

Member Forum - Questions & Statements from Councillors



Supplementary Information

Date: Tuesday, 9 November 2021

Time: 3.30 pm

Supplementary Agenda

2. Member Forum Statements Received

Statements republished to include an attachment to Councillor Hopkins statement.

(Pages 3 - 8)

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Date: Tuesday 9th November 2021



The following statements have been submitted – full details are attached:

	Name	Subject
CS01	Cllr Varney	Barriers on Cycle Paths
CS02	Cllr Clark	Brislington Greenway
CS03	Cllr Hartley	Park Street Bus Gate Plans
CS04	Cllr Hopkins	Jubilee Pool - Don't drop the baton (or throw it away)
CS05	Cllr Brown	Budget Funding Gap

CS01

Members Forum statement from Cllr Andrew Varney – Lib Dem Cllr for Brislington West
Subject: Barriers on Cycle Paths

I'm sure the vast majority of members are in agreement that encouraging active travel such as walking and cycling is crucial, not only in terms of easing congestion on our roads, but also in terms of physical and mental health and well-being, and in terms of reducing pollution and helping to achieve our carbon neutrality targets.

I'm sure we also agree that having an integrated and segregated network of routes, safe and suitable for all ages and abilities, is highly desirable and the best way to encourage more people to make the switch and leave their cars at home.

Unfortunately, as a regular cyclist I can tell you that Bristol is a long way from achieving this. The routes we have are often poorly designed, disjointed and inconvenient, and poorly maintained and often strewn with broken glass and other detritus. It's no surprise many cyclists refuse to use them.

Of particular concern is the number of barriers across these cycling routes, restricting access to wheelchair users, parents with push chairs and anyone with a non standard bicycle. The argument of course is that these barriers prevent illegitimate use of the routes by motorcyclists. However, the fact that these barriers prevent many legitimate users is unacceptable.

There is also a great deal of inconsistency. For example, there is a difficult barrier that prevents access for disabled users and riders of non standard bikes at the entrance to the St. Phillip's Greenway riverside path at Avonmeads Retail Park. However, between that point and Temple Meads, there are four barrier-free access points where motorcyclists could join or leave the path if they chose to do so. Guess what? I have never encountered a motorcyclist on this path.

The barriers are clearly pointless and only serve to frustrate, irritate, and hinder legitimate users. They need to be removed as soon as possible and I'm pleased to say relevant council officers agree with me. However, when I spoke to officers about this issue, I was met with the usual response: 'We do not have any dedicated funding at our disposal to facilitate it.'

This is unacceptable and I would humbly request that as a matter of urgency, dedicated funding is made available and a timetable is established in order to remove these barriers. If we are serious about promoting active travel to as many people as possible, if we are serious about meeting our climate emergency obligations, if we are serious about fulfilling the requirements of the Equality Act,

2010, where measures must be put in place to avoid physical features that disadvantage people with disabilities, then anything less would be unacceptable.

CS02

Members Forum statement from Cllr Jos Clark – Lib Dem Cllr for Brislington West

Subject: Brislington Greenway

Bristol is a great place to live but it cannot always be said that it is a great place to get around in, particularly if you want to do the right thing and start using your bike to travel. The cycling rates in South Bristol are not good compared with other areas of the city, this is in part because of the major roads that cut through the area. In Brislington West we have a potential off-road route crying out to be used for active travel. The Brislington Greenway would act as the missing link on the Whitchurch Way and would be a great way to get into the centre of the city without having to encounter too many cars. Cllr Varney and I call upon the council to enable this project to progress rather than building more polluting roads.

CS03

Members Forum statement from Cllr Alex Hartley – Lib Dem Cllr for Hotwells & Harbourside

Subject: Park Street Bus Gate Plans

Upon learning of the WECA Mayor's plans for a consultation on installing a bus gate on Park Street, I wrote to all the residents on the neighbouring streets to ask their opinion. Since I put out the survey 10 days ago, I have had over 200 responses. The headline numbers are 58.3% of respondents are either wholly or partially against, 2.4% are neutral, and 39% are somewhat or wholly supportive of the plan. Many residents acknowledged that we need to do as much as we can to tackle both the climate emergency and air pollution in the city centre but felt that the closure of Park Street to private cars would push traffic down Jacob Wells Road and Park Row, which would add to existing pollution and congestion issues in those areas, including outside the BRI. Many local residents expressed how difficult this would be for them, and local businesses to operate. One resident's comment was particularly accurate, this is the wrong solution to the wrong problem. Outside of rush hour, Park Street is not that busy, and improving bus services would do more to reduce traffic and improve the area.

