will not meet its emissions targets year by year, until 2030, not being measured as a threat risk?

Answer:

Climate change is a huge risk which is why we have declared a climate emergency and agreed a One City Climate Strategy.

The corporate risk register, however, sets out the strategic risks to the organisation in delivering the ambitions we set out in the corporate strategy.

In this regard, climate change in itself is not a single risk, but will increase risk of various other risks such as organisational resilience and flooding as noted in the report.

Question: PQ22.01&02

Cabinet – 14 September 2021

Re: Agenda item 22 - Corporate Risk Management Report – Q1 2021/22

Question submitted by: Suzanne Audrey

Background

Please see my statement to Cabinet in which I express concern that the housing 'targets', which the Corporate risk register suggests are a critical threat risk, may be undermining the provision of good quality 'affordable' homes. In answering my questions, please note I am very familiar with the arguments in favour of building on brownfield sites at density, although I do not accept that high density should equate with high-rise developments especially when providing 'affordable' homes for families. I would be grateful if the replies to my questions could focus specifically on provision for, and the well-being of, families with children.

Question 1

What importance do you place on the aims of the Urban Living SPD in relation to children living in high-rise developments when considered in the context of the corporate risk relating to delivery of affordable homes?

Response:

An answer to this question was provided in person at the Cabinet meeting:
https://youtu.be/-Cu_MeUSR0A?t=3698

Question 2

What measures, if any, are in place to enforce compliance with the Urban Living SPD aims in relation to children?

Answer:

An answer to this question was provided in person at the Cabinet meeting:

https://youtu.be/-Cu_MeUSR0A?t=3953