

Cabinet

Supplementary Information



Date: Tuesday, 10 May 2022

Time: 4.00 pm

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

2. Public Forum

(Pages 3 - 17)

- Replies to questions will be given verbally at the meeting. If a reply cannot be given at the meeting (including due to lack of time) a written reply will be provided within 10 working days of the meeting.

Please find attached answers to public forum to Cabinet 10 May 2022

Issued by: Sam Wilcock, Democratic Services

City Hall, Bristol, BS1 9NE

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

Date: Monday, 23 May 2022



Question: CQ08.01

Cabinet – 10 May 2022

**Re: Agenda item 8 - Adult Social Care In-House Rehabilitation Service Review
– South Bristol Rehab Centre**

Question submitted by: Cllr Jackson

Last time this item came to Cabinet I raised issues about consultation with the South Bristol Rehab Centre staff. Please can I have assurance that the issues I raised then have been addressed?

Reply

- Thank you for raising this and I agree that actions taken could have been better.
- Since the Cabinet discussion in January, service managers have taken a number of steps to ensure better communication and engagement with the affected staff group.
- Following staff and union feedback, other options were re-considered including a proposal to second staff to Sirona and staff were kept apprised of these discussions (although ultimately this option was not deemed to be feasible).
- A variety of written and verbal briefings have taken place between January and May, including staff meetings (group and 1:1), pensions clinics, 'frequently asked questions' documents as well as trade union consultative committee meetings
- Myself and Helen Holland visited the centre and spoke with staff, and the Executive Director and ASC Director have been closely involved, meeting separately with both staff and trade unions.
- Targeted support sessions for staff have been scheduled held by the Council's employee wellbeing team, in recognition of the period of change and uncertainty they have experienced
- Interview skills training was offered to all staff to support them in considering new employment options (whether with Sirona, within the Council, or elsewhere)

Question: CQ08.02 & CQ08.03

Cabinet – 10 May 2022

Re: Agenda item 8 - Adult Social Care In-House Rehabilitation Service Review – South Bristol Rehab Centre.

Question submitted by: Cllr Goodman

I understand there are 60 rehabilitation beds at South Bristol Community Hospital and 33 beds split across South Bristol Rehabilitation Centre and East Bristol Rehabilitation Centre.

1. How many rehabilitation beds are there currently at each of the two sites and how many are currently in use at each site?

Reply

- There are currently 17 beds at South Bristol Rehab Centre, but typically occupancy is at about 60% (10 beds), as not all rooms meet the needs of service users.
- There are currently 16 beds at East Bristol Rehab Centre and typically occupancy is at about 60% (10 beds).

2. How many BCC staff currently work at the two Rehabilitation Centres and how many Sirona or other staff?

Reply

- At South Bristol Rehabilitation Centre, there are currently 40 employees, of which 28 are care staff.
- Sirona provide therapy and nursing input to the service as required (2 Occupational Therapists, 3 Physiotherapists, 1 Associate Practitioner)
- At East Bristol Rehab Centre, there are currently 35 employees of which 26 are care staff.
- As above, therapy and nursing input is provided by Sirona as required (3 Occupational Therapists, 2 x Physiotherapists, 1.5 x Nurse, 2 Associate Practitioners)

Questions: CQ10.01 & CQ10.02

Cabinet – 10 May 2022

Re: Agenda item 10 - Introducing Drug Safety Testing in Bristol

Question submitted by: Councillor Bennett

1. Advertising this scheme well will be essential if we are to make the most of it. Please could Cllr King provide more information on how the council will do this?

- Answer was given in the meeting

2. What other policies is the Council undertaking to reduce the harm caused by recreational drugs?

- Answer was given in the meeting

Question: PQ12.01 & PQ 12.02

Cabinet – 10 May 2022

Re: Agenda item 12 - Gaol Ferry Footbridge Full closure for complete Bridge Refurbishment commencing in early June 2022

Questions submitted by: Bethan Grant

Question 1:

Please can I ask what assessment has been undertaken of the likely impact of directing both pedestrians and people on bikes to use the footway - which is very narrow and obstructed at parts (e.g. the bus stop approaching Bedminster Roundabout), currently not legal for bikes to use, and likely to be busy at peak commuting times - specifically commenting on the impact of the safety of pedestrians sharing this space with people on bikes/e-scooters and the safety of cyclists who choose to use the road instead of the pavement.