What was clear from the vast majority of respondents was the need to make sure that those most affected; those living on or on the roads just off Park St, need more support if this is to happen, perhaps an exemption for local residents, or improving the local RPZ conditions.

60% of respondents thought that bus provision in Bristol is either very poor or poor, and 67.8% of respondents thought that the Mayor and his administration's plans for transport in Central Bristol are poor or very poor. I would implore the Mayor and the Cabinet Member for transport to take local residents views into account when creating their plans. We must offer car drivers more of a carrot by creating better public transport networks before trying to force them out of their cars

through an ever-growing number of bus gates which force people to take journeys many times longer and more polluting.

I will continue to work with local residents as part of the consultation, and I hope that all councillors will voice theirs and their residents' views when the consultation opens. I also sincerely hope that the views of the public will be properly considered during the consultation process, something that has not happened after recent consultations.

CS04

Members Forum statement from Cllr Gary Hopkins - Lib Dem Cllr Knowle

Subject: Jubilee Pool - Don't drop the baton (or throw it away)

The stated position of the administration, in response to a huge campaign, changed from forcing closure of Jubilee Pool to working towards community ownership and management.

The community are working very hard in preparation and the friends group has been boosted with expert volunteers.

But are the administration really trying to pass on the baton.?

I have attached the first response to the cat offer which illustrates the reality.

Meanwhile the community have been given a very tight timetable to work within. They are being told that the entire process must be complete by July 2022, that no repairs will be done and no help given.

Incorrect and incomplete information seems to have been supplied. Should all this be successfully overcome then unbelievably the administration are demanding a share of the future profits.

I recently received an assurance from the mayor that the contract with the present operators, Parkwood, which contains no council subsidy, would be extended beyond March. Parkwood, who with the help of the friends group have got to a record membership and full sessions, are keen to continue but no extension has been offered.

Council performance and attitude need to improve dramatically.

[Attachment:](#)

[Begin forwarded message:](#)

From: Save Jubilee Pool <>

Date: 4 November 2021 at 16:58:17 GMT

To: Guy Fishbourne <>, Christina Gray <>, Katharine Moran <>, Jacq Abraham <>, Patrick Lawton <>,
>,
>

Cc: Councillor Gary Hopkins <>, Councillor Graham Morris <>, Councillor Christopher Davies >,
Councillor Andrew Varney <>, Councillor Jos Clark <>, Councillor Tim Rippington <

Subject: Jubilee Pool CAT - request for clarification on supporting information and additional information requirements

Hi all,

I hope all is well with everyone.

We have undertaken an initial review of the CAT prospectus and have some initial immediate queries based on some of the supporting information and a request for further information that was not included.

It is likely there will be more questions as we further assess the Prospectus, but would like to take this opportunity to deal with these issues as a matter of urgency.

Financial Information

Our accountant has been reviewing the financials and the attendance figures (attachments 5a/5b/6a/6b) and there are a number of questions that are fundamental to gaining a full understanding of the true cost of running the pool.

The numbers in 6a and 6b don't total correctly, and it is unclear where the error, or errors, lie. One particular item of concern that looks incorrect is the Rent and Rates line which appears as an income instead of an expenditure. As it stands, it is very difficult to trust these numbers, so as a minimum can we please request that these two documents are checked, corrected, and resubmitted to us?

It would be useful if we could have further detail/clarification on the following:

1. All utilities are put together in the same line so we have no understanding of the split of water/elec/gas/water treatment, or whether the centre is metered, tied in to any tariffs/contracts, etc.
2. Where do insurance costs sit– it is expected that there is premises, public liability, employers liability, services insurance, but there is no indication of the split, or where the costs sit in the accounts.
3. What is the staff breakdown? What proportion are instructors/reception/lifeguards and on what wages are each? The pension contribution is tiny and appears to only apply to one person? Training is minimal – is this something potentially covered by Hengrove?
4. What is included in 'financial costs'? The monthly average varies significantly pre and post covid.
5. The income split is not sufficient to understand the pool usage, nor does it seem to tally with the number of swims/visits (e.g visits in June less than May, but income significantly higher). Could we understand how much income relates to school visits, lane hire by clubs, party hire, etc, and what the rental rate is for these? The total number of swims given by month doesn't add to the correct total either.

