

Audit Committee

Supplementary Questions & Responses



Date: Monday, 4 March 2024

Time: 3.00 pm

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

6. Public Forum

Up to 30 minutes is allowed for this item.

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Any member of the public or Councillor may participate in Public Forum. The detailed arrangements for so doing are set out in the Public Information Sheet at the back of this agenda. Public Forum items should be emailed to democratic.services@bristol.gov.uk and please note that the following deadlines will apply in relation to this meeting:-

Questions - Written questions must be received 3 clear working days prior to the meeting. For this meeting, this means that your question(s) must be received in this office at the latest by 5 pm on **27 February 2024**.

Petitions and Statements - Petitions and statements must be received on the working day prior to the meeting. For this meeting this means that your submission must be received in this office at the latest by 12.00 noon on **1 March 2024**.

Members of the press and public who plan to attend a public meeting at City Hall are advised that you will be **required to sign in** when you arrive and you will be issued with a visitor pass which you will **need to display at all times**.

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Date: Thursday, 21 March 2024

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Supplementary 1

The response to my question was :

"The Council was aware that Bristol Waste was providing Stepping Up with transitional support, however the details of the support provided was pursuant to an arrangement between Bristol Waste and Stepping Up. "

The Council is a large and complex organisation. I would appreciate a more specific and detailed answer.

I'm assuming that this answer was provided by the Monitoring Officer. The Monitoring Officer needs to give clear details about what he knew about this situation, and the involvement of staff and members:

Q1. Was the Monitoring Officer aware and what details did he know about the arrangements for transitional support, including loans and cash support?

Response.

The Director of Legal and Democratic Services was aware that Bristol Waste were to provide back office support, hot desk and meeting facilities and to allow Stepping Up to use their Ashton Court office as their registered address.

Did he or any of his team have discussions with Bristol Waste about this matter?

Response.

Legal services liaised with Bristol Waste regarding putting in place a service level agreement between Bristol Waste and Stepping Up under which the transitional support was to be provided.

How did he become aware of the transitional support?

Response.

The Director of Legal and Democratic Services was informed that Bristol Waste were to provide back office support, hot desk and meeting facilities and to allow Stepping Up to use their Ashton Court office as their registered address in an email dated 22 March 2022 from Councillor Cheney to the Director of Legal and Democratic Services.

Did the Monitoring Officer know if Cabinet members (including stakeholder Deputy Mayor Cheney) and the Council's director on Bristol Waste board (Councillor Steve Pearce) were aware of these plans?

Response

The Director of Legal and Democratic Services knew that Councillor Cheney was aware Bristol Waste were to provide back office support, hot desk and meeting facilities and to allow Stepping Up to use their Ashton Court office as their registered address.

Supplementary 2

"Bristol Waste is a separate legal entity and were not acting on the council's instruction or authorisation, and the council did not authorise or request any loan or cash flow support for Stepping Up from Bristol Waste."

Bristol Waste may well be a "separate legal entity" but it still has certain duties towards the City Council, as a Council-owned company.

I refer to the Memorandum & Articles of Bristol Waste Company, dated 29 May 2021 (Companies House website).

Schedule 1, Reserved Matters states :

item 19. lending or advancing any monies to any person, firm, company or employees of the company.

[I also note "item 14. entering into any arrangement contract or transaction which may impact on the shareholder's statutory functions, commercial interests or reputation". I would argue that the transitional arrangements for Stepping Up would impact on the shareholders (The Council's) reputation.]

I cannot see any Reserved Matter decision relating to this issue on the City Council's website.

Response.

[Bristol City Council did not receive any reserved matter request for lending or advancing any monies from Bristol Waste to Stepping Up.](#)