Reply

- A full Equality Impact Assessment has been completed.
- The existing Northern footway of Coronation Road is of varying width from 1.8m to 3m with a usable width of 2m to 2.5m along its majority. The footway on Commercial Road is of a high standard with wider widths along the route.
- Everybody needs to share road space and be aware of each other. We have constraints along parts of the route and everyone will need to be aware there will be additional pressure at points.

Question 2:

What measures have been considered to make a signed on-road diversion along Coronation Road for cyclists/e-scooter users safer and therefore more desirable, taking them out of potential conflict with pedestrians on the narrow footway e.g. reducing the speed limit, filling in several deep pot holes & sunken manhole covers, providing a temporary, segregated lane for cyclists/e-scooter users?

Reply

- The existing highway is not wide enough to segregate pedestrians and cyclists along the diversion route without having significant impacts to the traffic network causing congestion, delays to buses and air quality issues for the entire area
- We have instructed Highways to inspect the diversion route for any required maintenance to be put in place prior to the bridge works starting.

Question: PQ12.03 & PQ12.04

Cabinet – 10 May 2022

Re: Agenda item 12 - Gaol Ferry Footbridge Full closure for complete Bridge Refurbishment commencing in early June 2022

Questions submitted by: David Redgewell & Gordon Richardson, Bristol Disabled Equalities Forum

1. What plans do the City Council and the West of England mayoral combined transport authority have to make the diversionary route fully accessible to all users whilst the Bridge is closed especially for disabled people and parents with buggies, including works to drop kerbs and temporary pavements. We ask this of both authorities as being jointly responsible for the funding and works programme.

Reply

- The Highways team are inspecting the diversion route and any required maintenance or ramps will be put in place prior to the bridge works.

As the Gaol Ferry Bridge is part of a programme of works by Bristol city council the Highway and Harbour Authority, what action is being taken by the city mayor Marvin Rees and Dan Norris and the west of England mayoral combined transport Authority to ensure the following bridges are fully accessible as part of the regeneration works.

Gaol Ferry Bridge
Bath Road New Bridge
Langton Street Footbridge.
Bedminster New Bridge.
Bedminster Old Bridge (the Banana Bridge).
Vauxhall Bridge

Do the City Mayor and West of England Mayor have plans to upgrade the footways and other routes for disabled people and parents with buggies to ensure their access needs are met. All routes should be step free and without other obstructions inhibiting their use by disabled people, including those with vision impairment, and parents.

Reply

- As part of the refurbishment of all the bridges in the next 5 years we will be considering all aspects of accessibility whilst undertaking the refurbishment within the available budget and technical structural tolerance of any changes.

Question: CQ12.01 & CQ12.02

Cabinet – 10 May 2022

Re: Agenda item 12 - Gaol Ferry Footbridge Full closure for complete Bridge Refurbishment commencing in early June 2022

Question submitted by: Councillor Townsend

This diversion will cause significant issues for the many people who use the bridge to walk and cycle via a direct link between South Bristol and the City Centre, and beyond.

In the Equalities Impact Assessment it appears that the plan is to divert all this sustainable traffic via footways. In the Eco Impact assessment no mention is made of the risk that people may choose to travel by motorised transport as no safe alternative route is available.

It is highly likely that many people will be forced to cycle and walk on Cumberland and Coronations Roads. The latter road is currently already taking the strain of increased use as a result of the long-term closure of Dalby Avenue and the diversions as a result of the Malago Road one-way closures.

Q1: Since the Coronavirus pandemic there has been a lot of progress in understanding how to deliver temporary active travel infrastructure which needs to be put into place here.

What provision is being made for safe and segregated routes that as far as possible meet the LTN/120 standards along these routes?

Reply

- Answer was given in the meeting

Q2: The best way to mitigate road danger is to remove danger at source. What signage is proposed?

Reply

- Answer was given in the meeting

Question: CQ12.03 & CQ12.04

Cabinet – 10 May 2022

Re: Agenda item 12 - Gaol Ferry Footbridge Full closure for complete Bridge Refurbishment commencing in early June 2022

Question submitted by: Cllr Stafford-Townsend

We welcome that the bridges are getting the urgent repairs required.

However the 6 to 9 months duration is of intense concern to both residents and businesses in both Central & Southville wards. For many residents in Central, their core facilities like doctors surgeries are on the south side of the bridge. For businesses in Wapping Wharf, a considerable amount of customers (for some businesses more than half of their customers) come over the bridge.