Taking into account the limited time that we have it would be quicker, and more beneficial for all, if our Accountant was able to meet with whoever maintains these accounts in order to explore these questions further as the above is just a summary.

Additional information requirements

1. Building Survey remedial works plan -
Following the 2018 building survey was there an action log kept or planned maintenance log kept of the Remedial actions identified and actioned. This is for us to know what is still a live issue and what has been addressed in particular the work around the roof.
2. What was the date of the last electrical condition report and please can we see a copy of it and any remedial actions log so we can determine when the next survey is due and what actions are outstanding.
3. In the 2018 building survey report (section 11.4) it mentioned that the internal drainage systems are considered in bad condition with flooding of the undercroft, as well as flooding reporting of flooding during backwash operation and a detailed inspection recommended. As the ladies changing rooms currently has a smell of drains there are concerns this is still a problem. Were any reports carried out since that report if so please can we see a copy.
4. According to the pre-planned maintenance there were no water risk assessments carried out in 2017/2018. As these are every two years please can we see the 2021 copy? And the water management plan/action plan, which supports this.
5. Please can we see the last fire risk assessment and action plan. As for example the 2018 building survey identified some issues regarding the siting of fire alarms and signage and I am keen to understand if this has been resolved, as could be considered a hazard. It has also been noted today 03.11.21 the fire exit sign at the main entrance the fascia cover is currently missing and will need to be reinstated as a matter of urgency.
6. The M and E condition survey was carried out in 2019. Please can you confirm what actions were completed following this and in light of the work carried out around ventilation in preparing for making jubilee covid secure.
7. There has been provided a 2017/2018 pre-planned maintenance schedule for the property but please can we have a current version and also the log to confirm what has actually been completed on the pre planned maintenance. We appreciate things may have shifted due to the pandemic but so we have an idea of current schedules and activity already completed.
8. Copies of the annual energy bills so can understand the tariffs the pool is on and the consumption figures. This will help when considering newer technology and help with cost/benefit ratios and for applying for potential grants which may form part of the business plan.
9. Water rates bill (annually not just partial months as covid would have impacted consumption so we can assess water consumption and costs)
10. The annual waste costs for recycled and landfill waste.
11. The COSHH register and costs associated with the chemicals used for treating the pool.
12. What H&S training has been carried out and details of RIDDOR and near misses that have happened at the pool.

If these documents are not available, please can we seek permission to arrange new reports and can this be arranged directly with Rob the onsite manager?

Bearing in mind the constrained timescale that has been set by the Prospectus it would be appreciated if this information could be made available by the 15th November at the latest.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Best wishes

Jules Laming

CS05

Members Forum statement from Cllr Andrew Brown – Lib Dem Cllr – Hengrove & Whitchurch Park

Subject: Budget Funding Gap

One of the things I've enjoyed most over the past few months has been working constructively with Councillors from all parties on the Budget/Finance Task and Finish Group. My experience has been that Officers have been open and forthright with regard to the information shared, and the challenges facing the Council's finances. They have guided members' through the various budgets, cost pressures, and forecasting assumptions with the utmost professionalism.

It was somewhat disappointing, therefore, to have little advance notice of the administration's consultation on closing the remaining funding gap for 2022/23. Further, it is disappointing the extent to which the consultation is focused on cuts and reliance on third parties to backfill on services currently provided by the Council. This approach contrasts with the Housing Revenue Account 30 year plan consultation process, in which members of the Working Group have been able to inform the process, provide feedback on the tools used, and interact with the Cabinet member responsible.

None of this is to belittle the challenges faced by the Council in meeting the budget; the pressures of Covid on both revenue and services has not gone away, even as funding for the purpose comes to an end. Adult Social Care in particular remains a real concern, despite the much-trumpeted changes announced earlier this year, and SEND provision remains a major, and to an extent, unquantified element of the Education budget.

External pressures are substantial and closing a funding gap of £23m is now going to severely compromise the Council's services and staffing numbers. However, members of the public, who have seen tens of millions lost in the Bristol Energy debacle, will be entitled to ask how much of the pressures are of the administrations making. Clearly it is too simplistic to say that the money spent on Bristol Energy could have been available to cover the current budget gap, but that doesn't mean that the challenges wouldn't have been much less had £43m+ not been channelled into that failed venture.

The cuts envisaged will compromise the city not just in 2022/23 but for years to come.