Not only will the Wapping Wharf businesses be impacted by the footfall, considerable numbers of residents from south of the river will be dissuaded from venturing into the town centre, potentially choosing easier to access options such as the internet, or travelling by less sustainable modes of transport to access the city centre. The current closure timescale includes the critical Christmas period, and that with the expectation that the project adheres to schedule.

With the cost of living crisis and retailers having only just scraped through the pandemic, the independent businesses of Wapping Wharf are ill placed to survive additional losses in footfall for such a critical period of time.

As ward councillors for the two wards most directly affected by the closure of Gaol Ferry Bridge, we have already engaged with officers and will continue to do so. However we feel that there is a need for support for both residents and businesses alike that is beyond what officers are able to provide without support from above.

Questions:

1. What measures will BCC be putting into place to assist city centre & Wapping Wharf businesses beyond signposted diversion route signs?

Reply

- We are fixing the bridge which is the main route to Wapping Wharf from Southville.
- In addition to that:
 - we have agreed with the Wapping Wharf traders that we will allow advertisement banners along the New Cut.
 - We're doing our own council promotion of the area

- We will put in place alongside the diversion signs, distance to markers highlighting City Centre, Wapping Wharf, Harbourside, and Bedminster East Street.

2. Will BCC be offering any financial and/or marketing support to those businesses impacted by the bridge closure in order to prevent the forced closure of retailers from extended lack of footfall?

Reply

- What we are doing is fixing the bridge, making sure these businesses benefit from a repaired and safe bridge.
- We've visited businesses, we are making sure the repairs are publicised, and continue to support through our Economic Development team.
- We'll be giving information to local councillors so they can further support businesses and inform residents.

Question: CQ12.05 and CQ12.06

Cabinet – 10 May 2022

Re: Agenda item 12 - Gaol Ferry Footbridge Full closure for complete Bridge Refurbishment commencing in early June 2022

Question submitted by: Cllr Fodor

In the short term:

1. Will the council look into installing a Bailey Bridge or other temporary structure to ensure reasonable access is provided for pedestrians and cyclists rather than relying on a long diversion?

Reply

- Yes, we have looked into this.
- A Bailey Bridge for a span of 57m would need a full design and the costs would be prohibitive (in the region of £1m).
- We would also need to close Coronation Rd and Cumberland Road due to ramps, abutments that would need to be installed across the highway.

Given the existing crossing is at or over capacity already, and in line with the provision of a second bridge at Commercial Rd/Wapping Rd to facilitate bus priorities:

2. Will the council prioritise a second, permanent bridge here in the near future to ensure adequate and segregated capacity for growing cycle and walking access in line with our active travel priorities?

Reply

- A new bridge would cost between £7 and £9m (based on the Camden Road bridge proposal), and we have six other bridges we need to repair so those must be our focus.

Question: CQ13.01

Cabinet – 10 May 2022

Re: Agenda item 13 - Conferencing, Events and Catering contract for Museum Sites

Question submitted by: Councillor Pearce

The budget included provisions to look at opening a roof top bar on the M Shed. Has progress been made on this, and does this catering contract take into account this work?

Reply

- This could be an exciting addition to a key landmark site on the harbourside, which contributes to Bristol's night-time economy, and generate much-needed revenue for the Council.
- To mitigate financial challenges and build resilience into the future Culture budget, the aim of the rooftop project is to investigate how to develop and commercialise the roof space of M Shed.
- This means initially investigating the feasibility of implementing an outside bar and by extension improving the offer of the Event Suite for outdoor functions by making better use of the footprint on the flat roof space.
- A feasibility study is currently being prepared and expected to be received in June
- The results will feed into the completion of an Outline Business Case (OBC) which will determine the viability of this approach.

Should the OBC determine that rooftop option is viable the running of the space will be factored into the tender for the next contract when this current one expires.

Question: CQ17.01

Cabinet – 10 May 2022

Re: Agenda item 17 – Electricity Contract Procurement and Renewals

Question submitted by: Cllr Mack

I was fascinated to learn about the sleeving arrangement, which seems a novel solution to a ridiculous system where the feed in tariff is so much less than our cost of electricity. The papers claim this decision will deliver a carbon saving of 2700 tonnes of CO2 equivalent each year.

However, I'm not sure I follow the logic that this system reduces emissions at all, as the arrangement does not change anything physical, it's just an accounting arrangement that moves a carbon figure from a 'national' column into the 'Bristol' column.

Question: Given Bristol Council will continue to use the same amount of electricity (not considering the many efficiencies other projects are contributing), and produce the same amount of renewable electricity, how will this decision lead to the promised saving of 2700 tonnes of CO 2e a year?

Reply

- For the purposes for tracking our own carbon emissions, this paper is right to note emissions will reduce for Bristol City Council because we're now using local, renewable sources, instead of just the National Grid.
- It is accurate to record that reduction.
- However, this is not the focus of the paper. We've taken steps to reduce the council's exposure to energy price increases.
- A further benefit is that this sleeving mechanism strengthens the local renewable energy market, allowing other projects to come forward to further reduce Bristol's carbon emissions.

Question: CQ18.01

Cabinet – 10 May 2022

Re: Agenda item 18 – Household Support Fund 2022 (including Easter holidays free school meals vouchers)

Question submitted by: Cllr Pearce

This cabinet item notes the authorisation of spending £660k on free school meals from the £4m household support fund. What does the Council intend to spend the remainder of this fund on?

Reply

- This fund is to cover the period from April to September, which includes not only the Easter holidays but also the May half term and summer holidays.
- A third of this fund must be spent on pensioners as stipulated by DWP.
- The proposal to spend the money is as follows:
 - £1.347m will be spent on supporting pensioners, initially on those who aren't going to receive the £150 energy rebate (so who are in property Bands E-H) by the same amount.
 - Once we have established how many that is, we will then allocate the remainder of this sum equally across all citizens of pension age. We will also make a direct award of £33k to Bristol Age UK.
- A further £1.65m will be spent on free school meals for the May and Summer holidays, £100k on those with no recourse to public funds and £38k to care leavers.

Question: CQ18.02

Cabinet – 10 May 2022

Re: Agenda item Household Support Fund 2022 (including Easter holidays free school meals vouchers)

Question submitted by: Cllr Katy Grant

The news of an additional £4,039,965 to be spent in the coming six months on vouchers to cover holiday periods in the place of Free School Meals, as well as energy rebates for pensioners and support to other vulnerable groups, is welcome. This will be vital support at this time of cost of living crisis for many.

£211,965 has been budgeted for administration of this fund, which at 5% is not a high percentage of the total budget. But it is nonetheless a lot of money, given that vouchers and rebates will be distributed through existing targeting systems such as the Free School Meals database, the Red Cross, and the Council Tax register.

Transfers will be mostly electronic, so the procurement and logistics aspects of this operation should be minimal. What is not spent on the administration of this fund can be turned into support for more households.

Question: Would it be possible to see in more detail how the £211,965 will be broken down across administration, procurement communications, and marketing?

Reply

- 5% as an administration cost is widely accepted as a standard minimum for awards of this type, indeed many other authorities are claiming a higher percentage.
- We will of course seek to reduce these costs as much as possible.
- Any of the administration funds that are not required will be reapplied back into the main fund for distribution.

Question: CQ19.01

Cabinet – 10 May 2022

Re: Agenda item 19 - Corporate Risk Management Report – Q4 2021/22

Question submitted by: Cllr Grant

It is distressing to see that Safeguarding Children remains one of the highest in the risk register. It is understood how the past two years have put significant additional pressures on services, and it is clear that steps are being taken to work on strengthening both prevention and response. However, as Corporate Parents, reducing this risk needs to be our top priority.

Services seem to be under highest demand from teenagers; the demand in this cohort must be exacerbated by the arrival of young refugees in Bristol. We must ensure we honour the commitments we have as a city of sanctuary to ensure that these potentially traumatized and vulnerable young people are given safety, security and the chance to thrive on our watch.

Question: Are there extra measures that can be put in place to ensure the protection of adolescent and unaccompanied refugee minors?

Reply

- We have launched Independent Child Trafficking Guardians. Their role is to provide specialist independent support for trafficked children, and to advocate on behalf of the child to ensure that their best interests are reflected in decisions made by public authorities. This service is provided in addition to existing statutory service provision.
- We have recently undertaken a multi-agency review of our service and support to children seeking asylum and as a result are progressing the establishment of a specialist team who will develop expertise in this area of work and we are progressing work on placement sufficiency to enable more children seeking asylum to live locally.
- We have increased capacity within our Independent Reviewing Service who reviews the plans for our children in care to enable improved oversight of our adolescents in care and children seeking asylum.
- You're welcome to take this up direct with Cllr Craig.